

THESIS

IDENTIFYING VALUES AMONG STAKEHOLDERS IN
COLORADO SCHOOL-BASED AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

IDENTIFYING VALUES AMONG STAKEHOLDERS IN COLORADO SCHOOL-BASED AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

To better understand the relationships between shared community values and experiences in School-Based Agricultural Education (SBAE), a mixed-methods study was conducted on the core values of SBAE in Colorado identified by three stakeholder groups. To inform programmatic decisions from the state’s Agriculture, Natural Resources and Energy Program and Colorado Team Ag Ed, this study highlights both the philosophical and practical applications of core values respective to SBAE stakeholder engagement in Colorado. Qualitative survey instruments were used across three sample groups to question community stakeholders, high school agriculture instructors, and state agricultural education leadership. Findings represent the values that stakeholders hold as most important in SBAE and the aligned activities that demonstrate these values. Arranged in three parts, this paper identifies values in relation to 1) stakeholder identification, 2) cooperative decision-making, and 3) educational motivation and autonomy. A pragmatic approach to implications throughout each part seeks to deliver an easily applicable strategy for stakeholder engagement—both for readers and the author. A discussion on the relationships between values, motivation, and other educational and organizational theories is included. While results and suggestions from this study are specific to Colorado’s SBAE programs, they could serve as frameworks for informing further agricultural education research and SBAE methods in other states.

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PREFACE

When it comes to the interactions of values in School-Based Agricultural Education, numerous theoretical frameworks can help shape how improved stakeholder engagement should look. Theories in education, stakeholder engagement, business management, and motivation all point to a common reality of thriving communities when values are recognized, supported, and transformed into action. However, when putting these theories from different disciplines into a common theoretical framework of influential values in Colorado’s SBAE community, the water can become muddied. In working to build a cohesive framework for values in SBAE, three connected yet distinct essays emerged to provide a cohesive view of the interactions between values, culture, and organizational leadership. A multi-part thesis became the best approach for communicating the most appropriate theories, research findings, and application of the two for improved strategy and connection in Colorado SBAE leadership. One essay can be read independently of the other two; however, to build the strongest framework for synthesizing theory and research into practice, it’s recommended that all three are reviewed together in the order presented—recognizing stakeholders, working across different values, and uplifting values for motivating action. For those who have witnessed my writing style, I’m known to be somewhat long-winded. By hyper-focusing on just one single topic in each essay, brevity of thought has been pursued, hopefully, with some success. Your time invested in considering the thoughts I’ve wrestled with over the past 30 months is greatly appreciated.

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ESSAY I - RECOGNIZING THE VALUES OF SBAE STAKEHOLDERS

Introduction

The opportunities for the next generation in agriculture are significant; there is record-breaking membership in the National FFA Organization (*National FFA*, 2023) and, according to American Farmland Trust, the ownership of forty percent of America's agricultural land will be in transition within the next fifteen years (*Keeping Farmers On the Land Read More*, 2023). It is more crucial than ever to understand and empower the community in which young people are building competence in agricultural careers through their secondary educational experiences. In seeking to understand the future workforce of agriculture, key questions consider how educational systems can better understand the community that is supporting young people's pursuits of agricultural careers. How can instructors, supporters, and leaders in School-Based Agricultural Education (SBAE) build an effective motivational education environment? Ultimately, looking at the foundation of shared values can inform the motivation and determination of how these values influence the instruction and leadership development of the next generation.

While research in the realm of SBAE focuses on the connection of knowledge and skills within learning models such as Kolb's (Baker, Robinson, & Kolb, 2012), there is little discussion of how values defined in social and behavioral theories inform secondary educational environments and their connected communities. In his hallmark book, *Experience and Education*, Dewey writes (1939), "Amid all uncertainties, there is one permanent frame of reference: namely, the organic connection between education and personal experience" (p. 25).

While a student’s personal experience is such a crucial element to their education, there must be an acknowledgment of the additional players and stakeholders that influence and support secondary vocational education programs. A focus on values—those ideas that define and inform personal and collective experiences will lend a deeper understanding of how the SBAE community informs, plans, and supports thriving educational environments.

A Focus on Core Values

In studying the influences of diverse stakeholders in SBAE, the unique ecosystem of students, peers, parents, instructors, administrators, and industry professionals can be described through a framework of personal and organizational values. When values are expressed and communicated, they can develop a “consciousness” of community and organizational operations (Pruzan, 2001). Determining and defining the most central, or “core” values of a community or organization, is a multi-faceted task that lays or solidifies a common, foundational understanding of the work of the community.

The concept of “core values” can be simplified down to a brief description of those ideas and beliefs which are most tightly held by an individual that inform their actions. To discuss core values within the field of social and educational psychology, however, it is helpful to use the framework that core values are “(a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviors, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance” (Schwartz et al., 1987). With this definition, it is necessary to consider how concepts and beliefs are formed and supported to then guide behavior and attitude toward action. Exploring how values are upheld and considered by the key stakeholders of Colorado SBAE can further inform sustainable community actions. In examining

the core values associated with SBAE programs, we can consider how to best develop supportive environments where students gain an affinity and skills for successful careers in agriculture.

School-Based Agricultural Education

SBAE in the United States dates back to 1917 when the National Vocational Education Act (also known as the Smith-Hughes Act) established agricultural education as part of public education systems as seen through the need for more skilled labor training in pre-collegiate education. While agricultural and educational systems look different across regions, states, and even counties, the unified model for agricultural education in the United States is the “3-circle” model used by the National Council for Agricultural Education and defined by Phipps & Osborne (1988) as:

1. Classroom and laboratory instruction (contextual learning),
2. Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs (work-based learning), and
3. Student leadership organizations (National FFA Organization and National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization).

SBAE programs continue to see increased diversity in student enrollment- with diverse backgrounds and values, which they bring into the three core experiences of the classroom, SAE, and FFA. From the 2019-2020 academic year to the 2021-2022 academic year, Colorado’s Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program saw a 17% increase in student enrollment—totaling 8,290 middle and high school students in 135 programs in 2022 (coloradostateplan.com, 2022). In Colorado high school CTE programs, 42% of students identify as ethnic minorities and 45% identify as female (coloradostateplan.com, 2022). A framework is necessary for determining how key figures in agricultural education—

teachers, community stakeholders, and state leadership, support the values encountered or upheld within SBAE experiences. Without having an informed understanding of values in SBAE, leadership is left to make decisions based on assumed motivations that lack identified values.

Motivating a greater number of high school students (and even those younger) is seen as key to raising the next generation of young leaders in agriculture. What defines the community in which these motivations are fostered? Knowing the shared values and activities that shape the educational context can inform *from where* the motivations arise in SBAE (values), and *towards where* these determinations can be directed (agricultural activities). The pursuit of studying the relationships between core values and motivation in agricultural education is an area of educational and social psychology that has yet to be deeply researched. Studies, such as that conducted by Lockaby & Vaughn (1999), have sought to determine which values should be taught by agricultural instructors in SBAE. This study aims to look deeper into the role of core values to pragmatically inform the work of teachers, community stakeholders, and leadership in building learning environments that recognize the values that inform and influence learning.

The SBAE Community

Creating resilient and action-oriented communities requires recognizing the building blocks that shape and direct the work of groups. As noted by Gallent & Ciaffi, when aiming to foster action-focused community networks, communities' coherency will “depend on the strength of shared values, on which responses to different challenges are built” (2014, p.7). Responsive leadership seeks to strategically apply—or “leverage” the identified unique attributes that stakeholders bring to the table to achieve desired impacts. Whether in the classroom, field, laboratory, kitchen table, or boardroom table, values influence everyday decisions in communities. In agricultural education, community-centric viewpoints inform and develop

impactful learning opportunities. To explore the role of stakeholder values, a study of Colorado SBAE will serve as the foundation for this commentary on value-informed community action.

In SBAE, it is important to understand the roles of values within organizational contexts. The values of stakeholders influence the culture, opportunities, and actions of youth studying agriculture. Rokeach notes that values are "the most distinctive property or defining characteristic of a social institution" (Rokeach, 1979, p. 51). To define the institution of SBAE in Colorado, a foundational understanding begins by acknowledging the different stakeholder groups and the respective roles and values held exclusively and collectively between groups. Educational programming benefits from continued stakeholder engagement and input that identifies values and prompts conversations regarding how values are best identified, challenged and supported in communities.

Defining Stakeholders in Communities

SBAE brings together a unique collection of voices and perspectives. Whether agricultural producers, researchers, teachers, parents, students or local neighbors, the network of individuals influencing the career education of youth in agriculture is vast and often complex. Defining the relationships within the community that seeks to prepare young people for careers in agriculture is a step that should be taken often and with curiosity. Noted by Christens and Speer (2015) on community organizing, an emphasis on a "common value base" helps build a shared identity within groups of diverse individuals seeking common community improvement (p. 207).

Building resilient systems in a community relies on the effective interplay of differing types of capital (from economic and political to infrastructure and social). The type of capital this

essay will focus on is the social capital of Colorado SBAE—that is, the outcomes of participation in networks that benefit society and individuals (Putnam, 2001). The intersectional disciplines in psychology, social policy, management, and community development present numerous models for building social capital. However, at the core, practices in organizing and empowering communities rely heavily on identifying, convening, upholding, and giving voice to the diverse experiences and perspectives held by stakeholders most impacted by institutional decision-making. Building capital in a community includes highlighting “cultural knowledge outside normative social relationships, and re-organization of institutionalized systems that disenfranchise nondominant groups” (Cafer, et al., 2019, p. 210).

To pinpoint the diverse voices within a community, “stakeholders” is a common term when developing a project or product. The use of the term “stakeholder,” though, can appear transactional and tied to an accountability mindset rather than an empowered collective interest (Greenwood, 2007). Organizational management studies and the fields of project and business management provide purposeful descriptions of the role of stakeholders and best engagement practices in completing projects. Built upon the writings of Freeman, the Stakeholder Theory suggests that organizations should work to create value, not only for shareholders (those holding the most risk in an organization) but those impacted by the actions of the organization (1984). Within the flow of Stakeholder Theory, stakeholders’ capacity to effectively support and create collaborative action relies upon the components of “power, legitimacy, status and action responsiveness” (Rodriguez Serna, et al., 2022, p. 445).

Engaging the key stakeholders in community institutions is best done proactively and within the recognition of how stakeholders impact and are impacted by leadership decisions and resulting actions (Rodriguez Serna, et al., 2022, p. 445). Stakeholder research weighs the power

dynamics at play in projects and decision-making, noting the extent of interdependent relationships of stakeholders. Holistic stakeholder engagement recognizes the constant flux of power factors and the intent behind engagement—whether to act in the true interest of stakeholders as moral obligation or to simply justify actions by including stakeholders for strategic gain (Greenwood, 2007). Without integration and collaboration with stakeholder perspectives and values to be considered, productivity and relationships suffer (Gaumer & Shaffer, 2018). Proactive engagement processes that acknowledge stakeholder values and dependencies shift the focus of capacity-building from projects and programs to people and (social) power. Reactive engagement, on the other hand, relies on listening to stakeholder concerns and priorities after action has already been taken (Rodriguez Serna, et al., 2022 p. 445).

While necessary in some circumstances, a reactive stakeholder engagement strategy diminishes stakeholders’ capacities to build agency, leverage power, and practice shared responsibility. Action and planning that is informed by values and needs can lead to sustained collaborative action that upholds stakeholder satisfaction. In a society that is increasingly disconnected from local decision-making processes to affect change, a renewed commitment to connecting diverse stakeholders builds an important organizational framework for action (Christens & Speer, 2015, p. 204). If the Colorado SBAE community desires to construct social capacity, proactive and integrated collaboration by stakeholders (Kier et al., 2023) needs to work beyond paternalistic organizational “strategies” and toward “autonomy and capacity” for stakeholders’ self-determination (Greenwood, 2007).

The interplay of stakeholders within organizations benefits from the lens of values—taking note of the varying perspectives that shape cultural context for action. When recognized and upheld, values qualify a partial obligation to be kept and upheld by the actions of the group.

Stakeholder engagement theories widely debate the delineation of obligation and responsibility to stakeholders into “narrow” and “broad” views—questioning how wide of a net should be cast to include those impacted by or driving a group’s actions (Freeman, 1984). Within this study on stakeholder values in SBAE, the subjects recruited hold differing roles in the day-to-day delivery of educational programming. A “narrow” view of engagement is seen with teachers as stakeholders—noting an obligation due to the daily work of instructing. Soliciting “broad” insights from a diversity of community supporters (those indirectly impacting educational outcomes) creates a balance between a moral obligation to other stakeholders and a strategic responsiveness observed across the SBAE community (Greenwood, 2007, p. 320).

SBAE Stakeholders

In SBAE, there is direction from a group of supporters (with the local instructor at the helm) who seek to uphold the work of equipping the next generation of agriculturalists. SBAE provides unified opportunities through the three-circle model of classroom and laboratory, Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs, and student leadership opportunities through the National FFA Organization (*Agricultural Education*, n.d.). Stakeholders help influence the delivery of opportunities in agricultural education by reviewing programming and standards and offering insights to enhance the practices and outcomes of instruction toward agricultural careers.

This study of Colorado SBAE considered three groups of stakeholders and identified the shared values as influencers of programmatic support and strategic planning. These groups included community members of local SBAE programs, local SBAE instructors, Colorado Team Ag Ed, and Colorado FFA State Officers—the final two groups being surveyed jointly due to their common responsibilities for statewide leadership.

Community Members as SBAE Stakeholders

The values of stakeholders are visible in their decisions, support, and influences that establish learning environments that support students' and teachers' autonomy—having a personal determination to, respectively, learn and teach as they best see fit (Reeve, 2009). Identifying the values of local community supporters defines the culture in which SBAE programs are structured and operated. Whether explicitly addressed or not, values held by community members (whether parents, program alumni, or industry supporters) influence and inform the educational environment in which an agricultural educator operates. These stakeholders hold a distinct purpose in informing the SBAE culture since how they prioritize values and activities defines the influence of the local community on teachers and students.

Instructors as SBAE Stakeholders

Considering the key influencers of agricultural education would have little grounding without acknowledging the instructor tasked with creating an effective learning environment for all students in SBAE. Instructors encounter values daily as they transform best practices and agricultural knowledge from concepts into lived experiences. Overseeing each component of the three-circle model, instructors build relationships with students, coach Career Development Event teams, and, of course, deliver lessons and assessments. While community members or state-level leaders might seek to have certain values upheld in the local SBAE program, instructors get the final word on how values take shape and impact their learning environment.

Colorado Team Ag Ed as Stakeholders

The community of agricultural education builds upon networks of support ranging from local to regional to state and national. Statewide oversight of support for SBAE in Colorado is

provided through a group of individuals representing Colorado State University Agricultural Education, the Colorado Community College System, the Colorado FFA Association, the Colorado FFA Foundation, and the Colorado Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association. The aim of this group, known as Colorado Team Ag Ed, is to consider the scope of agricultural education programming across the state and uphold standards, implement policies and create systems of support. Values that this group espouses when introducing programs and policies have the capacity to shape how the work of Agricultural Education is viewed and supported across Colorado.

An elevated leadership experience offered to ten young leaders in Colorado is the opportunity to represent Agricultural Education and the membership of Colorado FFA for a year of service learning in the role of State FFA Officer. While these recent high school graduates don't oversee curriculum or educational policies, they serve SBAE by raising awareness of the aspirations of the next generation of workers and leaders in agriculture. State Officers facilitate workshops and staff events for current FFA Members as well as the broader agricultural community. Through representing the Colorado FFA Association, State Officers personify the values of the state's Agricultural Education community as they invoke leadership in a variety of contexts that inspire other stakeholders (especially high school students) to learn more about the organization and embrace its mission.

Values play a critical role in how the stakeholders in agricultural education are understood. Beyond inspiring words or phrases used in fundraising campaigns and posted on classroom walls, values represent the work of communities and organizations; they can unite, inform, and encourage actions (Schwartz, 1992). Values can also lead to division and polarization when not communicated clearly, prioritized differently, or used to justify divergent

actions (Johnson, 2020). When identified, considered and communicated within a community, values can be a powerful tool to help members of the community and supporters speak cohesively and work collectively towards shared goals and desired pathways.

Colorado SBAE Stakeholder Values Survey

To build a more informed understanding of the values that influence SBAE programming and experiences, 48 individuals participated in a study on core values in Colorado SBAE. For the purposes of this study, the definition of “values” was understood in the context of “core values” characterized by Schwartz as: “(a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviors, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance” (Schwartz et al., 1987). Additionally, the aim of this study was to determine how values are identified in stakeholder groups respectively and collectively (exclusive to one group and/or shared between multiple groups).

Participants

Sampling occurred via email communications and Colorado’s agricultural education online resource platform. All regions of Colorado (as defined by Colorado’s Department of Education) were represented by at least one study participant. Members of the three stakeholder groups defined above were recruited to take part in an online questionnaire that captured the “most important” values and the activities aligned with those values in SBAE. Participants included fifteen local community members (n=15), sixteen SBAE instructors (n=16), and a group of seventeen state leaders composed of eight Team Ag Ed members and nine FFA State Officers (n=17). Participants were informed that the results of the study would be analyzed for use in future Team Ag Ed strategic planning work.

Instrument

Participants were asked to write in up to five values they viewed as most important to SBAE in Colorado. Qualtrics software prompted participants to provide activities they viewed as aligned with the “most important” values shared. Both question entries were open-ended, allowing for maximum diversity of answers and avoiding selection bias that could have occurred had a list of values or activities been provided for participants to choose from.

The survey instrument was piloted for accuracy by CSU Agricultural Education instructors and undergraduate students not part of the respondent group. This test provided anticipated qualitative data and helped refine and condense instrument questions for increased trustworthiness and validity. The main study of 48 stakeholders resulted in qualitative data largely collected as lists and short narratives of values and activities rather than single words. A team of instructors in Agricultural Education at CSU assisted in reviewing responses to ensure the validity of results in line with SBAE terminology, standards, and practices. The survey instrument used was very simple—asking only for a ZIP code, stakeholder group affiliation, years teaching (if applicable), most important values in SBAE, and the aligned activities. The data gathered through this simple tool, though, provided a cross-sectional view of how values and activities interplay, as seen by influencers in Colorado SBAE.

Analysis

To manage data from stakeholder groups separately and ensure the integrity of data, the three groups’ data sets were exported from Qualtrics separately into Excel, and a codebook was developed through inductive coding. Coding was validated with the assistance of the Agricultural Education team in order to perform descriptive statistical analysis. Once validated and separated

into distinct words and terms, data pieces were color-coded by sample group and compiled into separate study-wide lists of values and activities. Frequency counts of all unique submissions were taken across the three stakeholder groups to answer, in part research questions one and two: “What core values do stakeholders identify in Colorado SBAE activities?” and “How are core values perceived to be connected to SBAE experiences?” Unique values and activities mentioned only once were treated as outlier data as no consistency between stakeholder groups could be observed.

Frequency counts were again conducted for the mentions of each respective group’s values and associated activities to answer the research question, “To what extent are the values identified by different stakeholder groups—advisory committees, instructors, and state leadership—distinct or similar?” Distinct values and activities were then grouped by alignment (i.e. value of “integrity” with activities of “classroom,” “leadership,” and “teams”). This was done to answer, in part, the research question, “Which experiences identified as being part of Colorado SBAE are most likely to foster the core values perceived by the stakeholder groups?”

Findings of SBAE Stakeholder Values Study

Core values are expressed and framed differently by members of any organization, and the stakeholders associated with Colorado SBAE are no exception (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987, p. 554; Bourne & Jenkins, 2013). Analysis of data showed a broad diversity of unique values (n=93) and unique aligned activities (n=247) being shared as important to Colorado SBAE. Of the values submitted, ten exhibited agreement across the three groups (See Table 1.1). From a broad range of activities submitted, a total of only eight showed agreement amongst all three stakeholder groups (See Table 1.2). Each of the top shared values (n=10) were matched with

activity mentions to illustrate how these values play out in SBAE activities—comprehensive tables can be found in Appendix C. All values mentioned twice or more are seen in Appendix B.

Table 1.1

Mentions of Top Ten Values by Respective Sample Group

Value	Total (f)	Mentions by Team Ag Ed (f)	Mentions by Teachers (f)	Mentions by Stakeholders (f)
Leadership	19	6	5	8
Respect	16	3	9	4
Integrity	13	5	3	5
Work Ethic	11	2	4	5
Community	10	2	3	5
Relevant Curriculum	6	3	2	1
Honesty	5	3	1	1
Relationships	4	1	1	2
Purpose	4	2	1	1
Passion	3	1	1	1

Table 1.2

Top SBAE Activities Aligned to Shared Values Across all Sample Groups by Sample Group

Activities	Total (f)	Team Ag Ed (f)	Teachers (f)	Stakeholders (f)
CDE	46	26	16	4
SAE	41	26	13	2
LDE	37	23	13	1
Community Service	28	9	16	3
Classroom	20	11	7	2
Classwork	7	4	1	2
Official Dress	6	3	1	2
Relevant Curriculum	3	1	1	1

The top 10 shared values were representative of ninety percent (n=43) of all participants. This representation included 100% of instructors, 87% of community members, and 82% of Team Ag Ed. A wide array of 28 activities was produced to align with the values. When seeking to know which values *and* activities aligned across all stakeholder groups, a list of 8 activities resulted: CDE, SAE, LDE, Community Service, Classroom, Classwork, Official Dress, and Relevant Curriculum.

Transforming Continued Stakeholder Engagement

This study identified what values are considered “core” to the work of SBAE in Colorado—and how they are enacted through SBAE activities. Support, organizational leadership, and instructional practices in SBAE can utilize and build upon the findings of values and activities to inform programmatic priorities responsive to stakeholders. Beyond this study’s scope of recognizing stakeholder groups and their values, further work can study how these values are prioritized in the local SBAE program and whose values are seen by students and instructors as the most prominent influencers of action.

Programmatic goals and leadership strategies should seek to align planning and evaluation with the values shared within the community of Colorado SBAE. By being proactive in engagement, stakeholders helped recognize the connections between ongoing activities and the values that drive them—from upholding leadership through community service to upholding work ethic through SAEs. Engaging with 48 diverse voices is a good place to start for leadership and involved stakeholders in Colorado SBAE to develop a framework for further engagement to leverage shared values’ implications on activities.

Shared values frame intentional conversations that promote understanding while considering what actions should be taken. Building stronger support networks in education relies upon recognizing a diversity of values and also understanding that those values might be prioritized and applied differently between stakeholders. While an SBAE instructor and community member both hold the value of “relationships” as important, their expectations for fostering relationships through SBAE experiences will look different due to their roles and connections in the agricultural education community. For one stakeholder, the value of “respect” might look like students being attentive in class; for another, “respect” is shown through the correct styling of FFA Official Dress. Though values may be clearly stated, responsive leadership should support conversations that clarify how stakeholders see values prioritized and upheld across SBAE.

Study Implications

The implications of this study rest on the capacity and desire for statewide leadership to empower continued stakeholder input. Forming a foundation of values and activities provides a cross-section view of shared perspectives of SBAE in Colorado. The values and activities identified through this study can help characterize the work and aspirations of Colorado SBAE through the lens of stakeholder engagement. As seen through the theoretical framing of this study, values held by stakeholders should be applied to SBAE planning and programming through an understanding of organizational impacts and responsibilities—those of leadership, instructors, and community stakeholders.

Beyond the identification of values, this study provides a framework for identifying how different stakeholders’ values inform the work of SBAE. Recognizing shared values in Colorado informs further work to determine how stakeholder values are adopted, upheld, assumed, or

misunderstood. With nearly 100 unique values and 247 unique activities mentioned to support those values, further engagement with stakeholders can continue to define values and implement value-informed decision-making in local SBAE programs. Although the study’s scope did not include comprehensive school-by-school profiles of values and activities, involved leaders, instructors, and community members can continue the conversation to compare what they observe locally with the study’s findings.

Applications for SBAE Instructors

In stakeholder theory, the question often arises of which stakeholders hold priority for having their perspectives considered—often qualifying participation and connection to a group through filters of “power, legitimacy, status and action responsiveness” (Rodriguez Serna, et al., 2022, p. 445). Through this qualification, the local instructor holds precedent as they bear the daily task of sustaining their SBAE program—teaching, coaching, driving to contests, or making farm visits. As state leadership and community members express the values they desire to inform agricultural education outcomes, the instructor has the final say on which values will permeate and influence their program’s culture. Instructors and their students, however, do not exist in a cultural vacuum—separate from the values of their school, community, supporters, or state staff. Two key implications for instructors include collaborative evaluation of local programs and honest engagement with local supporters.

Considering the values and stakeholders identified in this study, teachers can evaluate *which values* and *whose values* are most influencing their program’s learning environment. If “upholding values” is insisted upon by instructors without critical thought given as to which values define their program, this study provides a starting point for evaluation. Identifying and comparing the local programs’ values with those in this study should be done with a curiosity for

which stakeholders hold such values and their expectations for the program. When framed with an organizational understanding, values serve the local instructor beyond being an accountability tool—but a way to clearly define the culture in which students learn and exert their influence. To build a program that is responsive to learners’ needs, taking stock of values should be done with consideration of the program's participants—which values can best support their experiences.

Beyond interactions with state leadership, committees, and teacher associations, instructors also have the opportunity to gain direction from local community stakeholders—those supporters who attribute values to SBAE that they have historically observed and anticipate students will embody. While values like citizenship, respect, and work ethic can be seen forming activities in SBAE, honest engagement with community members should discuss how these values might be applied and supported beyond the classroom and SBAE experiences. To one community supporter, “citizenship” may mean celebrating American pride, and the same value might infer to another supporter the serving of neighbors who have differing backgrounds.

Holding the values identified in this study as an example, instructors should seek to have honest conversations with their program’s supporters to gain clarity on what values they attribute to SBAE and what they expect will influence students. As noted above, instructors have the final say in which values will be highlighted and upheld in their programs. Rather than assuming the values of community members, instructors can aim for shared definitions of values and explain their instructional methods based upon a shared understanding.

Application for SBAE Leadership and Colorado Team Ag Ed

This study provides a value framework for strategic planning for Team Ag Ed, however, with such strategy comes the consideration of why and how stakeholders should be regarded in

Colorado SBAE. With the Colorado Team Ag Ed's prompting of this study to identify values, there is still more work to move from strategic espousal of values to understanding the obligations to stakeholders framed by the values of Colorado's SBAE community. This study was able to lay a framework of stakeholder engagement within SBAE based on the recognition of the importance of values. While the findings only represent a handful of state-wide stakeholders, it can inform conversations about how educational priorities are set—if truly through collaboration with stakeholders at the local program level or through a high-level committee seeking values that affirm their decisions.

Having a clearer focus on the values of stakeholder groups in SBAE, further empowering of local agricultural education programs should develop a framework for regularly soliciting stakeholder input on values and activities. Team Ag Ed might encourage replication of this study on a local scale by instructors—either through a questionnaire or roundtable discussion. State-level leadership lacks the capacity to sustain relationships with every local supporter of SBAE programs but can establish tools for local conversations to consider which values are most influential in program activities. Additionally, espousing the values found by leadership in this study should extend past the board room—making the leadership-prioritized values publicly known.

Applications for Accessible Education and Community Leaders

Beyond Colorado SBAE and Team Ag Ed, this study of stakeholder values recognizes the efforts towards emboldened stakeholder engagement across community development, education, and administration. Identifying values and their application is a useful tool for practitioners of informal education and resource delivery in contexts such as Cooperative Extension. Led by the mission of providing pathways to education and resources to thrive in all aspects of life,

Extension faculty and specialists provide educational programming that is responsive to residents' and communities' needs across the entire state.

Considering diverse stakeholder values influencing educational programming is essential when considering how Extension educational programming is not limited to one topic, age group, or mode. By conducting values assessments with community members, educational programming can be girded with an understanding of how values impact educational offerings and community culture. Additionally, efforts to engage community members in recognizing their personally held values can prompt an understanding of how values impact and influence their belonging and connection to their community. While an organizing institutional structure such as Colorado State University Extension can allow for a high-level espousal of values, community-level educators should develop a keen awareness of the unique expression of values amongst the diverse learners and community members they routinely connect with.

Personal Application

Understanding the needs and values of agricultural stakeholders has been my passion since beginning my higher education journey at Colorado State University in 2018. The goal of pursuing my bachelor's degree in landscape architecture in the College of Agricultural Sciences was twofold— knowing how communities are impacted through designed spaces and considering how best practices might be implemented in planning rural and agricultural infrastructure. Through various leadership positions at CSU, connecting with diverse stakeholders has provided insights into how shared values can lead to powerful, collective action. All too often, however, voices of stakeholders in agriculture and rural communities have limited platforms for expressing their values and identifying how others share their values. Conducting this study of values in SBAE provides an additional avenue for understanding the perspectives of

stakeholders adjacent to rural and agricultural communities and framing these needs through the lens of organizational management and community engagement.

Conclusion

Defining the roles of stakeholders in School-Based Agricultural Education and identifying key community values helps build informed decision-making and shape supportive educational environments. This study captured the values and aligned activities shaping the culture of SBAE in Colorado as seen through its diverse stakeholders—instructors, community members, and state leadership. As values help unite different perspectives held across the SBAE community, applying Stakeholder Theory through the lens of community organizing uplifts stakeholders' roles to influence, support, and drive SBAE culture. With implications for local and state decision-makers, namely local instructors, further stakeholder engagement can take the values and activities identified and use them to direct best practices and work to thoroughly define and highlight core values in the educational contexts of SBAE.

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ESSAY II - WORKING ACROSS DIVERGENT VALUES IN COLORADO SBAE

Introduction

Defining issues with values clarifies community-based decision-making and addresses diverse perspectives to effect change. In public institutions, values help characterize groups and foster connections. Agricultural education offers a unique perspective on shared values, especially within School-Based Agricultural Education (SBAE) in Colorado. Essay 1 explored how communities can be unified around a common set of stakeholders' shared values and applied activities. This essay explores how stakeholder engagement can aim for the cohesive application of organizational values even when expressed and prioritized differently across the SBAE community. When values are recognized and managed through responsive community organizing and leadership, SBAE can aim to build respectful and thriving stakeholder relationships.

Building community resilience requires consistent, deliberate, and solution-seeking engagement to understand how perspectives and priorities enable or disrupt action. This “thick” engagement (Carcasson, 2020) aims to better develop well-reasoned efforts through strategic interactions rather than deferring to the dreaded “public comment” sessions all too familiar in board rooms. The effectiveness of SBAE in Colorado depends on connections, decisions, and actions beyond the classroom that involve community members, instructors, and leaders. Building networks of belonging through this engagement leads to connections that develop strong social capital (Putnam, 2001). While stakeholders often share a common vision, differing expressions and definitions of values can create tensions. Responsive leadership should develop forums for developing and defining mutual visions to improve educational programming.

When stakeholders agree on similar values to drive their common actions, a starting point for building sustainable community action is realized. Moving beyond the identification of values and considering how to manage polarities between cohesive or divergent values is a challenge for either a leader or community member. As common goals might govern a community such as agricultural education, assuming that all stakeholders (a.k.a. community members) prioritize the exact same values or hold identical definitions of shared values is problematic.

As noted by Gallent & Ciaffi (2014), “the lived reality is that communities seldom speak with a single voice, and that conflict is part and parcel of the make-up of dynamic social groups constituted on networks of social exchange” (p. 7). Seen in essay 1, SBAE community members consider the values of work, leadership, respect, and service as central to the efforts of developing young agriculturalists. Questioning why these values matter and how they should be upheld leads to potentially divided opinions. This division can be alleviated through modes of dialogue and perspective-sharing such as deliberative inquiry. Creating further understanding might also be seen through debate—to prove one side’s “correctness,” activism—to raise awareness of the impacts of division, or resorting to apathy and inaction.

Resilient communities require that stakeholders maintain the capacity to engage seemingly divergent viewpoints in order to work together towards common objectives (Berkes & Roff, 2012). The decision-makers on the state, regional, and local levels of Colorado SBAE have varying responsibilities to impact actions within the three circles of agricultural education—Classroom/Laboratory, Supervised Agricultural Experiences, and FFA/Leadership (*Agricultural Education*, n.d.). A look into expressions of organizational values helps frame how stakeholders

in SBAE apply their values within the community they support, and therefore how to address divisions.

Organizational Expression of Values

Organizations are responsible for determining the values that characterize their culture and upholding the values held by their members. Managing the expression of these values to uphold both is important. In their study of the role of values in organizational management, Bourne and Jenkins (2013), propose four forms in which organizations find their values—espoused, attributed, shared, and aspirational.

Espoused and Attributed Values

The first two value forms, espoused and attributed, are unique in their ability to direct the perception of the overall values of the organization, however, are not necessarily agreed upon by the entire membership. Espoused values “reflect values that are specifically endorsed by management or the organization at large; close to 90% of organizations across numerous countries have written documents stating espoused corporate values” (Ostroff et al., 2013). As Pruzan notes “It is both meaningful and efficacious to ascribe the competency for conscious and intentional behavior, including formulating and expressing values and visions, to collectivities of individuals, to organizations” (Pruzan, 2001). Bourne and Jenkins label this ascribing of values as “attributed values” by members of the organization who observe its past patterns (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013).

Shared and Aspirational Values

The value forms of shared and aspirational represent a broader ownership and expression of the values by the organization’s members. A system of shared values is said to exist when “a

number of key or pivotal values concerning organization-related behaviors and state-of-affairs are shared—across units and levels—by members of an organization” (Wiener, 1988). Finally, aspirational values are those values that members of the organization believe ought to become the values. “Importantly, the locus of aspirational values is at the level of the members; unlike espoused values,” write Bourne and Jenkins, “they are not necessarily endorsed by top managers and instead may emerge from anywhere in an organization” (p. 502). A graphic of how these organizational value types operate within SBAE is seen in Figure 2.1 (included in Appendix A).

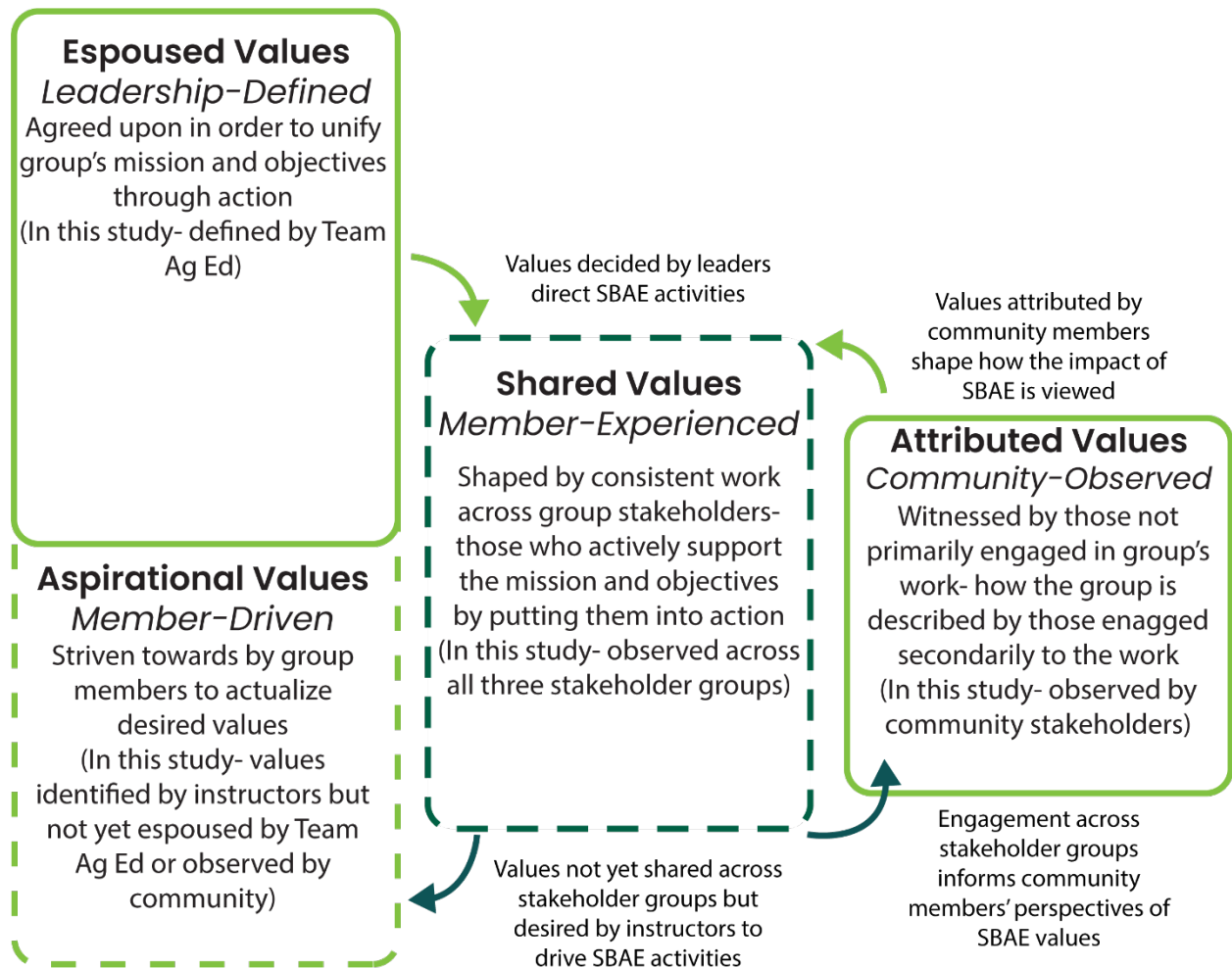


Figure 2.1

Organizational Framing of Colorado SBAE Values Across Stakeholders

Value Expression in Colorado SBAE

Applying organizational value types frames a deeper look into how shared stakeholder values might be expressed to create a more thriving community in SBAE. Espoused values in Colorado SBAE are decided upon by the governing institutions and organizations, most notably, Colorado Team Ag Ed. While overseeing the policy translated into planning and programming for regional and local programs, Team Ag Ed has the responsibility of staying informed on needs and opportunities across the state that define the vision for SBAE in Colorado.

Community members who are not explicitly involved in the everyday activities of SBAE provide helpful guidance by sharing historical, community, and industry contexts that support the activities of the local SBAE program. By attributing values to the work of SBAE, stakeholders in the local community shape the reputation of agricultural education by sharing what they observe and hope to see as the outcomes of agricultural education across the three circles. Whether providing a career presentation, attending an FFA banquet, or sponsoring an SAE project, community stakeholders are invited to engage with students and observe how implemented programming affects students.

The community of agricultural education is formed by those holding a shared knowledge and understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and benefits of training students for careers in agriculture. When leaders, instructors, and the local community agree on the most important ideas to uphold in SBAE, shared values can be observed. “The [prioritization] of planning,” notes Gallent & Ciaffi, D. (2014), “requires community groups to [recognize] the longer-term pressures that are faced and the possibility that, through the articulation of collective vision and will, those pressures can be mitigated or opportunities grasped” (p. 131). These values extend beyond the reputation of agricultural programs or FFA events; shared values display the

intentions of the SBAE community and lead to collective action. From planning educational events to developing policies that guide teacher practices, shared values reflect the diverse support and work of agricultural education.

While espoused, attributed, and shared values reflect the perspectives created through previous actions and behaviors, aspirational values represent those ideas that members of the SBAE community believe ought to be the aim for the impacts of agricultural education. As leadership espouses values to promote action and community stakeholders relay what values SBAE should produce, SBAE instructors are responsible for uplifting aspirational values. Leadership committees oversee value-informed organizational priorities. Community stakeholders observe the impacts of quality agricultural education. Daily work by instructors, however, is the mechanism for transforming aspirational values from goals into realities that can be observed over time. As values are expressed and incorporated into the educational environment, instructors must consider how societal norms and cultural shifts impact the values upheld in SBAE.

Study of Core Values in Colorado SBAE

Organizational values can be identified through intentional stakeholder engagement. In 2023, Colorado Team Ag Ed sought the technical assistance of CSU Agricultural Education to identify the core values of Colorado SBAE to inform strategic planning efforts. The study of these values provided insights into the values held in and across the different groups that support and facilitate SBAE programs.

A study of 48 Colorado SBAE stakeholders was conducted to identify the values and aligned activities considered most important. Stakeholders recruited from across Colorado represented instructors (n=16), community members (referred to as “stakeholders” in this study) (n=15), and Colorado Team Ag Ed (n=17). An open-ended survey questionnaire, piloted for accuracy by non-subjects in the CSU Agricultural Education program, allowed participants to write in the values and activities that align to those values. The inductive coding of qualitative data was validated by members of the CSU Agricultural Education program, and the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Data was analyzed collectively across all stakeholder groups and exclusively within respective groups. This study produced a cross-section set of values and activities that show both consistency and divergence across the three groups. This information is useful in describing and defining the work of Colorado School-Based Agricultural Education through the lens of organizational value expression for stakeholder engagement.

While seeking to find shared values, different stakeholder groups expressed mixed levels of which values they viewed as most important—seen through frequency counts. The shared values identified in this study portray the common experiences in Colorado SBAE—especially when paired with the SBAE activities submitted in connection to the values. Considering how values are identified as “core” by only one or two groups highlights how a lack of consistency across all groups might impact policy, planning, and programming. Keeping stakeholder roles in mind allows for a realistic scope of considering how values are expressed across a community.

Findings of SBAE Stakeholder Values Study

Core values are expressed and framed differently by members of any organization, and the stakeholders associated with Colorado SBAE are no exception (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987, p. 554; Bourne & Jenkins, 2013). Analysis of data showed a broad diversity of unique values

(n=93) and unique aligned activities (n=247) being shared as important to Colorado SBAE. Of the values submitted, ten exhibited agreement across the three groups (See Table 2.1). From a broad range of activities submitted, only eight showed agreement amongst all three stakeholder groups (See Table 2.2). For the top values (n=10), a wide range of activities were mentioned (n=42) and can be seen in Appendix C. Values mentioned twice or more are seen in Appendix B.

Table 2.1

Mentions of Top Ten Values by Respective Sample Group

Value	Total (f)	Mentions by Team Ag Ed (f)	Mentions by Teachers (f)	Mentions by Stakeholders (f)
Leadership	19	6	5	8
Respect	16	3	9	4
Integrity	13	5	3	5
Work Ethic	11	2	4	5
Community	10	2	3	5
Relevant Curriculum	6	3	2	1
Honesty	5	3	1	1
Relationships	4	1	1	2
Purpose	4	2	1	1
Passion	3	1	1	1

Table 2.2

SBAE Activity Mentions Aligned to Shared Values Across all Sample Groups by Sample Group

Activities	Total (f)	Team Ag Ed (f)	Teachers (f)	Stakeholders (f)
CDE	46	26	16	4
SAE	41	26	13	2
LDE	37	23	13	1
Community Service	28	9	16	3
Classroom	20	11	7	2
Classwork	7	4	1	2
Official Dress	6	3	1	2
Relevant Curriculum	3	1	1	1

Ninety percent of all participants (n=43) saw a value they consider most important to SBAE within the top 10 shared values. This representation included 100% of instructors, 87% of community members, and 82% of Team Ag Ed. Considering how these 10 values lead to action and programming in Colorado SBAE, a wide array of 28 activities was produced to align with the values. When seeking to know which values *and* activities aligned across all stakeholder groups, a list of 8 activities resulted: Career Development Events, Supervised Agricultural Experiences, Leadership Development Events, Community Service, Classroom, Classwork, Official Dress, and Relevant Curriculum.

Separating the mentions of values and activities by stakeholder groups explores which respective groups hold similar values and activities as most important to SBAE. While “respect” was mentioned across all three groups, it was comparatively top of mind for teachers, with 9 mentions. Similarly, “leadership” was submitted as a core value by over half of the participating community members (stakeholders). Team Ag Ed and Teachers mentioned numerous activities for each value, while community members (stakeholders) listed fewer—most likely due to less interaction with the numerous events associated with SBAE.

In addition to finding shared values across all three stakeholder groups, exclusion of particular values to just one or two groups was observed (see Tables 2.3-2.5). Knowing that each group provided unique values allows for a more comprehensive framing of how values build community in an organizational setting. While Team Ag Ed’s most-mentioned value of “tradition” received seven mentions, this value wasn’t even mentioned by SBAE instructors. Similarly, instructors mentioned the value of “family,” which was unique to their group—not being mentioned by either Team Ag Ed or stakeholders. One of the values found to be unique to community members was “experience,” with four mentions.

Table 2.3*Top Values by Team Ag Ed*

Value	<i>f</i>	Value	<i>f</i>
Tradition	7	Hard Work	2
Leadership	6	Purpose	2
Service	5	Dedication	2
Integrity	5	Employment Skills	2
Empowerment	4	Career Readiness	2
Honesty	3	Strategic	2
Relevant Curriculum	3	Kindness	2
Respect	3	Community	2
Opportunity	2	Work Ethic	2

Table 2.4*Top Values by Instructors*

Value	<i>f</i>	Value	<i>f</i>
Respect	9	Relevant Curriculum	2
Leadership	5	Loyalty	2
Hard Work	4	Inclusivity	2
Work Ethic	4	Resilience	2
Service	3	Dedication	2
Learning	3	Growth	2
Empowerment	3	Sustainability	2
Family	3	Kindness	2
Community	3	Individuality	2
Integrity	3	Accountability	2
Education	2		

Table 2.5*Top Values by Stakeholders*

Value	<i>f</i>	Value	<i>f</i>
Leadership	8	Learning	3
Work Ethic	5	Accountability	3
Community	5	Ethics	2
Integrity	5	Friendship	2
Respect	4	Career Readiness	2
Experience	4	Relationships	2
Tradition	3	Dependability	2
Work	3	Innovation	2

Because the diversity of stakeholders sampled represents varying connections to the work of SBAE from state planning to local programs, differences between groups' value lists are expected. Similarities between the groups speaks to the level of cohesion in how the work of SBAE is viewed across leadership, instructors, and community members. The values mentioned by instructors (the primary workers in SBAE), but not yet shared across the groups—especially with leaders, help determine the aspirational values of the community (Bourne & Jenkins, 2013).

Divergent Values between Sample Groups

A comparison between the previous lists of values shows that the frequency of value mentions across all sample groups and in the respective groups do not necessarily align. For example, while the value of “tradition” was mentioned by both Team Ag Ed (n=7) and Stakeholders (n=3), it was left unmentioned by Instructors. While this suggests that “tradition” is not *strongly* valued among SBAE Instructors, it cannot be assumed that tradition is never upheld in the local SBAE program. Similarly, the absence of “kindness” being mentioned by the Stakeholder group should not lead to an assumption that community members don't want youth to be kind. “Kindness” was simply not a top-of-mind value that they attributed to the outcomes of their local SBAE program. Of the top forty-eight (48) values, twenty-seven (27) received at least one mention across two sample groups. Although not observed across each sample group, nine (9) values received two or more mentions by two sample groups. See Table 2.6 below for how these nine values were shared across at least two groups but not all three. Noting these similarities and differences allows for a discussion on how the SBAE community might approach values prioritized differently across the SBAE network of stakeholders.

Table 2.6*Values Mentioned at Least Twice Across Only Two Sample Groups*

Value	Total	Mentions by Team Ag Ed (f)	Mentions by Teachers (f)	Mentions by Stakeholders (f)
Tradition	10	7	0	3
Service	8	5	3	0
Empowerment	7	4	3	0
Hard Work	6	2	4	0
Learning	6	0	3	3
Accountability	5	0	2	3
Career				
Readiness	4	2	0	2
Kindness	4	2	2	0
Dedication	4	2	2	0

Gaining Shared Understanding Through Values

As seen in the study findings, ten values were “shared” between the three primary stakeholder groups studied. Having identified these values, the theoretical framework of the organizational expression of values can be applied (see Figure 2.2). Shared values lend insights into the cohesion of priorities of different stakeholder groups. The impacts of differing values upon relationships and responsibilities between groups should be considered in maintaining a resilient community. Framing values in an organizational context is helpful insofar as the roles of different groups are established and there is a willingness to define identified values and their implications further.

Organizational values assist in the work of how and who directs policy, planning, and programming. If members of stakeholder groups lack a shared understanding of values, conflict may result. Additionally, certain value types might become unrightfully expressed by certain groups—i.e. a program’s advisory committee considers their values as authoritative state-level

espoused values. Leadership that seeks to build a dynamic application of values will identify the organizational expression of the values being considered as a lens to further consider how values impact action.

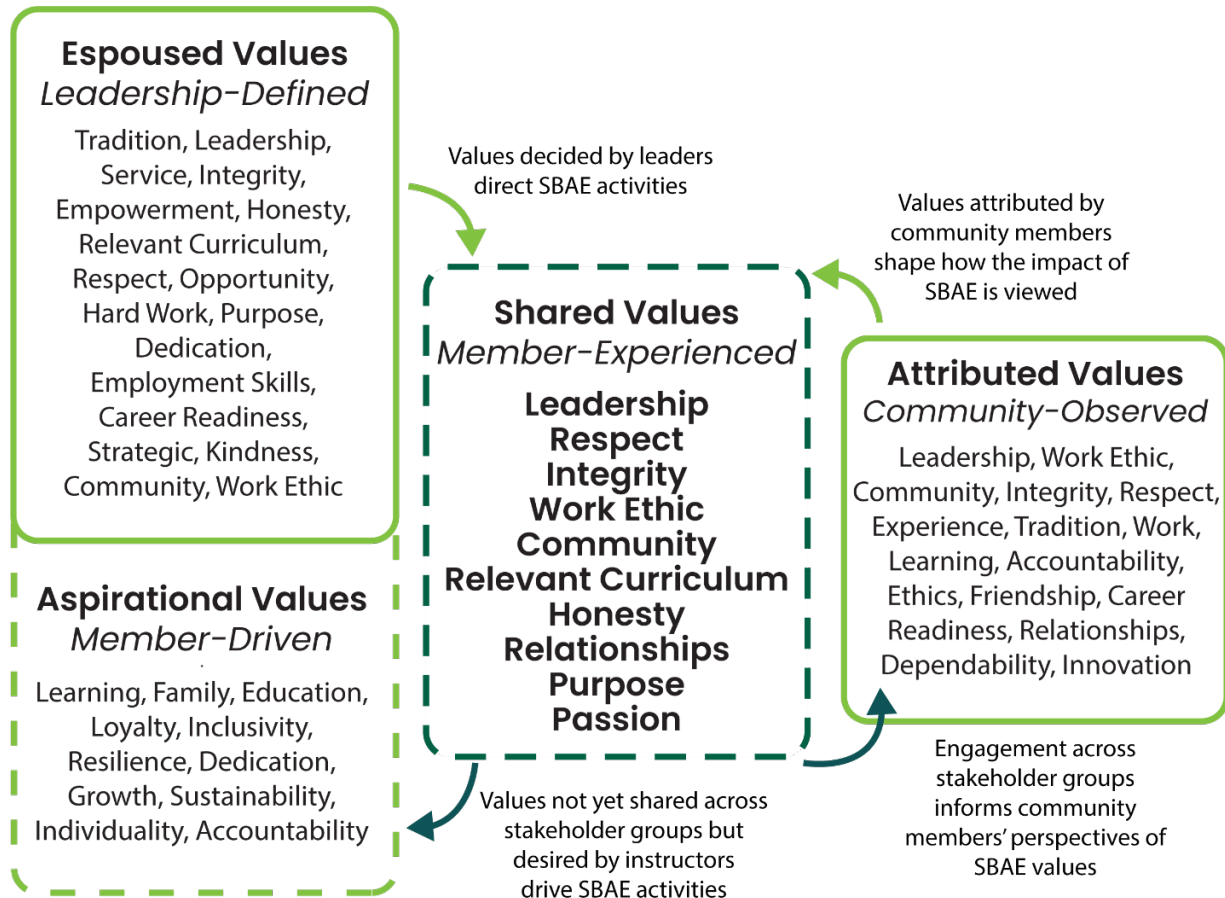


Figure 2.2

Values Across SBAE Stakeholders Applied to an Organizational Programmatic Framing

Not all groups have the opportunity or organizational capacity to identify values and recognize the tensions at play when values are prioritized differently or not acknowledged at all. Several symptoms that values held are in tension include people feeling attacked, values being used to vilify rather than inform, and decision-making being polarized into divergent viewpoints. When value tensions are addressed by leadership and the community, resolution might look like

attacking problems rather than people, using values to inform and appreciate perspectives rather than coerce or convince, and framing issues with “and” between values rather than “or.”

Focusing on “And” Rather than “Or”

De-polarizing values to focus on the issues and needs within communities involves a reframing of how values are held by stakeholders. Values identified as “shared” between groups don’t constitute a consistent prioritization and can lead to certain values dominating others—resulting in difficult, polarizing choices (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). If SBAE stakeholders hold the shared value of “relevant curriculum”, and a dominating focus on “tradition” is espoused by Team Ag Ed, instruction in modern agricultural skills is at risk. Open recognition and dialogue on values held within a community allow values to be managed rather than dominating and leading to polarized realities. Rather than taking an “all-this” or “all-that” approach, values supported together can promote an “and” mentality—such as upholding both tradition *and* opportunity (Johnson, 2020).

While values can be weaponized to defend or attack positions, the diverse values influencing SBAE experiences should be considered for their role in shaping the cultures that support young people toward lifelong pursuits. As Johnson notes, if conflicts arise between groups due to polarities between values, not only are both sides “right,” they both need each other’s wisdom to be successful over time” (2020, p. 7). Stakeholders seeking to defend historically-espoused values such as “work ethic” should also seek to understand those values emerging in SBAE such as “sustainability.” Rather than resorting to calling unfamiliar or less-prioritized values as “against” the work of SBAE, principled community engagement utilizes values beyond acknowledging cultural realities and instead calls for value tensions to be met with purposeful observation, stories, and personal reflection.

Leveraging Shared Values

Sustaining communities of support relies on the recognition of resilience (or lack thereof) and systems to build a greater capacity for resilience. Capacity building within a community or organization requires committed actions directed at understanding the needs of affected stakeholders. As noted by Cafer, et al., “In order to build capacity at multiple levels, stakeholders at all levels must be engaged, and this often requires challenging dominant power structures (Christens & Speer, 2015, cited in Cafer, et al., 2019, pg. 20). If building resilience in communities requires an emphasis away from traditional authoritative structures onto stakeholder engagement, how should quality engagement be approached to address values?

Work in community engagement and deliberation provides the useful duality of “thick” and “thin” participation (Carcasson, 2020). These categories assist in structuring actions while taking on differing methods of participation—“thin” engagement allowing opinion sharing through survey, emails, and hearings, whereas “thick” engagement calls for more time, interaction and effort. “Thicker engagement shifts from mere participant input to genuine opportunities for mutual understanding, learning, creativity, and, ultimately, co-creation” (Carcasson, 2020, pp. 9-10). For SBAE, avenues for input and engagement are often seen through community member participation in advisory groups, FFA chapter dinners, and supporting SAE projects.

Applying a view of deliberative inquiry on value tensions in a community helps uncover the necessary work of regular, intentional stakeholder engagement—providing opportunities for community members to consider the challenges facing their community and what actions are most effective and beneficial. As discussed by Carcasson and Sprain, deliberative inquiry combines policy analysis with structured interactions with relevant parties—with an “eye toward

identifying and supporting the move to action by a broad range of actors” (2016, p. 2). To address the challenging problems of how to develop a highly skilled agriculture workforce, instructors are often positioned as “conveners” of stakeholder perspectives desiring to inform and influence local action.

As the roles of actors within the SBAE community are further defined, the reliance on just one cross-sectional study of values should be challenged through “thicker” engagement—identifying values, managing polarities, and promoting action informed by stakeholder input. Creating intentional interactions allows SBAE stakeholders to discuss what values are in tension and how values are shaping the diverse efforts of agricultural education. These spaces might appear as personal conversations, round table conversations, board meetings, or surveys. “Thick” engagement requires continued intention and responsibility among instructors and community members to leverage values toward beneficial actions in SBAE.

Implications

When rightly handled, the values of the SBAE community can prompt proactive community engagement to inform local actions while building social capital. Framing policy rifts between stakeholders as differing value priorities instead of personal attacks can lead SBAE instructors, supporters, and leaders to cultivate effective decision-making processes. Because SBAE creates a unique culture based on shared responsibility and supporting the next generation of agricultural leaders, influential values should be highlighted across stakeholders. While recognizing values and their priorities is a great place to start, sustained community engagement will allow for values to truly inform and affect changes in the SBAE community.

Application for Instructors

To build a cohesive approach to upholding values in local SBAE programs, instructors should utilize shared values and activities to drive local activities (including engagement with local stakeholders). By providing the list of values found in this study to instructors (such as Figure 2), local programs can consider which values are most influential in planning and practice. Through consistent consulting of values and their organizational types of expression, instructors can inform a specific mission and vision statement that can be posted in their classrooms. Additionally, instructors can use the identified values and activities to have more informed, deliberative conversations with advisory committees and local community supporters.

Application for Team Ag Ed and Colorado SBAE

Beyond those espoused by leadership, the values seen in this study should be utilized in all strategic planning and training activities. Sharing these values broadly can uplift the espoused values by which Team Ag Ed defines and promotes the work of SBAE in Colorado. The programmatic directives and standards from Team Ag Ed should align with the aligned values and activities—from CDEs to community service projects to classroom instruction. Additionally, state leadership should consider how values are defined and informed differently across the state to support proactive engagement. As more attention and autonomy are provided to the local program, value conflicts can be resolved locally, and value alignment can inform interactions with state leadership.

Application for Higher Education Programs in Agricultural Education

As seen through this case study on values in SBAE, systems of support for communities should improve the capacity to use values to combat and inform polarized viewpoints on issues

and actions. Within a Land Grant institution such as Colorado State University (CSU), the work done on behalf of Colorado residents incorporates inherent values into education, research, extension and service. The beauty of a Land-Grant System is that, while espoused values of University leadership might dictate mission and action priorities, Extension Offices can be empowered to create local resources that reflect the values and desires of the local community. Just as an SBAE instructor is a convener of perspectives on agricultural education practices, Extension Faculty and Specialists interact with a wide cross-section of their county or region. By clearly defining organizational values through engaged leadership, soliciting stakeholder input on values can further address stakeholder tensions to motivate informed community action.

As an institution with a mission to serve and support communities statewide, CSU develops very beneficial research to explain the issues affecting agriculture (and other sciences). Finding common ground through values can establish pathways for dialogue and exploration of today's pressing issues to promote community connection and inform collaborative action.

Personal Application

Throughout my time working on this study of stakeholder values in SBAE, I have been provided valuable opportunities to acknowledge and identify when values might be misaligned within communities. Whether in agricultural education, University administration, high school instruction, or community development, honest recognition of diverse values takes effort and commitment to long-term engagement. When stakeholder groups are excluded or diminished in their held values, community policies are based on assumptions and limited to shallow input instead of pursuing groups intentionally to gain more understanding.

I've witnessed community members' excitement when they feel seen in their values and know that sharing their perspectives will contribute to a significant conversation. Building social capital in local communities relies upon leaders to have the tools to inform decision-making processes with diverse values while facilitating purposeful conversations that bring together differing perspectives. As I support formal and informal education and community development, ensuring that pathways for "thick" stakeholder engagement are present will always be a priority in promoting resilient communities that leverage shared values to sustain collaborative action.

Conclusion

As the Colorado SBAE community seeks to inform policy and activities with the perspectives of its members, the methods of stakeholder engagement matter. Identifying shared values through this study can promote further conversations on which values are truly influencing SBAE culture. However, recognizing the differing prioritization of values held among stakeholders leads to an awareness of what action should be taken to clarify priorities and stakeholder roles in defining organizational vision. Maintaining "thick" community engagement leads to increased community capacity to drive action with values in collaborative ways. Holding the findings of this study as a foundation for how different stakeholder groups view values in SBAE, key actors at the local program level should endeavor to build sustainable rhythms of engagement and input to identify, manage, and leverage values to inform beneficial action.

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ESSAY III - APPLYING SBAE STAKEHOLDER VALUES TO SUPPORT MOTIVATION

Introduction

It is important to understand how motivation and autonomy—coupled with values, can form a sustainable culture in education. Self Determination Theory points to how autonomy-supportive cultures help meet basic psychological needs rather than upholding domineering leadership and external reward-based achievement. Rather than seeking to control behaviors from an external force, a critical task for SBAE leadership is to foster self-driven action by identifying the values at play in agricultural education and enabling support around activities that promote the values.

Proactive communities implement stakeholder values to build systems of support. Recognizing stakeholders' unique identities and responsibilities is the first step in strategic application, or “leveraging,” of values to achieve desired impacts. A close next step is recognizing how shared stakeholder values lead to developing a common vision for collaborative action to occur (Gallent & Ciaffi, 2014). Supporting sustained behaviors in organizations follow a specific sequence of activities: 1) stakeholder identification, 2) identifying common and diverging viewpoints, 3) understanding how to prioritize actions that motivate sustained behavior. Essays 1 and 2 focused on how to recognize the importance of stakeholder input and how to manage the diverse values of stakeholders in building resilient communities. The purpose of this essay is to consider how values identified in Colorado SBAE can be used to inform motivation within the actions of SBAE stakeholders to build a thriving educational community.

Supporting the Needs of the SBAE Community

In SBAE, a unique culture and community is formed between community members, agricultural education instructors, students, and program leaders. Each different stakeholder has a role to play in facilitating impactful learning. Stakeholders must consider the values and needs of the community, individuals, and organizations involved in SBAE in order to make learning authentic. These insights explain the development of motivation for sustained action.

The theory of Self-Determination points to how strong cultures of support center around supporting basic psychological needs rather than upholding domineering leadership and external reward-based achievement. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) maintains that thwarting any of these three basic needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness, “is seen as damaging to motivation and wellness” (2020, pg. 1). Rather than seeking to control behaviors from an external force, SDT looks at how internal motivations are fostered.

The building blocks of SDT are built upon the foundation of three basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). How these needs are met leads to an understanding of how motivation is sourced to initiate actions and sustain behaviors. SDT research in the educational field has primarily focused on how educational settings meet or frustrate these needs in a particular context (Ryan & Deci, 2020, pg. 1). Before looking at how these needs relate to the values expressed by SBAE stakeholders and commenting on broader leadership implications, an overview of these basic needs and SDT’s types of effective motivation is helpful.

Developing Effective Motivation

Determining how values motivate actions lays a foundation for SBAE that goes beyond informing organizational management to reveal deeper connections in a responsible community. The first need that Ryan and Deci have defined in SDT is autonomy. “Autonomy,” write Ryan and Deci, “concerns a sense of initiative and ownership in one’s actions. It is supported by experiences of interest and value and undermined by experiences of being externally controlled, whether by rewards or punishments” (2020, pg. 1). Support of decisions and behaviors as autonomous rather than controlled can result in greater motivation. Values in SBAE can frame autonomous behaviors or can be top-down and lead to less agency in the SBAE community.

The second need that Ryan and Deci maintain in SDT is competence. Competence concerns the feeling of mastery, a sense that one can succeed and grow. “The need for competence is best satisfied within well-structured environments that afford optimal challenges, positive feedback, and opportunities for growth” (Ryan & Deci, 2020, pg. 1).

The third need that SDT implies is relatedness. “Relatedness concerns a sense of belonging and connection. It is facilitated by conveyance of respect and caring” (Ryan & Deci, 2020, pg. 1). In building organizations and communities that foster relationships, avenues for open communication and genuine connection (as opposed to membership in name only) provide ways to achieve this need.

Meeting the psychological needs of community members in SBAE—including instructors, community supporters, and students, promotes an internal regulation of actions. Providing the support to act autonomously and feel supported towards sustained action is seen through relationships and authority structures that inform and impact the work of education. If aiming to foster more supportive educational communities, SBAE stakeholders—instructors,

community members, and leadership should consider how their actions and desired policy decisions meet the needs of fellow stakeholders.

Regulating Motivations

SDT is focused on how support of internal, psychological needs can be conducted in differing environments—supporting more autonomous, sustainable behaviors. The differing ways that these needs are supported fall upon a spectrum from “amotivation” to “extrinsic motivation” to “intrinsic motivation.” (Ryan & Deci, 2020, pg. 2). Perception of personal control correlates with different motivations; with “amotivation” holding an impersonal control of motivation, “extrinsic” motivation ranging from external control to internal control, and “intrinsic” motivation being characterized by internal control.

Controlling motivations, though, is not as simple as increasing self-awareness, asking others for control of activities, or taking action absent of interdependence. Studying motivations must constantly consider the external impacts and relationships that someone cannot control—the relational and cultural context in which the activities take place. While confidence might exist for members of a community to take responsibility for their actions and act with levels of independence, leaders who desire to create a supportive environment for collaborative work should consider what cultural factors are impacting motivation.

In the research fields of organizational, personnel, and leadership management, studying SDT principles applied to leadership observes how autonomous-supportive environments encourage less organizational stress and improve worker satisfaction toward retention. As noted by Stone, Ryan and Deci, supporting workers’ autonomy leads to more internalized rules, standards and procedures—allowing workers to “act creatively, proactively and of their own

“accountabilism” mindsets rather than autonomous teaching and learning (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). Alternatively, when educational guidelines and standards are scarce, instructors’ autonomy is hindered due to incohesive leadership and feeling like they are always behind.

In the field of agricultural education, studies examining need-supportive academic environments largely focus on student outcomes rather than the influence of SBAE stakeholders. Examples of how motivation is discussed among students include a look at student motivation in Career Development Events by Bird, et al. and the efficacy of teacher career choice seen through the FIT-Choice® Model framework of Watt & Richardson (2007). As noted by the study of Bird et al., sustained involvement in Career Development Events was the result of maintaining or shifting to internal regulatory factors, with instructors as catalysts for this shift in motivation. Studies on career choices in agricultural education, such as Ingram et al. (2018), use FIT-Choice® models to focus on Expected Value Theory in the sense of career aspiration. Research on agricultural education methods and educational psychology lacks an emphasis on the role of core values in self-determination and using stakeholder values to inform supportive educational communities.

Core Values and Self-Determination

If we can see, then, that support of psychological needs fosters longevity in action and satisfaction in work and behaviors, additional framing to define these needs in a common cultural context can be seen through values and their expressions. Core values is a term often used in organizational management and marketing. Defining how these values are expressed and who determines values for a particular group is seen through the lens of Basic Human Values. In framing the Theory of Basic Human Values, Schwartz characterizes values as: “(a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviors, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d)

guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance” (Schwartz et al., 1987).

Values express the ideas that shape and inform actions. Knowing that motivation is a foundational building block for taking action, an examination of motivating factors in a community context can consider how supporting values might foster co-creation. While SDT helps explain how support of needs (or lack of support) prompts or hinders actions, values describe the realities desired or observed through these actions. The relationships of motivation defined in these theories are inseparable.

Studying Motivation and Values

As support of psychological needs fosters longevity in action and satisfaction in work and behaviors, additional framing to define these needs in a common cultural context can be seen through the lens of values and their expression. As noted by Ryan and Deci, “human needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are universal—they transcend culture and context” (2009, pg. 78). Core values are developed and affirmed through experiences and reflect the ways in which basic needs are met in a social context. How these needs are met develops and affirms a set of values while revealing the extent to which motivation is internally fostered. Recognizing whether the values of a community are shared or externally defined allows for the source of motivation for action to be addressed, reframed, and transformed. Through the support of needs, values are formed and informed, leading to further action.

Study of Core Values in Colorado SBAE

Organizational values can be identified through intentional stakeholder engagement. In 2023, Colorado Team Ag Ed sought the technical assistance of CSU Agricultural Education to

identify the core values of Colorado SBAE to inform strategic planning efforts. The study of these values provided insights into the values held in and across the different groups that support and facilitate SBAE programs.

A study of 48 Colorado SBAE stakeholders was conducted to identify the values and aligned activities considered most important. Stakeholders recruited from across Colorado represented instructors (n=16), community members (referred to as “stakeholders” in this study) (n=15), and Colorado Team Ag Ed (n=17). An open-ended survey questionnaire, piloted for accuracy by non-subjects in the CSU Agricultural Education program, allowed participants to write in the values and activities that align to those values. The inductive coding of qualitative data was validated by members of the CSU Agricultural Education program, and the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Data was analyzed collectively across all stakeholder groups and exclusively within respective groups. This study produced a cross-section set of values and activities that show both consistency and divergence across the three groups. This information is useful in describing and defining the work of Colorado School-Based Agricultural Education through the lens of organizational value expression for stakeholder engagement.

Understanding the values that each of these respective groups hold creates a unique picture of what different stakeholders view as the motivation and impact of SBAE. SBAE instructors merit the highest need for continued support, as they hold a high level of responsibility. A majority (56.25%) of instructors who participated in the study have been teaching for over twelve (12) years, followed by early-career instructors (25%) who have taught three (3) years or less, with mid-career instructors who have taught between four (4) to six (6) years having the least frequent response (18.75%).

In this stakeholder study, 10 values were shared between all three stakeholder groups, as seen through the frequency of mentions. Although 93 unique values were validated across all submissions, the 10 that had consistency across the three groups can be seen in Table 3.1. In alignment with these specific values, the 8 unique activities shared across the three stakeholder groups can be seen in Table 3.2. For full tables of values and activities, see Appendices B and C.

Table 3.1

Mentions of Top Ten Values by Respective Sample Group

Value	Total (f)	Mentions by Team Ag Ed (f)	Mentions by Teachers (f)	Mentions by Stakeholders (f)
Leadership	19	6	5	8
Respect	16	3	9	4
Integrity	13	5	3	5
Work Ethic	11	2	4	5
Community	10	2	3	5
Relevant Curriculum	6	3	2	1
Honesty	5	3	1	1
Relationships	4	1	1	2
Purpose	4	2	1	1
Passion	3	1	1	1

Table 3.2

Top SBAE Activities Aligned to Shared Values Across all Sample Groups by Sample Group

Activities	Total (f)	Team Ag Ed (f)	Teachers (f)	Stakeholders (f)
CDE	46	26	16	4
SAE	41	26	13	2
LDE	37	23	13	1
Community Service	28	9	16	3
Classroom	20	11	7	2
Classwork	7	4	1	2
Official Dress	6	3	1	2
Relevant Curriculum	3	1	1	1

This study sought to discover the values and activities shared across stakeholders in Colorado SBAE and deemed as most important to the work of agricultural education. The cross-section produced in this study considers how stakeholders view values to uphold and the activities/methods in SBAE through which they are upheld. Recognizing the shared values signals support for upholding these values through the continued pursuit and investment of the aligned activities. Exploring the values and activities not shared across all three groups should prompt stakeholders to consider whether the values and activities they view as most important are truly empowering actions within SBAE. Additional efforts should also be made for stakeholders to discuss how they define certain values and view the impact of these definitions.

As stakeholders play distinct, yet connected roles in supporting agricultural education, laying a foundation for collaborative work is aided by the understanding of how values and prioritized activities differ (see Table 3.3) or align between groups. For example, community members and instructors viewed “accountability” as a top value, while this value didn’t appear in Team Ag Ed’s participation. On the other hand, “service” was mentioned by both Team Ag Ed and instructors, but not community members. While the sample of this study is small compared to the growing size of SBAE programs in Colorado, empowering voices in more localized conversations might equip communities to discuss the similarities and differences seen between stakeholders and which values are most important for their specific program to uphold.

Table 3.3*Values Mentioned at Least Twice Across Two Sample Groups*

Value	Total	Mentions by Team Ag Ed (f)	Mentions by Teachers (f)	Mentions by Stakeholders (f)
Tradition	10	7	0	3
Service	8	5	3	0
Empowerment	7	4	3	0
Hard Work	6	2	4	0
Learning	6	0	3	3
Accountability	5	0	2	3
Career				
Readiness	4	2	0	2
Kindness	4	2	2	0
Dedication	4	2	2	0

Building Value-Informed Leadership

As framed by the theories of Self Determination and core values, sustainable environments for work and learning depend upon the ability for motivation to form internally. In considering how these environments are formed and strengthened, values characterize the motives of the influencers who plan, guide, and direct SBAE programming. Autonomous-supportive leadership in the community of SBAE can use values to define their work and support the work of impacted stakeholders. Identifying, defining, discussing, and prioritizing values builds the capacity for communities to engage in honest conversations regarding support of personal and group efforts and how the sharing of values impacts motivation.

In the broader work of community engagement and development, leading groups toward building local capacity for decision-making involves considering how needs are identified and values are prioritized. In “Beyond talk: creating autonomous motivation through self-determination theory,” Ryan and Deci provide six paths of change for leaders and managers to

move their teams' motivation from an extrinsic/impersonal style to intrinsic/internal sustainable motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2009).

These six priorities, as presented by Ryan and Deci, are:

1. Ask open-ended questions and invite participation in problem-solving
2. Actively listen and acknowledge employee perspectives
3. Offer choices within structure, including the clarification of responsibilities
4. Provide sincere, positive feedback that acknowledges initiative and factual, non-judgmental feedback about problems
5. Minimize coercive controls such as rewards and comparison with others
6. Develop talent and share knowledge to enhance competence and autonomy

As the community of agricultural education seeks to encourage experiential education opportunities that reflect stakeholder values and support instructor needs, engaged dialogue can promote shared responsibility and autonomy. SBAE values in this study can embody the six priorities for a pragmatic approach to building autonomous motivation among SBAE stakeholders.

Priority 1: Inviting Diverse Participation in Problem-Solving

Upholding the identified value of “empowerment” can be exemplified through inviting stakeholder contributions that broaden and anchor the context of issues in local perspectives and lead to innovative and relevant solutions. As each SBAE program is shaped by the efforts of the instructor(s), problem-solving and decision-making rely upon the connections between additional stakeholders. Going beyond questions of “yes” or “no” and seeking to consider different

perspectives might prompt extra efforts to discuss, but also, can lead to decision-making reasoned with stakeholders' values and lived experiences. While including more perspectives and opinions into decision making, providing the opportunities to share in the work of decision-making can lead to decisions that aren't limited by a singular view from an instructor or state leader. Discretion as to whom to invite into decision-making activities should be made with the understanding that as participation increases awareness of the impacts of decisions, not all offered insights will be helpful or able to be integrated.

Priority 2: Listening to Understand Perspectives

Colorado Team Ag Ed desired to provide a platform for stakeholders to have their voices heard through the identification of core values in SBAE. Continuing to build authentic and bidirectional communications to inform leadership that is responsive to stakeholders is dependent upon listening to understand the issues impacting programs. Technology can assist with the distribution of surveys, polls, and questionnaires that allow teams to collect and compile information on the activities of SBAE. However, in order to build connections with stakeholders beyond information-gathering, the practice of listening without an immediate response or solution can deepen relationships for longer-term leadership capacity. Each member of Team Ag Ed represents a broader field important to the profession – therefore, it is important that each member feel empowered and supported in the leadership team.

By actively listening—not just collecting performance data, a Team Ag Ed member listening to a passionate instructor, or an instructor listening to a concerned parent can center the values of “honesty” and “respect” in communications. With an identified core value of “learning” in SBAE, stakeholders should consider the opportunity to engage in conversations that explore new and underrepresented viewpoints. Especially considering that each SBAE

instructor has a different pathway in how they arrived at their current position, providing opportunities for them to share their perspectives and experiences is important for creating an understanding of how the culture of SBAE can better support the differing cultural competences in agricultural education.

Priority 3: Offering Choices and Clarifying Responsibilities

The work of preparing agricultural leaders relies upon a variety of investments and roles in SBAE—especially from community supporters. Beyond educators upholding strong standards within agricultural career pathways, the additional members of the SBAE community assist with providing insights and support for ensuring relevant curriculum and quality experiences. Offering a variety of options for stakeholders to participate in decision-making processes should take place regularly. This helps to clearly frame expected outcomes with community stakeholder values in mind. Seen through the identified values of work ethic, loyalty, and responsibility, stakeholders see a clear outcome of SBAE as the importance of work in agriculture—whether pursuing education, gaining new skills, sustaining a career or serving communities. Stakeholders seeking to work with and for SBAE should be provided with clear responsibilities and roles so as not to mistake their personal priorities as what should take precedence over the authority of instructors.

Priority 4: Making Space for Sincere, Positive Feedback

Whether just beginning a teaching career or approaching retirement, being open to feedback requires a level of vulnerability and trust that should be respected and admired. One of the core values of “honesty” in SBAE was identified as of high importance in this study. As the community of SBAE seeks to support one another, providing authentic assessments in a positive

manner is necessary to uphold the value of “honesty” while also ensuring open communication. Asking for feedback from leaders, supporters, and instructors is an invitation to promote collaborative problem-solving and awareness of committed efforts. Being honest about the activities and standards relevant to modern agricultural issues promotes unity around actions and may mitigate the polarizing effects that would otherwise emerge through misinformation or disinformation.

Priority 5: Focusing on Internal Motivation and Minimizing Coercive Controls

Defining, elevating, and sustaining standards is an important task to ensure consistent delivery of academic experiences. Providing proper motivation matters in developing sustainable outcomes and actions. Whether it be an instructor encouraging their students to participate in a Leadership Development Event or a Team Ag Ed member introducing new professional development opportunities, incentives focused on peer comparison and coercion may be perceived as negative alternatives in comparison to positive controls such as incentives and recognition.

If activities in SBAE prioritize the value of “accountability” and never values such as “empowerment,” external regulation of behaviors will drive actions. Focusing on punishing undesired behaviors or answering to subjective standards can lead to an impersonal motivation that sacrifices benefit in order to satisfy leaders’ expectations. When empowerment is prioritized in the SBAE community, local programming can focus on sustaining creative, asset-based decision-making rather than maneuvering deficits and restrictions. Instructors can model this in how they develop a supportive learning environment. Empowerment can direct students towards actions of maintaining high standards of living and working, knowing that when those standards are compromised, accountability must follow (e.g. upholding safety standards in the laboratory).

Priority 6: Developing Talent and Knowledge-Sharing to Enhance Competence and Autonomy

As agriculture faces rapid modernization and demands shifts in response to the next generation, the development of instructors equipped to train a workforce of highly skilled and motivated young people will also need to evolve. With a value like “relevant curriculum” informing motivations in SBAE activities, framing curriculum should consider emerging agricultural competencies as well as the importance of developing purposeful careers. For SBAE instructors who have a deep passion for training up the next generation of agricultural business leaders, developing an underlying competence is necessary to move from following curricular objectives to imparting relevant knowledge and tools gained first-hand in agriculture.

Developing a skillset of best agricultural practices goes beyond passing an exam or earning a certification—skills instructed in the classroom, FFA, or SAEs must align with the real-world implications and consequences of operationalizing those new skills. Encouraging instructors to uphold best practices in agricultural education that adapt to industry standards requires other instructors, community supporters, and organizational leadership to promote a culture of curiosity, humility, and camaraderie. Highlighting instructors who apply best practices, share knowledge, and exemplify displays of competency in agricultural pathways can motivate attitudes toward continuous development and autonomous desire for enhancing instructional practices.

With values and activities from this study, instructors should share with leaders and other SBAE instructors how their program uses values to influence and inform their instructional and program-wide decisions. Evaluating how the values of kindness, service, or honesty are observed among students in their CDEs, SAE, or community service can inform methods that recognize

autonomous motivation from these values rather than applying extrinsic measures to uphold them.

Implications

In the context of SBAE, support of basic needs is not only a valid concern for student motivation but is also important when considering how instructors, leaders, and supporters are empowered to operate within the unique contexts of their institution, classroom, and community. Understanding that values define community and impact motivation, leaders in agricultural education should consider how they are espousing values and whether their efforts to uphold these values are leading to members of their educational community feeling supported.

Within broader community engagement and education contexts, informing strategies with values infuses planning with an accountability mindset that seeks to uphold and support stakeholders. The work of community development must consider community values—from independence to safety to connection to innovation. By leading with values, projects and programs seeking to support communities can be responsive of how those communities see themselves flourishing. Community educational resources such as Cooperative Extension must always be mindful of how they are supporting the needs and values of communities—particularly those who are historically disadvantaged. Growing communities' capacities to co-create and self-govern demands heavy portions of time, trust, empathy, and curiosity.

Application for SBAE Instructors

Beyond identifying values, SBAE instructors should consider how defining values within their program and community can lead to informing motivation in activities. Moving from values as an implied learning outcome to values as guiding behavior during activities helps develop

internally-regulated motivations. Instructing students to keep accurate livestock records for the result of “being honest” keeps the locus of control on an external label, rather than acknowledging behaviors of honesty are affirmed through accurate record books. Infusing lessons and exercises with a clearly defined set of values allows for a deeper acknowledgment of how and whose motivations are driving behaviors.

Instructors who acknowledge how values impact educational environments should further consider how values are discussed in the classroom, FFA, and SAEs. Maintaining a healthy dialogue about values with students helps determine how values prioritized in SBAE are similarly prioritized in other areas of their lives—home, friends, faith, and community. Assuming that SBAE is the only place where values influence behaviors is a short-sighted view of education and positive youth development. Openly recognizing that values shape the culture and standards of the local SBAE program relays to students that values influence communities beyond school and leadership development.

Application for Team Ag Ed and Colorado SBAE Leadership

With an acknowledgment of shared responsibility for how values are expressed and motivate behaviors, state leaders in SBAE should promote values beyond the efforts of “strategic planning.” By clearly defining what values are prioritized and who defines values in SBAE, leaders such as Team Ag Ed and State Officers can reinforce the need to uphold supportive educational environments for instructors, students, and community members alike.

Understanding the interplay of values and activities at both the local and state levels, leadership should consider the most effective methods for building supportive environments for learning—and what sustainable motivation looks like.

Continued exploration of how values impact learner motivation in SBAE can help instructors evaluate key influencers in developing a determined agricultural workforce. Research into how the acknowledgment of values reinforces or deters behavior might better assist in informing pedagogical practices in SBAE. Beyond student motivation based on value expression, evaluation of instructor response to clear defining of values within local and state systems of support can offer insights into gaining and motivating local program support.

Application for Extension and Higher Education

Institutions that seek to attract students coming from an SBAE experience should question how they prioritize and communicate the values of their community. Determining the values seen at the local SBAE level might help inform value expression and prioritization in higher educational settings. By being aware of how students operate within certain value systems in their secondary education, universities that pride themselves on accessible and welcoming communities should consider how supportive their cultures truly are.

Considering how educational worker motivation can lead to sustained investment and retention, teacher-development programs—whether in agricultural education or not, should uphold values as a key cultural competency to develop. Education students are not guaranteed the opportunity to become an educator in the community they themselves grew up in. As such, students preparing to become educators should be equipped to develop an awareness of how values influence the culture of communities and educational systems. Skills to identify, manage, and uphold values should be developed in teacher preparation programs before instructors enter new communities and are met with complex community, school, and student cultures.

Personal Application

As I continue to work in higher education, I seek to explore what motivates the work of agricultural producers and professionals. In agricultural communities, there is a keen awareness of how values can and should inform businesses. In order to encourage long-lasting business endeavors, there are numerous values at play—some held in tension, some assumed, and others strongly implied. While historic values can be seen through innovation, nurture, responsibility, and pride, these values look differently in how they shape producers’ motivation and their determination to continue feeding the world. Even on the value of “responsibility,” I have witnessed numerous different ways this term impacts the way neighbors show up for each other, curious retirees take on new projects, cooperatives take shape, and young people rise to the helm of their 4th generation farm.

In a state with the 3rd-highest percentage of new and beginning farmers and ranchers in the United States, the question of motivation for starting a farm or ranch can be partially answered by the focus on values. As early and beginning farmers explore agricultural production due to the desire to promote values of provision, responsibility, connection, and innovation, the question of how and when these values developed is to be explored further. While values, in and of themselves, don’t put food on the table, the ways in which they are fostered and supported through hard work help sustain a thriving, healthy, and motivated agricultural community.

Conclusion

During the last several years at Colorado State University, I have pursued roles of support and leadership in agricultural education and community outreach. Through this work, and now empowered through the SBAE study on stakeholder values, I have grown in my understanding that supporting those around me depends upon the capacity to act in an authentic manner—with

values, responsibilities, needs, and roles kept intact. Supporting teams in my engagement efforts fosters the principles of leadership and organizational management that center on personal and stakeholder values. This perspective on work promotes a leadership and education ethic of service over self. In advocating for agriculture and those communities I find myself to be a part of, learning shared values, enhancing conversations on these values, and mediating conflict between value positions allows for proactive service-driven leadership.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Figures of Organizational Framing of Values

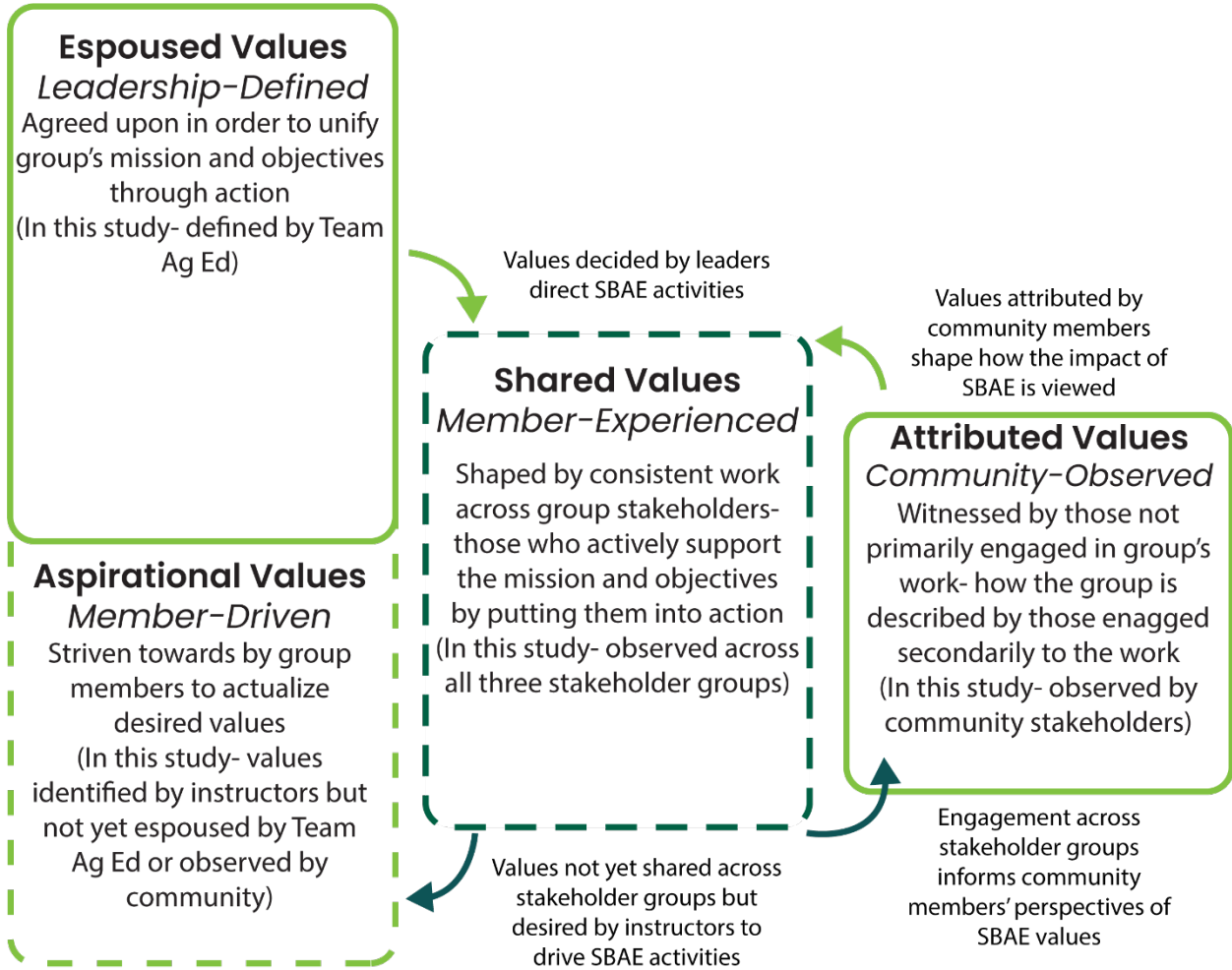


Figure A1

Organizational Framing of Colorado SBAE Values Across Stakeholders

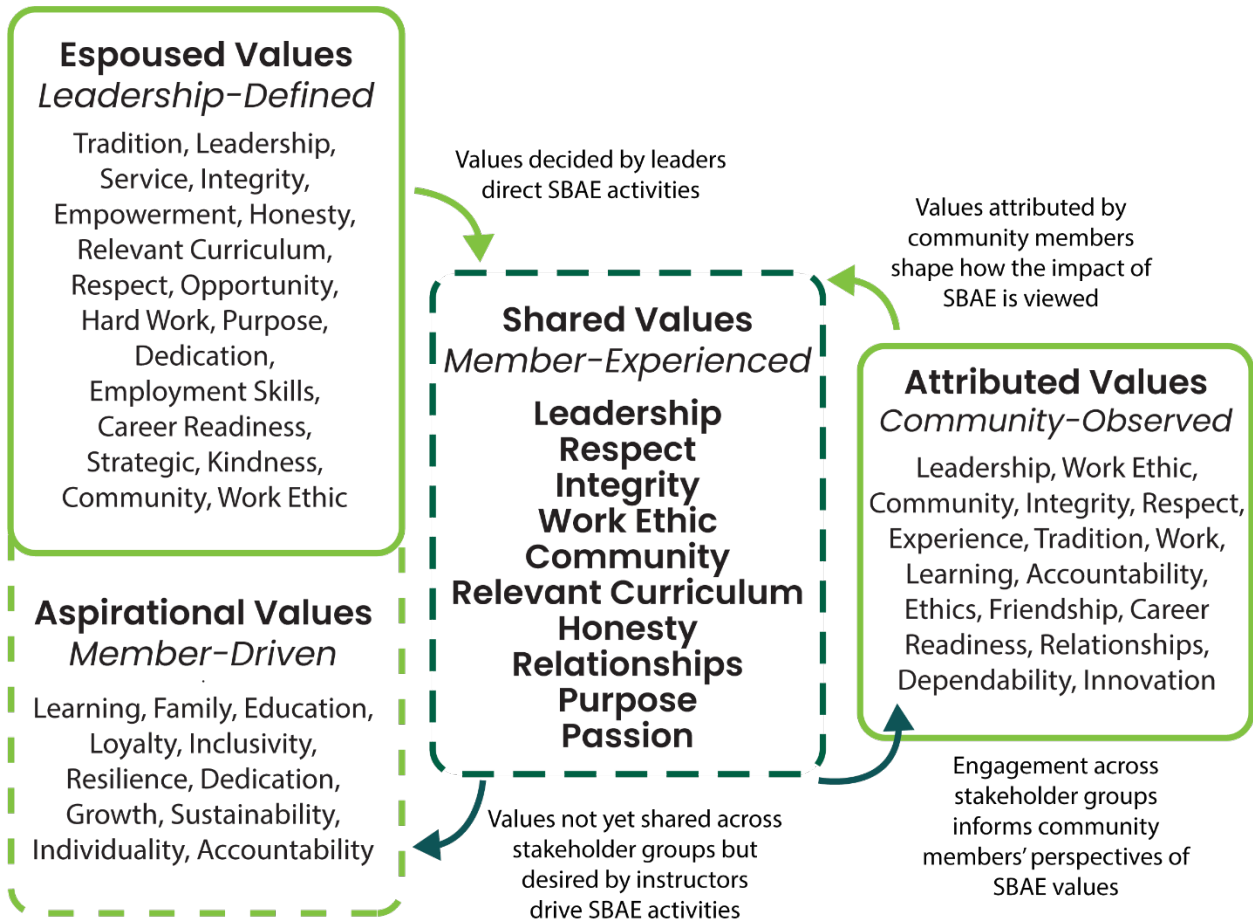
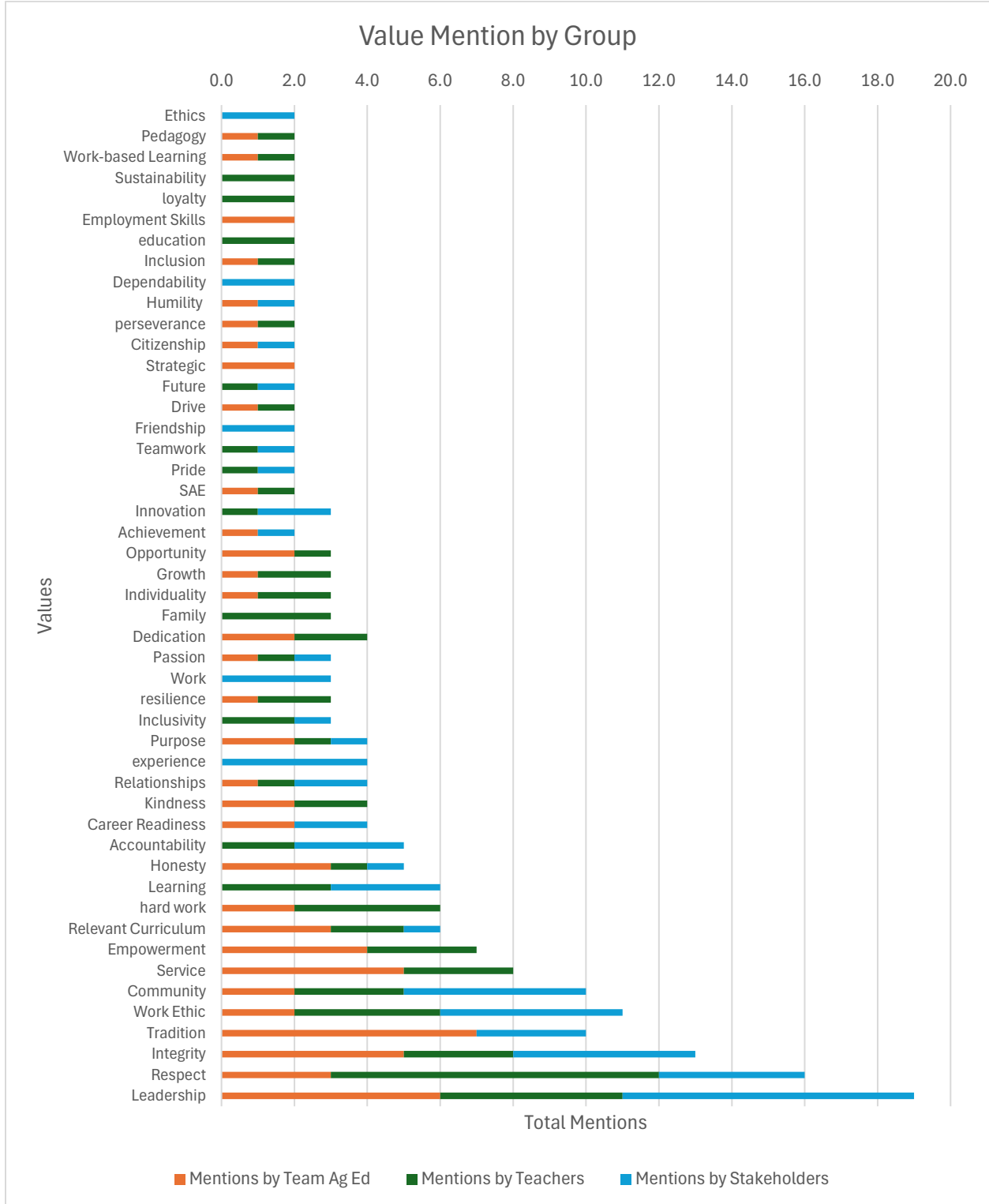


Figure A2

Values Across SBAE Stakeholders Applied to an Organizational Programmatic Framing

APPENDIX B

Summary of Top Value Mentions by Sample Group



APPENDIX C

Tables of Survey Data

Table C1

Frequency of Activity Mentions by Top Ten Values

Value	Mention (f)	CDE (f)	SAE (f)	LDE (f)	Community Service (f)	Leadership (f)
Leadership	19	7	3	6	4	4
Respect	16	3	1	4	2	2
Integrity	13	2	3	2	2	3
Work Ethic	11	4	7	3	4	
Community	10				2	1
Relevant Curriculum	6	1				
Honesty	5	1	1	1		
Relationships	4					1
Purpose	4	1				
Passion	3		1			

Value	FFA (f)	Chapter Meetings (f)	Classroom (f)	Shop (f)	Competitions/Contests (f)
Leadership	6	2		2	2
Respect	2	1	2		
Integrity	1		3		1
Work Ethic	1	2		2	
Community		2			1
Relevant Curriculum			1	3	
Honesty			1		1
Relationships		1			1
Purpose					
Passion					

Value	Teams (f)	Chapter Meetings and Activities (f)	Classwork (f)	District Leadership Conference (f)	Officer Positions (f)
Leadership	1	1		3	3
Respect	1		1		
Integrity				1	
Work Ethic		1	3		1
Community	1	2			
Relevant Curriculum					
Honesty					
Relationships	1	1			
Purpose	1				
Passion					

Value	Officer Teams (f)	Public Speaking (f)	Community Engagement/ Interaction (f)	Conferences/experiences that bring our students together (f)	FFA Events (f)
Leadership	2	2	1		1
Respect	1	1	1		
Integrity	1				
Work Ethic		1	1		1
Community					1
Relevant Curriculum					
Honesty					
Relationships					2
Purpose					
Passion					

Value	Official Dress (f)	Academics (f)	Awards and Applications (f)	Career Exploration (f)	Classroom Participation (f)	CVATA (f)
Leadership		1	1			1
Respect	3				1	1
Integrity					1	
Work Ethic		1	1			
Community						
Relevant Curriculum						
Honesty						
Relationships						
Purpose					1	
Passion					1	

Value	Livestock (f)	NAAE (f)	Nominating Committee (f)	State Office (f)	Teachers (f)	Ag Shop (f)
Leadership		1	2	2		
Respect	1	1			1	
Integrity						
Work Ethic	1					
Community						
Relevant Curriculum					1	1
Honesty						
Relationships						
Purpose						
Passion						

Value	Certifications (f)	Chapter Officers (f)	Character Development (f)	Committees (f)	Competition/Contest Preparation (f)
Leadership		1		1	
Respect					
Integrity			1		
Work Ethic					1
Community					
Relevant Curriculum		1			
Honesty					
Relationships					
Purpose					
Passion					

Value	Conventions (f)	Member Participation (f)	Shop Projects (f)	Student Recognition (f)	Teacher Recognition (f)
Leadership	1	1			
Respect				1	1
Integrity					
Work Ethic			1		
Community					
Relevant Curriculum					
Honesty					
Relationships					
Purpose					
Passion					

Table C2

Top Values by Sample Groups Mention

Value	TOTAL	TAE (f)	Teachers (f)	Stakeholders (f)
Leadership	19	6	5	8
Respect	16	3	9	4
Integrity	13	5	3	5
Work Ethic	11	2	4	5
Community	10	2	3	5
Relevant Curriculum	6	3	2	1
Honesty	5	3	1	1
Relationships	4	1	1	2
Purpose	4	2	1	1
Passion	3	1	1	1

APPENDIX D

IRB Materials

Research Subject Consent and Cover Letter

June 27, 2023



Dear Participant,

My name is Jonathan Cable and I am a researcher from Colorado State University in the Agricultural and Resource Economics department. We are conducting a research study on core values associated with school-based agricultural education in Colorado. The title of our project is Core Values of Colorado Agricultural Education (CSU IRB #4619). The Principal Investigator is Dr. Kellie Enns, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, and the Co-Principal Investigator is Jonathan Cable, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics. This research seeks to aid the strategic planning State of Colorado Agricultural Education Team and add to the bodies of knowledge for agricultural education and organizational values.

We would like you to please complete a digital survey that will ask you to share your personal beliefs about core values that are associated with agricultural education experiences. This survey will be provided to you via an online survey instrument. Participation will take approximately *8 minutes if you are a participant in Phase 1, 10 minutes if you are a participant in Phase 2, and multiples of 15 minutes each for surveys provided in Phase 3*. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

The research team for this study holds your privacy and confidentiality in high regard. As such, we want to make you aware that for all phases of this research, the information collected is not anticipated to be of a sensitive nature. The collection methods are not anticipated to place any subject in a position in a vulnerable physical or emotional position that would stigmatize them. Data collected will be stored in password-protected digital folders that will only be accessible by the PI and Co-PI. A code key linking any names or identifiable information to survey id numbers will be stored in a password-protected folder separate from where the research data is stored. Any identifiable private information associated with your survey submission will be removed from any results shared publicly and will not be used or distributed for future research studies. While there are no direct benefits to you, we hope to gain more knowledge of the perceived core values associated with Agricultural Education and which population of stakeholders define values that will drive further action through strategic visioning and planning.

There are no known risks associated with participation in this research study.

If you would like to learn more about this research or have any questions, please contact Dr. Kellie Enns at kellie.enns@colostate.edu or Jonathan Cable at joncable@colostate.edu. If you

have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at: CSU_IRB@colostate.edu; 970-491-1553.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kellie Enns

Associate Professor, Agricultural Education
Colorado State University

Jonathan Cable

Graduate Student, Agricultural Education
Colorado State University

Research Protocol Submission and Revisions

PROTOCOLS



#4619 - Core Values of Colorado Agricultural Education

Institutional Review Board Correspondence of Approval

PROTOCOLS



**COLORADO STATE
UNIVERSITY**

The protocol listed below has been approved by the CSU IRB Determinations Fort Collins on Wednesday, February 28th 2024.

PI: Enns, Kellie J

Submission Type and ID: Amendment 4619

Title: Core Values of Colorado Agricultural Education

Approval Date: Wednesday, February 28th 2024

Expiration Date: no date provided

The CSU IRB (FWA0000647) has completed its review of protocol 4619 Core Values of Colorado Agricultural Education. In accordance with federal and state requirements, and policies established by the CSU IRB, the committee has approved this protocol under Exempt review.

The IRB determined that this protocol meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review under exempt category 2ii.

Ongoing IRB review and approval by this organization is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities impact the exempt determination, please submit a new request to the IRB for a determination.

If no expiration date is listed above, continuing review is not required for this study.

The [Investigator Manual](#) defines the standards expected of Principal Investigators overseeing the conduct of Human Subjects Research at CSU. Any modifications to the approved study must be submitted for review through [Kuali Protocols](#). All approval letters and study documents are located within the Activity Log in [Kuali Protocols](#).

What are your responsibilities now, as you move forward with your research?

Document Retention: The PI is responsible for keeping all regulated documents, including IRB correspondence such as this letter, approved study documents, and signed consent forms for at least three (3) years following protocol closure for audit purposes. Documents regulated by HIPAA, such as Release Authorizations, must be maintained for six (6) years.

Site Permission: If your research is conducted at locations outside of Colorado State University (such as schools, hospitals, or businesses), you must obtain written permission from all sites to recruit, consent, study, or observe participants. Generally, such permission comes in the form of a

letter from the school superintendent, director, or manager. You must maintain a copy of this permission with study records.

Training: All researchers collecting or analyzing data from this study must renew training in human subjects research via the CITI Program (www.citiprogram.org) every 3 years. New personnel must complete training and be added to the protocol before beginning research with human participants or their data.

Modifications: Change to any aspect of this protocol or research personnel must be approved by the IRB before implementation, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects or others. In such situations, the IRB should still be notified immediately.

Unanticipated Problems/Adverse Events: Unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others, serious adverse events, and noncompliance with the approved protocol must be reported to the IRB immediately through a reportable event in [Kuali Protocols](#) in accordance with the [Reportable New Information](#) CSU IRB procedures. When in doubt, consult with the HRPP/IRB.

Monitoring: The HRPP reminds researchers that this study is subject to monitoring at any time by Colorado State University's HRPP staff, Institutional Review Board, Post Approval Monitoring team, or authorized external entities. Timely cooperation with monitoring procedures is an expectation of IRB approval.

Change of Institutions: If the PI leaves Colorado State, the study must be closed or the PI must be replaced on the study or transferred to a new IRB. Studies without a Colorado State University PI will be closed.

Other Approvals: This Colorado State IRB approval covers only regulations related to human subjects research protections (e.g. 45 CFR 46). This determination does not constitute approval from any other Colorado State campus departments, research sites, or outside agencies. The Principal Investigator and all researchers are required to affirm that the research meets all applicable local/state/ federal laws and university policies that may apply.

If you have questions about this determination or your responsibilities when conducting human subjects research on this project or any other, please do not hesitate to contact Colorado State's HRPP at CSU_IRB@colostate.edu or 970-491-1553. We are here to help!

Sincerely,

Colorado State University Human Research Protection Program/ Institutional Review Boards

Attachments

Consent	Core Values Project_June 2023_IRB_ConsentCoverletter_062723_REVISION.pdf	Cover Letter
Recruitment Materials	Core Values Project_June 2023_IRB_ConsentCoverletter_062723_REVISION.pdf	Recruitment and Consent Email Template
Recruitment Materials	Defining Value Expression_handout_ nal.pdf	1-Pager Reference For Core Values
Methodology Section	Draft Methodology_Core Values of Agricultural Education In Colorado_062223.pdf	Methodology Section Draft
Recruitment Materials	Core Values Recruitment Slide.pptx	Instructor Slide June 2023
Screening Tool or Procedure	Qualtrics Survey_Stakeholder_Instructor_062723_ REVISION.pdf	Screening Tool Incorporated Into Survey