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The Role of Extension in Community Resource and Economic Development as Perceived by Administrators and Directors of the Cooperative Extension Service

Seth Charles Urbanowitz
surbanow@utk.edu

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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Seth Charles Urbanowitz entitled "The Role of Extension in Community Resource and Economic Development as Perceived by Administrators and Directors of the Cooperative Extension Service." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications.

Bryan Q. Patterson, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Michael D. Wilcox, Bruce E. Tonn

Accepted for the Council:
Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

The Role of Extension in Community Resource and Economic Development as Perceived by Administrators and Directors of the Cooperative Extension Service

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ABSTRACT

Clearly understanding and specifying Extension's role in community resource and economic development (CRED) programming will allow Extension to more effectively serve the communities in which it operates and communicate a clear purpose to stakeholders. All levels of management might not know how CRED efforts are defined at the national/regional or state level, how much human and financial support is allocated, or what upper level administrators think might be some external/internal constraints. A valid image of national and regional organizational capacities in community resource and economic development will allow for clearer understanding and communication of this programmatic area to potential partners and sponsors. Identifying programming shortfalls, weaknesses and external constraints will allow for strategic planning to address organizational deficiencies. This study sought to inform this process by providing up to date data on CRED Extension programming from across the nation. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the attitudes and perceptions of Extension administrators and directors in regards to the perceived role, function and direction of CRED Extension programming as well as the social-environmental factors that could be affecting system resources.

The researcher e-mailed all 115 administrators and associate administrators of the Extension System due to their administrative responsibility. The study found limited regional overall variation among respondents regarding perceptions on the role of Extension in CRED. Consistent perceptions on programming and research priorities were identified. It was perceived that the CRED Extension programming and research

being done was failing to meet the needs of the people they serve. Regional variation was found in human and financial resource allocations to CRED. Full-time-equivalents devoted to CRED programming and research was perceived as being insufficient. Resources were seen as primarily decreasing in all programmatic areas. Respondents perceived that increased external linkages and mass media could build support and awareness for all that Extension has to offer. The results of this study should prove to be useful in obtaining a better understanding of all that Extension has to offer and how the organization might improve its efforts in CRED research and programming.

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Chapter One

Introduction and Overview

Background

The Cooperative Extension Service (Extension) is an organization that has contributed to the development of the United States of America through programs that are educational in nature with the basic mission to enable people to improve their lives and communities through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work (NASULGC, 2001). The demand for knowledge is derived from its value in reducing uncertainty in decision-making (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). Information that benefits the public sector is likely to be undersupplied by the private sector because of uncertainties in value. Reduced flows of information regarding technical issues are an obstacle to effectively addressing multiple issues in society (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). As a result of market failure, the government has stepped in to provide an unbiased public educational service. Extension activities are a positive attribute in that they benefit society as a whole through shared learning opportunities that improve the quality of life in America.

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 authorized the Cooperative Extension Service as an effort to increase informational flows from educational centers to those citizens not engaged in academic affairs in an effort to reduce obstacles in the development of the country's human and natural capital. The establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service was the last development of the era in the public land-grant system that was designed to bring research and education to the masses. The Smith-Lever Act followed

the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890, which established the first set of land grant universities and the Hatch Act of 1897, which established the experiment stations. Later, the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994 gave partial land-grant status to several Native American community colleges and other institutes of higher learning; completing the land-grant system. This vast complex of human and financial resources, coupled with the responsiveness of local offices, affords the organization an enormous opportunity to serve the people of this country. The degree and capacity in which the public is served, however, is determined in part by administrators and directors in Extension. Extension derives its legitimacy from a social agreement and political process (Warner and Christenson, 1984). A public organization is legitimate so long as the funds dispersed are paying for products deemed important by society. The legitimacy of Extension, therefore, lies directly in the educational programs offered.

There is a need for Extension to continually assess and strengthen its commitment and role in CRED work so that timely, science-based information is delivered to the diverse communities of America, allowing for effective and informed choices at the local level (Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development and National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals, 2005). One of the strengths of Extension over the last several decades has been its ability to evaluate itself then act on those assessments to adapt to environmental demands. Highlighting what Extension has to offer in the area of community resource and economic development (CRED) programming will allow Extension to communicate more effectively with the various stakeholders that confer organizational legitimacy while aiding in strategic planning. In

an effort to be a dynamic organization that delivers effective educational programs, Extension has had to evolve and become more adaptable to meet the needs of its clientele.

Since 1914, the country has seen major societal shifts with new legislative mandates and social demands imploring Extension to revise its mission broaden its focus and expand its clientele in order to remain a viable organization. Several societal trends over the last several decades have resulted in new environmental demands for Extension. A few of these major trends that have impacted Extension are; the decline of the farm population, the changing structure of rural America, globalization, and changes in the demographic structure of rural areas (Cowan, 2001; Warner and Christenson, 1984). Extension can be thought of as a social organism that must adapt to its environment through either administrative leadership or legislative mandate. If organizations do not adapt to their environment either through administrative leadership or legislative mandates they will lose support and funding (Warner and Christenson, 1984). Changes in organizations are the responsibility of its leaders. Extension administrators redirect programs and allocate resources in response to national crises, the state of the economy, changes in funding patterns, and environmental demands (Warner and Christenson, 1984). As a result, Extension's history closely parallels the major social events during the 20th century. The Great Depression, military engagements, the social programs of the 60's and 70's, and governmental behavior in general has greatly influenced how Extension operates. This study examines the attitudes and perceptions of state Extension administrators and directors regarding community resource and economic development

(CRED) Extension efforts in the United States as well as the environment in which it operates. This study also seeks to provide essential information that helps better assess CRED Extension programming and research needs as well as efforts.

Need for Study

Administrators and directors of Extension are faced with the difficult challenge of gauging the public's outreach educational needs and allocating Extension system resources to competing programs to address these educational needs. In an educational organization such as Extension, programs and the direction of the organization are often related to the attitudes and perceptions of its administration, which are responsible for providing organizational support, allocating funds and guiding policy directives (Yukl, 1998). The attitudes and perceptions of an organization's administrators and directors are important because they influence organizational direction through policy implementation and guidance, allocation of funds and provision of organizational support. Organizations' environments are constantly in flux therefore, understanding the environment in which an organization operates requires constant learning. Descriptive organizational surveys provide management with the opportunity to learn by providing a picture of an organization or organizational subunit from which informed decisions could be made (Smith, 2003). Data collection is an essential tool in organizational learning and development as it aids the organization in obtaining a valid image of itself, assessing weaknesses or shortfalls, and strategic planning (Nadler, 1977). In this study, an organizational survey was conducted in an effort to obtain the perceptions and attitudes held by administrators and directors of CRED Extension efforts as well as an assessment

of the external environmental forces that could be affecting this organizational program area as well as Extension as a whole. The results from this study will be useful in helping Extension change, adapt and evolve through its communication of present organizational situations and environmental threats, while expanding the organizations capacity to create a desired future.

Statement of Problem

Studies have been conducted to determine Extension System resources and the external social and political issues effecting Extension System resources but few have been conducted to assess organizational subunits. Administrators and directors of state Extension Systems have a sizeable influence over policy initiatives and guidance and aid in determining statewide issues and research (Comer, 2002). As such, state administrators must support new priorities and initiatives for changes to successfully occur. Historically, there have been regional disparities in CRED efforts and programming (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). Highlighting these regional differences and priorities in research and programming will allow for greater regional and nationwide understanding of CRED Extension activities. Perceptions of both external social and political issues, which are directly relevant to organizational resources and to research/programming priorities will allow for greater understanding of the socio-political environment which effects how Extension operates (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). A more unified voice in communicating to organizational stakeholders about Extension's characteristics and efforts will allow for greater public awareness and understanding of what Extension has to offer.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the attitudes and perceptions of Cooperative Extension Service (CES) administrators and directors in regards to the role, function, and direction as well as critical issues in Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) programming. The study uses a cross-sectional and descriptive model with the survey instrument e-mailed to all deans and associate deans working for Extension in the United States. Cooperative Extension's direction and programming are related to the attitudes and perceptions of its administrators and directors, which, in part, influence regional differences in funding for CRED Extension programming (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). This study examined the perceptions of administrators and directors who are responsible for allocating funds, providing organizational support and guiding and implementing policy. If CRED is to become a more effective, strengthened programmatic area, the attitudes and perceptions of those guiding policy and allocating funds must be understood. Comer, Birkenholz and Stewart (2004) emphasize this by stating that administration in an organization such as Extension must support new priorities and initiatives for changes to successfully occur. An environmental scan was conducted, eliciting perceived social and political issues that may be affecting Extension. Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) state that "a good deal of organizational behavior, the actions taken by organizations, can be understood only by knowing something about the organization's environment and the problems it creates for obtaining resources." By eliciting responses that pertain to role, function, and direction of CRED Extension efforts, a better picture of CRED issues and priorities unique to each region was collected to

provide perceived priorities and efforts as well as potential social-environmental constraints. The level of administrative support as qualified by the survey population will expose funding priorities and give direction to possible future policy initiatives. By providing a picture of the organization in this programmatic area and the social-political issues facing Extension it is hoped that more informed decisions could be possible. This organizational survey facilitates the betterment of the organization through issue identification, administrative understanding, support, and feedback; providing a national organizational picture of CRED Extension efforts, while improving the knowledge base and communication among administrator and directors.

The research objectives of this study are:

1. To gain insight into regional and national CRED Extension efforts.
2. To describe the political and social issues facing CRED Extension in the U.S.
3. To examine the perceptions and attitudes of CES administrators and directors regarding research and programming priorities in the U.S.
4. To examine the perceived role of CRED Extension professionals held by administrators and directors in the U.S.

Definition of Terms

Extension: Cooperative Extension Service (CES) of the U.S. also referred to as the Extension System, Extension or the Extension Service. A public educational service of the Land Grant System established by the 1914 Smith-Lever Act.

CRED: Community resource and economic development Extension programming that helps local governments, public/private partnerships, entrepreneurs and community groups investigate and create viable options for economic and community development,

such as improved job creation and retention, small and medium sized business development, effective and coordinated emergency response, workforce education, leadership development and land use planning. CRED programming is also commonly referred to as resource development (RD), community resource development (CRD), community and economic development (CED) and community vitality.

Land-grant University: An institution of higher learning in the United States designated by each state to receive benefits of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 and the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994.

NIFA: National Institute of Food and Agriculture; the national level of USDA organization for research and Extension. With a mission to advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities through support for research, education and extension programs in the Land-Grant University System and other partner organizations.

USDA: Unites States Department of Agriculture which is responsible for developing and executing government policy on farming, food, agriculture and natural resources. It aims to meet the needs of agricultural producers, work to ensure food safety, protect natural resources, foster rural communities, and end hunger in the United States.

1862 Institution: A land-grant university funded through the Morrill Act of 1862.

Smith-Lever Act of 1914: Provided federal support for Extension services at each land-grant university.

1890 Institution: A land-grant university, originally for Blacks in the then-segregated Southern states of the U.S., funded through the Morrill Act of 1890.

1994 Institution: A land-grant college established by the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994.

Assumptions

It was assumed that respondents answered apolitically and objectively.

Limitations

This study was limited to national Cooperative Extension System administrators; all 115 Extension deans and associate deans were surveyed. The accuracy of any conclusions drawn is limited to the accuracy of the respondent's answers. The study was conducted to provide a snapshot of CRED priorities and the external socio-political environment in which Extension operates.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

Introduction

A political contract influenced by social perceptions of organizational effectiveness allocates resources to Extension (Warner and Christenson, 1984). Various stakeholders on multiple levels communicate to influence Extension system resources. Internal resource allocation to organizational subunits is in large part determined by the perceived need of that subunit by administrators and directors (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). As such, administrators and directors perceptions are of vital importance due to the direct position they have in communicating role and function of Extension programming, implementing policy and deciding resource allocations among organizational subunits (Yukl, 1998). Properly adapting to changing environmental demands is a difficult task for administrative leadership in a large educational organization such as Extension (Warner and Christenson, 1984). The success of these changes determines not only the degree of effectiveness with which it meets stakeholders needs, but also system resources. It is important to know how all participants in Extension education perceive the services provided by the organization. Continuous assessment of the relationships various groups have relative to Extension is essential in remaining a responsive, relevant organization in today's environment. Therefore, a review of the literature was conducted to obtain information about a) the Extension Service in the U.S.; b) the evolution of Extension development efforts in the U.S., including but not limited to those programs that fall in the community resource and

economic development program area; c) attitudes and perceptions of Extension personnel, legislators, clientele and the general public, and administrators.

Extension administrators are responsible for allocating funds, providing organizational support, and guiding and implementing policy. They influence the activities of the organized group, attitudes of personnel, and help to create a shared vision (Senge, 1990). Ultimately, a complex political contract influenced by social perceptions of organizational effectiveness allocates resources to the Extension system (Warner and Christenson, 1984). Various stakeholders on multiple levels communicate to influence Extension system resources. If administrative leadership does not shape the direction of Extension then the public and their political representatives may do so through legislative mandate. Descriptive organizational surveys can present organizations with unbiased, valid and accurate information that allows for strategic planning and effective communication of organizational purpose, which can lead to increased awareness and effectiveness of the organization (Smith, 2003). The roles, programs and support Extension professionals receive change over time with administrative perceptions, environmental demands and social perceptions. Extension as an organization has been given flexibility to change to meet societal demands because it has defined its role as primarily educational in nature, which has allowed for the subject matter and audience to change with societal needs.

Several environmental forces over the last century, including globalization, national emergencies, demographic changes, the restructuring of rural America, and the decline of the farm population have required Extension to be a dynamic public service

organization that serves the needs of the nation (Cowan, 2001; Warner and Christeson, 1984). These forces have prompted Extension to have changing roles, programs, and development responsibilities over the lifetime of the organization. Governmental budgets continually expand and contract, as such it is imperative that Extension continually demonstrate its worth to society so that it is seen as providing a needed service to the public (Warner and Christenson, 1984). In an increasingly competitive political climate, it is important to assess environmental forces that affect the organization and clarify the role community resource and economic development (CRED) Extension professionals play in communities in addition to answer the question as to what program areas Extension administrators see as important to offer.

The Extension System

The Extension System is an educational service that includes three distinct but related and coordinated partners. The federal partner is the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), organized within the USDA. NIFA's mission is to:

> "…advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities by supporting research, education and extension programs in the Land-Grant University System and other partner organizations (NIFA, 2010)."

The federal partner does not perform actual research, education, or extension activities, but rather helps fund those activities at the state and local levels, as well as provides program leadership in those areas. The six current areas that the federal partner provides organizational support for are: 4-H Youth Development, Agriculture, Leadership Development, Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, and

Community and Economic Development (NIFA, 2010). The state or commonwealth partner, the Extension Service, has four programmatic thrusts: agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H/youth development, and community resource and economic development. There are currently 105 land-grant colleges that house the organization and administer extension programs, which vary from state-to-state and county-to-county, depending upon local needs. The state and territory level consists of fifty-eight 1862 land-grant universities, eighteen historically black 1890 land-grant universities and 31 Native American 1994 land-grant community colleges and higher education institutes that have partial land-grant status under the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994. The local partner is the elected authority at the county level, which governs local Extension programs. Extension activities are a coordinated educational effort of three levels of government, three levels of government funding, and three levels of perspectives on direction, goals and priorities for programming (Seevers et al., 1997). The partners are interdependent, though each has considerable autonomy in funding and programming. This multi-level educational system is a national resource that is thought to be the largest nonformal educational system in the world. The information provided by the state land-grant college, through the Extension System, is a service that enables people to identify and solve problems that are affecting their lives.

The Evolution of Development Roles

Extension was established under the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 with the responsibility to "…diffuse among the people of the Unites States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage

application of the same", and to accomplish this by the "…giving of instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture and home economics to persons not attending or resident in said colleges…" (S. 378, 1914). Extension was to link the scientific knowledge made possible by the research efforts of the USDA and the land-grant universities to the local communities who needed it. The purpose was to bring the immense resources of human capital and research oriented educational programs to help solve the development problems of rural America. These immense resources and the revisions to the original mandate have made for a dynamic, responsive organization that has allowed for Extension's development objectives to evolve over time to meet the needs of people at a local level. Through the decades of change in America, Extension has been reinvested in because it has evolved to meet the shifting needs of society. A plethora of legislative mandates have impacted Extension work throughout its history; forcing Extension to adapt to changes in its environment in an effort to ensure desired levels of funding, its continued existence, and allowed for more effective programming that meets the needs of the public.

In 1914 agricultural and rural development was a priority for decision-makers because of a primarily rural, agrarian population. Roughly 30% of workers were employed in agricultural occupations when Extension was created (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). The goal of Extension at this time was to improve rural livelihoods through improved farm practices, enhanced living conditions, and education. Today, the country is approaching a population that is 80% urban and the need for Extension to deliver production agriculture information directly to farmers has decreased dramatically.

Currently, roughly 2% of the population is composed of farmers (Cowan, 2001). In rural areas, less than 8% of the workforce is employed by farming or agricultural support services (Cowan, 2001). Counties nationwide have become increasingly less dependent on farming. Four hundred twenty of the more than 2,000 non-metro counties in 2000 were classified as being farm dependent, down from 618 in 1990 (Ghelfi and McGranahan, 2004). Extension has responded to these societal changes by offering new programs and bringing in non-traditional audiences. As the environments of organizations change, organizations must, if they are to remain viable be able to adopt goals, structures and services that meet environmental demands (Zald and Denton, 1963). Extension, as a dynamic organization charged with diffusing practical information to the masses, has constantly changed over the years to accommodate various development priorities. Environmental demands such as the decline of the farm population and the changing structure of rural America, globalization, and demographic changes have and are continuing to pressure Extension to alter its organizational structure and educational programs to meet the needs of the public if system resources are to increase or remain constant.

Economic concerns, farm efficiency and quality of life issues took precedence during the 1920's farm depression when Extension professionals led educational efforts on topics such as agricultural diversification and marketing, rural sociology, and public affairs. It was during this time that Extension changed from the primary agent representing the USDA in agricultural matters to focusing on educational programs that improved the quality of life in rural areas (Seevers et al., 1997). Extension agents taught farmers about agricultural marketing and helped farm groups organize both buying and

marketing cooperatives. Group discussions on public affairs engaged the public and brought about increased civic engagement (Seevers et al., 1997). During the Great Depression, the emergency needs of the public gave rise to many federal and state programs. Extension was made a service agency for the federal government by contributing managerial and organizational expertise to the Farm Seed and Loan Program, Rural Electrification Administration, Soil Conservation Service and water programs among others to help people in rural America in a national time of need (Seevers et al., 1997).

In the early 1940's, Extension continued to be involved with many of the federal programs involved with development and assistance, including: managing the rural electrification and water programs, assisting with price control and rationing programs, and managing the emergency farm labor program. Major advances in agriculture at this time included hybridized seeds, chemical control of pests, and new conservation and tillage practices. These advances created the need for new Extension programs that focused on education and adoption of new agricultural practices (Seevers et al., 1997). In the latter half of the decade, the Research and Marketing Act of 1946 expanded Extension work and led to increased work with urban consumers. The Farm and Home Development program focused Extension efforts on farm management, public affairs and marketing. Social change, prosperity, and a break of Extension efforts devoted to national emergencies in post-World War II (WWII) America prompted the organization to reevaluate its mission in the Joint Committee Report on Extension Programs, Policies and Goals report of 1948. This report broadened Extension's scope and the organization sought to be more inclusive (Ratchford, 1984). This report validated state programming

in agricultural marketing, rural health-care, farm and home management, natural resource conservation, leadership development and public policy education (Ratchford, 1984).

It was not until the 1950's that Extension experienced major changes in organizational direction. Agricultural surpluses and a decreasing farm population left Extension facing two alternatives; continued emphasis on subject matter related to agricultural production or broadening the scope to include human affairs and the broader goal of rural development in general (Barr, 1961). In 1953 with the enactment of Public Law 83, which broadened the mandate of the original Smith-Lever Act to "the giving of instructions and practical demonstration in agriculture and home economics and subjects related thereto", that Extension was given enough latitude to truly bring all of the benefits of higher education to people at the local level (Seevers et al., 1997). This new language was added to make certain that new legislation authorized all Extension activities; allowing Extension to more fully adapt to its environment. It validated a larger suite of programs that better addressed the needs of changing public needs. In 1955 community development became a distinct, organized activity within the organization. A Statement of Scope and Responsibility or the Scope Report of 1958 further expanded Extension's CRED programming emphasis. And for the first time program areas other than agriculture, home economics, and 4-H became a formalized part of the national system (Ratchford, 1984). In evaluating the shifting needs of the organizations environment, the report stated, "Extension programs grow out of the expressed wants and carefully analyzed needs of local people." and "the legal mandate implicit in the Smith-Lever Act reinforced by the insistent demands of people for help in understanding public problems,

amply justifies everything now being done and more" (Seevers et al., 1997). As a result of a changing rural America and an increasingly interdependent, complex world six national program priorities were identified at the national level; marketing, conservation of natural resources, farm and home management, leadership development, public affairs awareness and community development. The Scope Report outlined a pilot community resource development program to be deployed. Soon after the initial pilot program, it became a professionalized component of Extension in many states but remained without federal funding.

The social trends in post-WWII America helped set the tone for Extension in the following decades. A more complex, urban society coupled with numerous social critiques and legislative mandates prompted Extension to develop new and expanded programs; programs for low-income and minority groups, migrant workers, non-farm populations and urban clientele. In 1961, Section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act was added to allow for national funding for programs that reached the pertinent issues of the time; programs for community resource and economic development, urban gardening, pest management, and non-point pollution control (Smith-Lever Act, 1914). Community resource and economic development work was a new concept; a community was to decide on its own community development program with the agent serving as an advisor. Extension was also now dealing with groups of individuals and group decision-making. However, among the leadership at the time this work was looked at with disdain, with little financial pay-off (Schor, 1986). A large majority of community development work at this time was with African-American communities or those with limited resources. The CRED agent enjoyed little prestige at this time and a CRED agent became an

acronym for Negro work (Schor, 1986). A People and a Spirit of 1969 recommended a "broadened and redirected" Extension system that met changing and diverse public needs (Ratchford, 1984). A People and a Spirit (1968) was initiated because the New and Great Societies programs and social critiques sought to promote social programs and those focusing on the disadvantaged. As of 1969, 18% of all Extension efforts were expended on programs of a community nature and the program area was gaining importance within Extension work (Cebotarev and Brown, 1969). Remarks about obtaining a critical mass in research and field force made by Bottum (1970) counter any estimation of an effective effort made by CRED Extension efforts at this time. He states "up to this point he has dealt with the minimum critical mass or viable group at the central institution." He also states "unless sizeable inputs are put in at the local level, community development work may have little effect." He concludes that if community development educational efforts are to be effective, there must be:

1. A critical mass at the central institution dedicated to research.

2. Research must be more timely and relevant, with calls for joint Extension and research appointments to be the norm.

3. A critical mass at the community level.

Similar social programs continued into the 1970's, with continuing social critiques and legislative mandates, altering the way Extension operates. CRED work became increasingly respectable and welcomed in many communities. One significant

piece of legislation at this time that significantly altered the way Extension works in rural development was the Rural Development Act of 1972. One of the purposes of Title V of this act was to "increase the capabilities of, and encourage, colleges and universities to perform the vital public service roles of research, and the transfer and practical application of knowledge in support of rural development." Extension as the public service arm of the Land-Grant System has a clear role in the transfer and practical application of knowledge as well as collection, interpretation and dissemination of useful information and knowledge to aid in rural development. Rural development was defined at this time as "planning, financing and development of facilities and services in rural areas that contribute to making of those areas desirable places to live...the planning, development and expansion of business and industry in rural areas to provide increased employment and income; the planning, development, conservation, and use of land, water, and other natural resources of rural areas to maintain or improve the quality of the environment…and the building or improvement of institutional, organizational and leadership capacities of rural citizens and leaders to define and solve their own community problems (Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, 1972)." This legislative definition and purpose infer a role for Extension in a wide variety of programs; programs such as public infrastructure and public services, workforce development, and economic development became further warranted in Extension with this new language. Other programs such as leadership and civic engagement and natural resource management were also further validated by this new legislation. Though these programs could be warranted under Public Law 83, Title V also specified Extension's role and programming in rural development. Under the Rural Development Act, Extension

programs were to consist of "coordinated and integrated community initiatives that advance and empower capacity building through leadership development, entrepreneurship, business development, and management training and strategic planning to increase jobs, income and quality of life in rural communities" and include " technical services and educational activities; including instruction for persons not enrolled as students in colleges or universities and to facilitate and encourage the use and practical application of this information." This legislative mandate had broad and lasting implications for Extension's expanded role in rural development.

In 1973, Jim Hightower authored a report entitled: "Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times: A Report of the Agribusiness Accountability Project on the Failure of America's Land Grant College Complex". This report chastised the Land Grant System and the Extension Service for not addressing the needs of rural Americans. It criticized Extension for ignoring the needs of the majority of Americans, especially the rural poor. Hightower (1973) claimed that the needs of small farmers, rural communities, farm workers, rural poor, and Black farmers were largely ignored by the Extension Service and Land-Grant Colleges. He wrote in his criticism: "(t)ax dollars buy new tinker toys for agribusiness, misery for migrants, death for rural America and more taxes for urban America, all in the name of efficiency." Hightower (1973) indicated that "Extension was preoccupied with efficiency and production, a focus that has contributed much to the largest producers, but has also slighted the pressing needs of the vast majority of America's farmers, and ignored the great majority of other rural people." Hightower (1973) concluded that Extension "could be useful" if it focuses on "independent family farmers, farm workers,

small town businesses, small town government, non-farm rural people and others."

It was during this time that Extension began to try to break from its agricultural past and portray a flexible organization that was not exclusively involved with agriculture by changing its name from the Agricultural Extension Service to the Cooperative Extension Service (Seevers et al., 1997). The change also affected county level staff, whose titles changed from Agricultural Extension Agent to County Extension Agent. In 1973, Congress earmarked funds for rural community development and 4-H youth development work in urban areas. In the latter half of the decade, the federal Food and Agriculture Act of 1977 provided for more programming that was to reach small farms and significantly expanded Food and Nutrition Education programs (Seevers et al., 1997). These were continued attempts of Extension to try to reinvent itself, build awareness and project a different image in an effort to adapt to perceived environmental demands, establish political legitimacy and gain political favor.

The start of the 1980s brought the farm crisis, recession, and economic uncertainty for many Americans. New issues, new innovations in communication technologies and the evolving needs of a diverse American audience coupled with an economic recession resulted in Extension reducing staff and changing programming throughout the decade (Seevers et al., 1997). In the early 1980s, stress management and farm business management were brought into educational programming that helped farmers cope with the farm crisis. The decade also saw Extension shift from a focus on audience to a focus on issues. The issues came from seven national major base programs: 4-H and Youth Development, Agriculture, Community Resource and Economic

Development, Family Development and Resource Management, Leadership and Volunteer Development, Natural Resources and Environment Management and Nutrition, Diet and Health. The chronic questioning of role, function and funding was the reason for the 1983 report: Extension in the 80's, which had the continued theme of organizational change (Ratchford, 1984). The report stated that the Cooperative Extension Service was created as a dynamic institution by its very charter and should modify its programs and outreach in response to such factors and new knowledge, changes in its clientele's needs, and changes in the socio-economic landscape of the country (USDA-NASULGC, 1983). The report also stated that Extension programming must be broad and flexible if it is to remain relevant. CRED work became increasingly necessary for transitioning farmers and rural America to a more interconnected world economy. CRED, environmental programming and family living were pursued heavily at this time. The Food Security Act of 1985 amended the Smith-Lever Act to allow for the larger role of Extension personnel in applied research. This allowed Extension to become more flexible and responsive to the needs of communities at a local level by helping to solve the most pressing problems at the local level. At the close of the decade an Extension agent was identified as having four roles in economic development: providing perspective, increasing the knowledge base, teaching management skills, and shaping institutional structure (Weber, 1987). It was thought that states with a robust history of Extension development efforts might be likely to provide all four roles while those with limited efforts should focus on one or two roles to be effective. At this time the emphasis of most states was on provision of knowledge, which was defined as bringing the results of social science research to bear on locally defined problems (Weber, 1987). Weber (1987) concluded that "by more

clearly specifying its own role and the roles of others in the economic development education process, Extension should be able to more effectively serve the leaders and citizens of America's communities."

By the end of the 20th century and the start of the new millennium, the need for effective communication and organizational partnerships permeated the literature. It was emphasized by Extension leadership that Extension should continue with system diversity while strengthening partnerships with organizations with similar goals to remain relevant (Vitzthum, 1993). It was thought that the extension and research systems at the land-grant institutions were in trouble due to six factors: significant cuts for agriculture in the Clinton Administration among decision-makers who opposed extension research, federal budget deficits, state budget constraints, decreased power of agriculture in politics and agricultures negative image (Vitzthum, 1993). Boyle and Carpenter (1991) highlighted the importance of the political arena in which Extension operates and receives funding in stating "(t)he challenge facing the Cooperative Extension System in the highly competitive arena of the 1990's is to clearly communicate the value of its mission and programs." Clear communication about what Extension has to offer and the value to people remains a problem to this day. Hogan (1994) contends, "(s)imply doing good work and helping people to help themselves will not maintain or expand financial support and positive public opinion in a climate of scarce resources." Extension sought to more fully move beyond its initial responsibilities as mandated in the Smith-Lever Act and fully embrace its new call by adopting in 1995 a new mission: "Extension shall enable people to improve the lives and communities through learning partnerships that put

knowledge to work" (NASULGC, 2001).

Cultivating awareness of what Extension has to offer and a positive public image is crucial for continued or increasing levels of resource allocations. The CRED program area should not be seen as a program area in competition for scarce resources, but an integral part of expanding resources for Extension as well as an integral component of what Extension and the Land-Grant System were designed to achieve (Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development and National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals 2005). The message traditionally communicated to legislators and the public is that Extension is an agricultural agency (Warner and Christenson 1984). Warner and Christenson contend that this image is no longer valid and could constrict resource flows. Paluszek (1992) contends that Extension has a reputation deficit and that it must boost communication if it is to retain increasingly redirected federal funds and constrained state and local funds. Extension is a public educational organization that is driven by its environment. If it does not adapt to the market-driven needs of society and fulfill environmental demands it will lose political support and funding. Building awareness and organizational understanding of organizational purpose is essential in a competitive political environment. In reference to Extension administrator's, who guide policy and organizational direction, Keith Smith, 2004 ECOP chair, has urged, for Extension administrators to look inwardly and assume responsibility for Extension's future (Bull et al., 2004). In the 2009 Strategic Opportunities for Cooperative Extension, Extension administrators and directors reaffirmed Extension commitment to CRED Extension work by recognizing the more

robust Extension outreach objective of "assisting communities in becoming sustainable and resilient to the uncertainties of economics, weather, health, and security" as being a strategic opportunity for 2009 and beyond (Southern Regional Rural Development Center and National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals, 2009).

Current Community Resource and Economic Development Extension Efforts

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and the Land-Grant universities respond to the development needs of America's communities. The federal partner in this effort is NIFA, which has various portfolios that address the diverse development needs of the country. All of these portfolios address different needs with significant overlap. The Community Sustainability and Quality of Life portfolio addresses many of traditional CRED program needs. There is often confusion over content at the local and state level that leads to multiple program areas being addressed under any given individual program. To eliminate some of the confusion in program efforts, accountability efforts and to better evaluate the effectiveness of these programs, institutions report FTE's involved in specific knowledge areas. These are then used in NIFA's portfolios. The exact programming is left to the local and state Extension systems. With diverse priorities set at all one hundred-five land-grant universities and institutions of higher learning and still more diverse needs at the local level, there can be considerable differences in programming. As such, there exist regional differences in the naming of the base program area, with CRED being referred to as resource development

(RD), community resource development (CRD), community and economic development (CED) and community vitality at various institutions. In response to diverse perceived development needs there is also significant uneven distribution of community development professionals throughout the Extension System.

CRED Extension programming reaches a diverse audience and differs from the other three programmatic thrusts in several ways. The first and possibly most apparent is that this programmatic area was adopted later in Extension's history as it was not mentioned in the original Smith-Lever Act. The program area is less likely to have a full-time Extension professional at the county level that is solely dedicated to CRED programming, with many Extension appointments having a proportion of CRED work outlined for their position. CRED Extension programming is also engaged with groups of people (e.g. communities, institutions, organizations) rather than individuals; meaning it is process versus project oriented. Community resource and economic development Extension personnel are predominantly social scientists, such as economists and sociologists (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). CRED Extension professionals are seen as essential to the development of agriculturally dependent communities as well as those that are not (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). Community resource and economic development Extension activities were seen as a higher priority than CRED Extension research was in a 1996 survey of agricultural economists (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). The main aim for CRED Extension activities as identified by Conglose (2000) was to provide perspective on development issues, increase the knowledge base for individual and community decisions, develop the skills necessary to achieve individual

and community goals, and help shape the decision-making environment; with the end goal being to "improve the social and economic well-being of communities through group action." (Seevers et al., 1997).

Many counties throughout the Extension system have an agent dedicated to CRED work while others have none or are allotted a proportion of CRED duties to their total. Agent positions and corresponding FTE's engaged in CRED work have expanded and contracted with perceived needs and budgets throughout the years. Regardless of system fluctuations, the CRED program area remains the smallest allocation to human resources, in respect to FTE's (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). Community resource and economic development FTE's comprised 8% in 1977 (Ahearn, Yee and Bottum, 2003). This number declined throughout the latter half of the 20th century, representing 6% in 1992. Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum (2003) posit that this decline could be a result of declining populations in rural areas. However, Extension's evolution as an organization has brought directives and funding meant to engage non-traditional audiences, including urban populations.

Few studies have examined national human resource allocations among base program areas. One reason why this may be is that there is no easily accessible information regarding system allocations of full-time-equivalents (FTE's) (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum (2003) work to piece information together in an effort to better describe allocations of personnel between 1977 and 1997 and hence the focus of Extension activities. The total number of Extension FTE's dropped 8.7% from 1977 to 1992 (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). These changes in total and CRED

program area FTE's varied significantly between regions and states with the North Central (-15.5%) and South (-8.4%) seeing the greatest total declines in system resources. These are large declines in FTE's in contrast with 2.5% decline in the Northeast and a 2.4% gain in the Western region. Table 1 indicates that the declines in human resources (FTE's) were not evenly distributed across regions or among program areas. However, the North Central and South accounted for a combined 71% of total system FTE's in 1992. This is due, in part, to the relatively larger share of federally funded institutions in these regions.

Table 1. Percent Change in Human Resource (FTE's) Allocations among Regions and Program Areas (1977-1992)

Geographic Level	% Δ CRED	% Δ FCS	% Δ 4-H	% Δ AGNR	Total % Δ
North Central	-32.9%	-4.4%	-30.2%	-8.2%	-15.5%
Northeast	-44.4%	11.6%	-24.1%	15.7%	-2.5%
South	-36.6%	5.9%	-27.6%	1.5%	-8.4%
West	-22.8%	65.7%	-20.4%	32.5%	2.4%
National	-34.7%	7.0%	-27.1%	.06%	-8.7%

(Northeast: ME, VT, NH, RI, CT, NJ, DE, MD, PA, WV, NY, and MA; North Central: ND, SD, NE, KS, MO, IA, MN, IL, WI, MI, IN, KY, and OH; South: FL, GA, SC, NC, VA, TN,AL, MS, LA,AR, OK, and TX; West: WA, OR, CA, ID, NV, UT,AZ, MT,WY, CO, and NM. Excludes HI and AK.)

Table 2 shows that regional allocations of human resources in 1992 were not equal. There were slight increases for agriculture and natural resources (AGNR) (30.3 FTE's) and family and consumer sciences (FCS) (253.4 FTE's) programming from 1977

to 1992 (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). While community resource and economic development (CRED) and 4-H youth development (4-H) activities decreased by, 488 and 1,320.4 FTE's, respectively (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). The regional differences were small in 1992 with the total of FTE's in agriculture and natural resources varying from 42% to 48%, family and consumer science from 24% to 29%, 4-H and youth development programming varying from 22% to 23% and community resource and economic development varying from 4% to 8%.

Table 2. Regional Allocations of FTE's in 1992

Geographic Level	Number of FTE's	Percentage of System
North Central	4911.6	31.6%
Northeast	2260.5	14.5%
South	6218.3	40.1%
West	2105.8	13.5%
National	15,496.2	99.7%*

*Due to rounding errors. (Northeast: ME,VT, NH, RI, CT, NJ, DE, MD, PA,WV, NY, and MA; North Central: ND, SD, NE, KS, MO, IA, MN, IL,WI, MI, IN, KY, and OH; South: FL, GA, SC, NC,VA, TN,AL, MS, LA,AR, OK, and TX; West: WA, OR, CA, ID, NV, UT,AZ, MT,WY, CO, and NM. Excludes HI and AK.)

Community resource and economic development FTE's comprised the largest share of FTE's in the North Central region (8%) and smallest (4%) in the Southern region in 1992 (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). The South had the smallest proportion of FTE's devoted to community resource and economic development of all the regions in

every year from 1977 through 1992. However, the Southern region has large numbers of Extension FTE's. Table 3 gives more insight into changing CRED efforts on a regional scale. When looking at the number of FTE's devoted to CRED programming the South had the second highest mean of any region with an average of 23.2 FTE's devoted to CRED programming and a standard deviation of 13.4. The North Central had both the highest mean and proportion of FTE's devoted to CRED programming with an average of 29.3 FTE's in each of the 13 states and a standard deviation of 19.4. The Northeast and West had the lowest means with 10.8 and 13.4 FTE's per state, respectively. The North Central varied the most, with a standard deviation of 19.4, and the West varied least, with a standard deviation of 10.1, in FTE's devoted to CRED programming in 1992. As the perceived needs, priorities and environmental demands changed from 1977 to 1992, Extension administrators allocated system resources away from community resource and economic development and 4-H youth development program areas and toward agriculture and natural resources and family and consumer science program areas; as reflected in the declines of FTE's devoted to the former and increases in FTE's devoted to the latter program areas.

Table 3. Regional Snapshots of CRED Efforts in 1977 and 1992

Geographic Level	% CRED 1977	Mean CRED FTE's	Std. Deviation	% CRED 1992	Mean CRED FTE's	Std. Deviation
North Central	9.7%	43.6	29.9	7.7%	29.3	19.4
Northeast	10.0%	19.5	17.6	5.7%	10.8	11.0
South	6.2%	36.6	24.1	4.4%	23.3	13.4
West	8.5%	16.5	8.7	6.4%	13.4	10.1
National	8.3%	N/A	N/A	5.9%	N/A	N/A

(Northeast: ME,VT, NH, RI, CT, NJ, DE, MD, PA,WV, NY, and MA; North Central: ND, SD, NE, KS, MO, IA, MN, IL,WI, MI, IN, KY, and OH; South: FL, GA, SC, NC,VA, TN,AL, MS, LA,AR, OK, and TX; West: WA, OR, CA, ID, NV, UT,AZ, MT,WY, CO, and NM. Excludes HI and AK.)

Difficulties in communicating what Extension has to offer and defining the roles of Extension professionals in community resource and economic development not only hampers support and awareness for CRED Extension programs but also stymies the development of effective and relevant educational programs. The Community Sustainability and Quality of Life portfolio provides leadership and management of resources at the national level and addresses many of traditional CRED program needs. Two reports have also been published recently which have helped Extension establish a unified voice across the country. Strategic Directions for Extension: Community Resource and Economic Development of 2009 and National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals' (NACDEP) Community Development Foundation

of Practice: Reaffirming Extension's Role in Community Development (2005) came forward in an effort to reaffirm Extension's role in community resource and economic development and outline the role Extension professionals are to play in communities. These three documents bring a concerted, strengthened effort to CRED Extension work, while clearly articulating Extension's role in community resource and economic development. Despite significant incongruities between state and national efforts, Extension is moving forward with a unified voice in CRED work.

The National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals' Community Development Foundation of Practice (2005) identifies community development core competencies and areas of specialization for CRED Extension professionals and puts forth a framework for understanding community dynamics. The report suggests aligning regional or national research and educational programming to address ecological integrity, social cohesion, effective decision-making and relevant economic opportunities. The report brought together regional Extension actors in an effort to articulate a common community development framework for all Extension professionals in the country. It extols common language Extension professionals can use throughout the nation. The areas of specialization put forth indicate desired skill sets that CRED Extension professionals need to have or should obtain to effectively work in community development. These broad skill sets include:

1. Economic Development Diversity and Vitality
2. Local Government
3. Natural Resources

4. Group Process and Facilitation
5. Organizational Development
6. Leadership and Civic Engagement
7. Public Issues Education
8. Community Services
9. Workforce Development

The report expresses the limitations associated with a large organization such as Extension stating that the areas of specialization are not comprehensive due to the decentralized nature of Extension and the diverse local community needs.

Strategic Directions for Extension: Community Resource and Economic Development provides the current vision of CRED Extension programming in communities at a national level and strategic direction for the future of effective CRED Extension programming (Southern Regional Rural Development Center, 2009). It states the three broad thematic program areas, which have been synthesized from national CRED Extension efforts: building economically viable communities, renewing civic engagement and enhancing community decision making and governance. These programs work to improve social and economic conditions in communities across America. The programs accomplish this by helping community leaders to understand the social decision-making process and fostering broad partnerships that link universities to local stakeholders, government agencies, businesses and organizations. It outlines target audiences as local government officials, economic development professionals, other public officials, local leaders, small businesses, community-based organizations and the general public. The document sets five strategic imperatives that will allow CRED

Extension programming to remain a nationally viable program:

1. Speak with a more unified voice.
2. Improve marketing
3. Develop and enhance partnerships.
4. Improve program development and delivery.
5. Support evaluation and research for CRED programs.

The document states that CES and CRED programs must respond to current and emerging needs and opportunities in our complex environment. The document was designed to assist CES and CRED professionals in working from a common framework of collaboration, learning and communication (Southern Regional Rural Development Center, 2009).

At the federal level, NIFA supports research, education and extension programs that impact citizens in non-metro and metro communities alike; however, a large portion of work resides in rural America (NIFA, 2009). The Land-Grant University mission is to provide educational and research programs that improve the lives of all citizens. Programs undertaken often have the greatest impact in rural communities that often times have fewer resources than their urban counterparts (NIFA, 2009). While the programs have greatest impact in rural areas, programs do not exclude urban areas. The Community Sustainability and Quality of Life portfolio is NIFA's, formerly the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), response to

declining rural communities. The portfolio is linked to the Land-Grant System and supports research, education, and extension programs that expand economic opportunities and quality of life enjoyed by residents and businesses in communities. NIFA supports education and training of residents of the community and business leaders to help communities thrive in a changing world (NIFA, 2009). NIFA and the Land-Grant universities achieve this by offering a broad array of teaching, research and extension programs that have the goal of increasing capital in the following areas: human, social, civic/political, cultural, natural, financial, and built infrastructures. Broad program areas are used to address the various forms of community capital that include, but are not limited to:

1. Individual and Family Resource Management and Consumer Economics
2. Community Resource Planning and Development
3. Healthy Living
4. Community Institutions, Health, and Social Services
5. Human Development and Family Well-Being
6. Sociological and Technological Change
7. Human Environmental Issues
8. 4-H Youth Development

The specific programs managed and reported are designed to fall into either primary knowledge areas (KA's) or secondary knowledge areas (KA's). The primary KA's are those that have the greatest impact on a certain identified issue and are not a primary KA of another portfolio. The secondary KA's contribute to the issue but are

included as a KA in another portfolio. The primary KA's identified in the Community Sustainability and Quality of Life portfolio are:

1. Knowledge Area 801: Individual and Family Resource Management
2. Knowledge Area 607: Consumer Economics
3. Knowledge Area 608: Community Resource Planning and Development
4. Knowledge Area 724: Healthy Lifestyle
5. Knowledge Area 802: Human Development and Family Well-Being
6. Knowledge Area 803: Sociological and Technological Change Affecting Individuals, Families, and Communities
7. Knowledge Area 804: Human Environmental Issues Concerning Apparel, Textiles, and Residential and Commercial Structures
8. Knowledge Area 805: Community Institutions, Health, and Social Services
9. Knowledge Area 806: 4-H Youth Development

The secondary knowledge areas are:

1. Knowledge Area 703: Nutrition Education and Behavior
2. Knowledge Area704: Nutrition and Hunger in the Population:
3. Knowledge Area 902: Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

These knowledge areas, with their corresponding program areas, work to address total human development by focusing on all forms of community capital.

Those primary knowledge areas under the Community Sustainability and Quality of

Life portfolio comprise 25.5% of all Extension system FTE's. The largest knowledge area is Youth Development, which comprises nearly half of FTE's devoted to the portfolio and the most devoted to any knowledge area of any portfolio (Hewitt, 2008). Of the top fifteen highest funded knowledge areas three come from the Community Sustainability and Quality of Life portfolio; Youth Development 12.3%, Human Development and Family Well-being 4.5%, and Community Resource Planning and Development 2.4%. Including the secondary knowledge areas in total FTE's devoted to this portfolio increases the total to 29.9% of all Extension FTE's (Hewitt, 2008). While these activities are highly funded in both human and financial resources there is limited overlap with the CRED program area as defined by individual states.

NIFA (2008) provides data on how CES resources are allocated. It gives insight into national and regional expenditures, knowledge area expenditures and portfolio expenditures. There are differences by institution, region, and type of expenditure of system resources as each institution and region strive to meet the needs of their diverse audiences. Among the four regions for research and extension activities in 2007, the Southern region had the highest total expenditures with 44.2% of system resources. North Central, Northeast and West followed this level of expenditure, with 27.6%, 16.2%, and 11.9%, respectively (NIFA, 2008). The most heavily funded activity by each region and institution was extension activities in most cases. At the Northeast 1890 institutions, research and extension activities both received 4.3% of total funding. At the Northeast 1862 institutions, research accounted for 44.4% of expenditures in 2007, while extension accounted for 47%. At the North Central 1890 institutions, 2.1% and 1.4% were spent on research and extension activities in 2007, respectively. At North Central

1862 institutions, research accounted for 41.6% and extension accounted for 54.9% of total regional expenditures. The West, which does not have 1890 institutions, allocated 50.7% to research and 49.3% to extension in 2007. The South had expenditures for research accounting for 13.7% at 1890 institutions and 35.3% at 1862 institutions. Extension activities in the South, accounted for 40% and 11% at 1862 and 1890 institutions, respectively. Eighteen sixty-two institutions, accounted for 95.3% of total FTE's in Extension in 2007, with 1890 institutions accounting for the remaining 4.8%.

Attitudes and Perceptions in Research

Perceptions and attitudes refer to how an individual acts toward some aspect of their environment with respect to their beliefs, feelings, thoughts and predispositions that arise from experiences and interactions with their environment (Mead, 1977). Perceptions are based on some understanding or awareness of an object and are in essence meaningful relationships relative to that object (Allport, 1955). Perceptions are what people believe to be true about a particular object or concept. They are formed in an individual's attempt to organize behavior and understand the world (Sargent and Williamson, 1966). The object may be anything that is visible or tangible, such as a person or group, or something that intangible and can be intellectually comprehended, such as a belief, concept or situation. Many things contribute to one's perception; gender, ethnicity, aptitude, employment, and geographic background all influence what one believes to be true (Sargent and Williamson, 1966). Attitudes are a combination of three distinguishable reactions toward an object: affective, cognitive, and behavioral (Stahlberg and Frey, 1996). Affective denotes emotions toward an object, cognitive concerns beliefs, opinions and ideas about an object and behavioral involves the

behavioral intentions or action tendencies toward an object. Attitudes are an expressed psychological tendency in evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor (Stahlberg and Frey, 1996). The evaluation refers to all classes of evaluative responding all of which are moderately correlated.

Methods of attitudinal measurement are based on the assumption that attitudes can be measured by the beliefs or opinions of persons relative to the object (Stahlberg and Frey, 1996). The dimensions of an attitude, or favor or disfavor, were determined to be measurable by three different approaches by a study conducted by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), with each approach being equally valid because the attitude itself underlies the disposition coming to fruition in the given behaviors. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) concluded that the three approaches are: a) subjects may be asked to evaluate an object directly using a measure on a Likert-type scale; b) subjects may be asked indirect questions for their beliefs about an object with their responses coded as positive or negative, c) non-verbal behaviors may be observed with regard to an object (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

Several studies have suggested that attitudes and perceptions influence behavior. Attitudes are fairly consistent learned tendencies to behave in certain ways toward objects or situations (Sargent and Williamson, 1966). O'Shaughnessy (1992) believes that perceptions are directly related to the actions of individuals. Sargent and Williamson (1966), state that attitudes are dynamic and tend to pass over into behavior. Thus the behaviors of administrators and directors of Extension are based on their attitudes and perceptions about a given object or situation.

Attitudes and Perceptions of the Public and Extension Clientele

A joint USDA-NASULGC study (1983) conducted a national survey that examined the perceptions of Extension personnel and clientele regarding the future direction of the Cooperative Extension Service. The study "Extension in the 80's" surveyed 13,455 Extension professionals and 4,228 public leaders from various parts of the nation. This study addressed programming, mission, resources and the role of Extension in the community. The study recommended:

1. Extension programming must retain broad flexibility at all levels if it is to remain relevant and responsive.
2. Extension must market itself properly and build awareness.
3. It must continue to change with the rapid changes of society.
4. Strengthening of bonds between local, state and federal partners is essential.
5. Extension personnel need to be more specialized with increased training to meet changing needs.

The study concluded that there was consensus on the direction of the Cooperative Extension Service. Moreover, with limited public resources and increased scrutiny for public programs, the CES must establish priorities within major program areas and market itself properly to maintain a positive image among stakeholders.

Warner and Christenson (1984) conducted the first study that focused on the total organization and the public's perception of it. The primary method of collecting data was by telephone survey of a national sample of the general population. This study sought to gauge public awareness of Extension, identify Extension clientele, and determine the level of satisfaction and support for Extension. The study found that 87% of the

population recognized the organization or its programs. With 40% recognizing the name, 52%, 45%, 77%, and 46% recognizing the agriculture, home economics, 4-H youth development and community development programs, respectively. The use of programs varied by population characteristics. Twenty-four percent of the West, 28% of the North Central, 24% of the Northeast and 32% of the Southern households reported use of Extension services. A higher proportion of rural and farm residents used Extension services. Extension serves primarily middle-class users and a low proportion of minorities. Community development was the least used program with 21% of users reporting use and agriculture the most highly used program with 62% of the population reporting use. Public support was fairly consistent throughout the U.S. with few wanting funding cut. Some of the forces that were negatively affecting the organization were: no unified voice speaking for Extension, loss of rural congressional seats and dependence upon agricultural programming.

Warner et al., (1996) conducted a study to determine how people's perception of Extension had changed since The Cooperative Extension Service: A National Assessment (Warner and Christenson, 1984). In addition to changes in awareness and use, Warner et al., also documented how funding priorities have changed over the years. A random sample of the public, 1,124 interviewed, were surveyed by telephone with a completion rate of 60%. The 1982 survey interviewed 1,048 adults, a cooperation rate of 70%. A comparison of the studies was possible due to the close sample sizes and response rate.

The 1996 study found that 45% of the population had heard of Extension before, a modest gain from the previous study figure of 40%. Awareness of community

development and 4-H youth development has declined by 8%, to 38% and 69%, respectively; all other program areas have remained relatively unchanged. It was found that greatest support and use of Extension came from people in the South and Middle West, among those with higher educational attainment, among rural and farm populations, and people over 40 years of age. When respondents were asked about spending priorities and how they would distribute $100 of tax money among the teaching, research and Extension functions of land-grant universities they indicated that they would spend $45 teaching students on-campus, $30 on outreach, and $25 on research. This study found that there were no significant changes in awareness and support for Extension. One significant conclusion made from this study was that despite increased marketing and changes in program direction and target audience, little has changed. Extension continues to have a fragmented image and target populations such as urban residents, youth and individuals with limited resources or low education remain the least likely to be aware of Extension services (Warner et al., 1996). In addition to continued low visibility among non-traditional clientele, Extension registered an annual decline in use from the 1984 study.

Clarkson-Frisbie et al. (2008) found awareness of the CES to be strikingly different than the 45% of the general public who were aware of the organization in the previous study conducted by Warner et al., in 1996. Sixteen percent of adults aged 18 to 44 years were familiar with the CES; 13% somewhat familiar and 3% very familiar. Eighty-four percent were unaware of the CES and 15% didn't know or refused to answer. In base program areas awareness was less varied with fewer people being aware of each

discipline. Fourteen percent of the respondents were familiar with CRD, 22% with agriculture and natural resources, 20% with 4-H and youth development and 16% with family and consumer science. The most effective ways to provide information found by the study were found to be television, newspaper articles and local radio, in rank order. The National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences concluded that effective marketing needed to be undertaken. Though the results were most applicable to family and consumer science program area, the study has immediate relevance to all organizational subunits of Extension as well as Extension as a whole.

Attitudes and Perceptions of Legislators

A study by Miller (1986) was conducted to ascertain the perceptions of urban raised legislators in South Carolina of the Cooperative Extension Service. A mailed questionnaire was used to collect information from 124 representatives and 46 senators. Sixty-five percent of the population responded. Party affiliation and geographic location of the district were found to significantly affect the perceptions of state representatives and senators of that state. The study found that 75% saw Extension as a public service agency rather than an educational entity, 75% of the population had little knowledge of Extension's mission, 55% saw Extension programs as effective, and 17% were unaware of contributions or unaware of the extent of contributions made by Extension. They also found that legislators had little knowledge of the four base program areas. Seventy-seven percent of the legislators ranked the agriculture program area as the most important, followed by 4-H, community development, and home economics.

Kabes (1991) conducted a study comprised of interviews and a questionnaire that was designed to determine how legislators arrived at Extension funding decisions. A pilot study of a small group of Minnesota state legislators who voted on Extension funding were interviewed by telephone to determine the factors each would use when making funding decisions. The factors were combined into a written survey composed of 52 different points ascertained from the interview. The 52-point survey was then mailed to the 20 legislators who made up the total legislative group voting on Extension System resources in Minnesota. The study found that Minnesota state legislators were influenced mainly by their perceptions of Extension's results and impacts.

Nolan (2008) conducted a study to describe the perceptions of the Ohio General Assembly in relation to Ohio State Extension and to identify characteristics and factors that affect their state budget decisions. A five-part questionnaire was developed to collect data for this study that targeted all 132 Ohio State legislators and was mailed to the members of the Ohio General Assembly. The study found that 87% of the respondents perceived the effectiveness of service provided to their constituents by the Ohio Extension System to be very important. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents responded that Extension was making either great or many contributions to their constituents. In making budget consideration, 82% of the respondents indicated that they would like to receive their information about OSU Extension by conversations with the county OSU Extension staff.

Attitudes and Perceptions of Administrators

Thompson and Gwynn (1989) conducted a telephone survey that examined perceptions held by college of agriculture deans in each of the fifty 1862 institutions

regarding the role of Extension over the years and how that role should change in the future, if at all. Through the study, the deans recommended:

1. More integration in the colleges of agriculture to facilitate coordinated efforts in planning and teaching.
2. Increased specialization was needed among agents that operate regionally.
3. Extension should do more multidisciplinary research to develop new audiences and support.
4. Extension personnel should be engaged more heavily in research.
5. Extension should do more in a changing economy to ensure support and effective programming.

A Delphi study by Comer (2002) was conducted to examine the perceptions of North Carolina state Extension administrators regarding the role and future direction of Cooperative Extension programs within that state. This study found that:

1. They perceived that community development, leadership development, and environmental education are or should be a part of Extension's mission.
2. Poor political support and competition from the private sector affect Extension System resources.
3. The CES of North Carolina's mission should reflect more than it does.
4. The urbanization of America will affect Extension in the future.
5. Extension must work hard to develop linkages within communities to help with marketing.

This study illuminated potential environmental constraints that could reduce organizational resources as well as allowing for North Carolina Extension administrators

to gain useful insight into the direction of potential future policies, planning and programming.

Attitudes and Perceptions of Extension Personnel

Tondl (1991) examined the perceptions if 163 agents, 12 administrators and 300 randomly selected board members about change. Tondl (1991) found that administrators were more positive toward change than agents. The study found that the majority of male agents perceived the need for change negatively, with the opposite being true for female agents. Male and female agents were positive about participating in change, with females being more positive than males.

Since the formalization of CRED Extension work, perceptions of role and priorities have varied widely. Initial CRED Extension perception and attitudinal studies focused primarily on identifying needs, establishing priorities and finding how CRED fit into Extension's portfolio. No recent studies exist that explore perceptions of this organizational subunit. The roles, programs and support CRED Extension professionals receive changes over time with administrative perceptions of environmental demands.

A study by Cebotarev and Brown (1969) was conducted to determine how CRED work is perceived and is being implemented by personnel in three states; Maryland, Missouri, and Pennsylvania. This study highlights the disparate internal and external perceived state priorities and role CRED professionals have in communities. When identifying the most important job of CRD agents; Maryland identified creation or reorganization of new development organizations as most important with a high of 28%, Pennsylvania identified working with County Agents in an advisory capacity with 29%, while Missouri identified serving as an advisor to local development oriented groups at

31%. When identifying what the outcomes of a good CRD program should be, a high of 39% of Maryland respondents identified new active county development organizations, while Pennsylvania and Missouri identified well-informed area development organizations at 33% and 38%, respectively. The majority of respondents identified the development of human capital as being perceived focus of CRD programming. The majority of Missouri respondents indicated political science as the most important specializations of CRD staff, Pennsylvania identified land use and Maryland identified employment. Disparities existed both between states and within states.

Summary of Literature

The literature revealed that the evolution of development efforts and the organizational evolution in general have paralleled the major social-political events of the 20th century. Extension, as a dynamic organization charged with diffusing practical information to the masses, has broadened its mission over the years to accommodate the country's various development priorities. This change has been a result of either administrative leadership or legislative mandate. Extension has had constant questioning of role, priorities, audience and relevance; constant problems with awareness; and calls of mission creep. Despite issues regarding programming and effectiveness Extension has adapted to the socio-political environment and now serves a broader national purpose than its initial charter outlined. It now consists of four base programs at the state level and six at the national. There are regional and state differences in programming, research, and human/financial resource priorities due to perceived needs of CRED as an organizational subunit and the variation of environmental demands among the geographic regions in which Extension serves. Despite differences in human and financial resources

devoted to CRED efforts there remains clear place for community resource and economic development in the Extension portfolio.

The literature also indicated that administrative leadership is influenced by their attitudes and perceptions of organizational needs and environmental demands. Stakeholders believe that the future of Extension rests in the organization's ability to adapt to environmental demands (change), enter into new markets, form collaborative relationships and expand awareness of what Extension has to offer as a public service organization.

Studies have been conducted to determine Extension System resources and the external social and political issues effecting Extension System resources but few have been conducted to assess organizational subunits. This study will allow for greater understanding of regional and national priorities, perceived role of Extension CRED professionals, perceptions of external social and political issues relevant to organizational resources, and research/programming priorities; which will allow for greater communication of CRED Extension characteristics, efforts and direction; allowing Extension to communicate more effectively with stakeholders about organizational purpose and make-up.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter presents information regarding population, sample, instrumentation, validity and reliability, research methods, and the data analyses employed for performing the study as they relate to the four research objectives.

Population and Sample

This study was conducted by using a cross-sectional and descriptive research design. The research instrument was created as a web-based survey, which was distributed electronically through e-mail to all administrators, directors, associate administrators, and associate directors in the Cooperative Extension Service of the United States. Both groups of administrators and directors were chosen to effectively cover the group due to their position and responsibility within the Extension system. This population consisted of 115 people (N=115), of these, 42 responded.

The study sought to examine the perceptions of administrators and directors who are responsible for allocating funds, providing organizational support and guiding and implementing policy. If CRED is to become a more effective, strengthened programmatic area, the attitudes and perceptions of those guiding policy and allocating funds must be understood. Comer, Birkenholz and Stewart (2004) emphasized this by stating that administration in an organization such as Extension must support new priorities and initiatives for changes to successfully occur. Eliciting responses that pertain to current CRED efforts, role, function, and direction will provide a better picture

of national and regional Extension CRED issues and priorities. In addition, an environmental scan was conducted to elicit responses regarding perceived social and political issues affecting Extension.

Instrumentation

The purpose of the instrument was to elicit perceptions regarding CRED Extension efforts, function and role as well as the external environment in which it functions. Participants were instructed to state responses using three different five point Likert-type scales that were later used for data analyses:

1. where "strongly disagree" represented 1, "disagree" 2, "neutral" 3, "agree" 4, and "strongly agree" 5 (1=SD, 2=D, 3=NA or "Neutral", 4=A, 5=SA);
2. where "least important" represented 1, "not very important" 2, "neutral" 3, "somewhat important" 4, "most important" 5;
3. where "very negatively" represented 1, "negatively" 2, "neutral" 3, "positively" 4, "very positively" 5.

The researcher elected to use an online survey because of the wide geographical area covered in this survey and timeliness of distribution and response rates. In addition, Dillman (2000) states that university faculty, government employees, and other professionals make ideal candidates for e-mail based surveys. The instrument was created using Market Research Interview (MRInterview). The tool allowed for the researcher to design the survey in a web browser that continually collected data. The questions were set as variable labels, which later became value labels in a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 17.0 (SPSS) file. After the allotted time for the survey had ended the researcher downloaded the data in an SPSS, 17.0 file.

Invitations to participate were sent via e-mail with an attached Word document that contained the live survey link as well as an explanation of the purpose of the survey.

Validity and Reliability

The instrument's content (located in the appendix) and face validity were assessed several times by different specialists in the Extension system. Comments on content by all specialists contributed to the validity and reliability of the instrument by improving the clarity of the questions asked. Validity was continually assessed pre-implementation by several members of the Southern Program Leadership Network-Community Resource Development (PLN-CRD) committee who reviewed the instrument with comments on content. An Evaluation and Staff Development Extension Specialist from the University of Tennessee reviewed the instrument and made comments on content. An evaluation of the instrument was done by an assistant director of a regional rural development center and a CRED state specialist to assess face and content validity. The director of Extension at the University of Tennessee reviewed the instrument and made suggestions on content.

A pilot test was also employed to test the validity and reliability of the survey. Two deans from the sample population tested the survey and made comments on content, which improved validity and reliability through improved clarity of the instrument. The pilot test indicated that clarification was needed in the definition of the year in question. The instrument was then changed to reflect fiscal year 2009, as that was most recent year for reporting. All other content was given approval for immediate dissemination.

Methods of Data Collection and Timeframe

Several methods were used to improve the response rate of the population, which was anticipated to be low due to the deluge of surveys that administrators and directors in Extension receive and the multitude of demands on their time. The researcher chose to employ a multiple contact strategy to overcome the potential for a low response rate. Dillman (2000) states that a multiple contact strategy can be employed to increase response rate. An e-mail was sent by a University of Tennessee CRED Extension specialist to fellow colleagues across the Land-Grant System urging them to follow-up with their institution's appropriate administrator as the instrument was designed with the potential to be a partial fulfillment of the Southern PLN-CRD Committees 2010 Plan of Work. An e-mail was then sent by the director of the Southern Rural Development Center prompting the population to respond. Personalization of the initial message and the following reminders was done to increase response rate. The final reminder was personalized with information on current response rates of the region to all those who had not yet completed the survey. Dillman (2000) states that the email messages most likely to get a response are those that are personalized. The e-mail content was kept brief and described the purpose and benefit of the survey to Extension. Brevity was of the utmost importance because of the heavy reliance on e-mail by the population and the deluge of surveys that they receive fostering less attentive reading behavior (Dillman, 2000).

1. Several members of the PLN-CRD committee reviewed initial proposal of the instrument on January 7, 2010, with continued comments throughout pre-dissemination.

2. An Evaluation and Staff Development Extension Specialist from the University of Tennessee reviewed the instrument and made suggestions on content on February 18, 2010.
3. Assistant director of a regional rural development center and a CRED state specialist reviewed content on April 4, 2010.
4. On April 28, 2010, an Extension director reviewed the instrument and made suggestions on content.
5. On May 5, 2010, a pilot test was conducted. An e-mail containing an explanation of the purpose of the study and a test link to the web survey was sent to two administrators of the population.
6. Contact information in the form of e-mail addresses were provided by the Association of Public Land-Grant Universities (APLU) via Dean Tim Cross of the University of Tennessee on May 5, 2010.
7. On May 6, 2010, the survey and letter of purpose were e-mailed to all 115 Extension directors and associate directors. Fourteen participants (12.1%) responded to the initial mailing.
8. On May 13, 2010, an e-mail was sent by a CRED Extension Specialist from the University of Tennessee to fellow colleagues throughout the Land-Grant System urging them to follow-up with their appropriate administrators. Four (3.4%) responded to this approach.
9. On May 19, 2010, a letter was sent by the director of the Southern Rural Development Center encouraging administrators and directors of all Land-Grant universities to respond. Four (8.6%) responded to this approach.

10. On May 25, 2010, a personalized reminder was sent to those who had not responded. Ten (8.6%) responded to this reminder.
11. The initial deadline for the survey was extended from May 31, 2010 to June 6, 2010 due to low response rates.
12. A final, personalized reminder was sent to all of those in the population who had not responded on June 2, 2010. Ten (8.6%) responded to the final reminder.
13. Overall, 42 of 115 (36.5%) responded to this survey.

Data Analysis

The following research objectives were used to analyze the data:

1. To gain insight into regional and national CRED Extension efforts
2. To describe the political and social issues facing CRED Extension in the U.S.3
3. To examine the perceptions and attitudes of CES administrators and directors regarding research and programming priorities in the U.S.4.
4. To examine the perceived role of CRED professionals held by administrators and directors in the U.S.

Questions 1 and 2 were demographic questions that were needed to assess regional and institutional variation. Questions 3 through 10 were used to accomplish research objective one in which efforts were qualified by the researcher as human and financial resources allocated to CRED Extension research and programming. Research objective two (social-political issues affecting Extension) was accomplished through analyzing the responses from questions 17, 18, and 19. Research objective three (research and programming priorities as well as emerging issues) was accomplished by analyzing responses from questions 12, 13 and 14. Research and programming priorities

were gleaned from the Southern Rural Development Center's Blueprint for the Rural South, which was a synthesis of the series of rural development roundtables held in each of the 13 southern regions states starting in 2006, and the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development publication Economic and Community Development Issues and Priorities for Extension and Research: A Survey of Extension Professionals in the Northeast. The last research objective (the role of Extension CRED) was accomplished by analyzing questions 11, 15, 16 and 20.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)/ Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures and chi-square analyses were employed to test for regional differences of administrators and directors perceptions of efforts, role and function of CRED Extension programming as well as perceptions regarding the external social-political environment that affects Extension System resources. Fink (2006) states that differences in outcomes of a particular survey can be tested using chi-square and MANOVA/ANOVA tests. Data was analyzed using SPSS 17.0.

A MANOVA procedure was conducted to test the between-group (regional level) differences in perceived CRED Extension efforts, role, function and social-political issues affecting Extension System resources. A MANOVA procedure was employed because the researcher desired a single, overall statistical test done on each set of variables, rather than each variable individually (Carey, 1998). If statistically significant differences ($p = .05$ or less) were found then individual ANOVA tests were conducted to see which items differed. According to Fink (2006) the ANOVA method allows the researcher to test averages of two or more groups (regions) to see which differed. Pairwise comparisons were then conducted to see how items differed. MANOVA and

ANOVA tests were used for all numerical data. MANOVA/ANOVA procedures were employed for questions related to research objectives one, two and four; perceived role, social-political issues, and efforts (qualified as human and financial resources allocated to CRED Extension research and programming). Question seven was the only categorical question that fell into the aforementioned research objectives (objective one) and as such a chi-squared analysis was employed for that item.

Chi-squared analyses were conducted to examine whether Extension administrators and directors differed in categorical responses for research objective three and question seven, which falls into research objective one. If statistically significant differences ($p = .05$ or less) occurred then the adjusted residual was analyzed to see which regions differed and how they differed from one another.

Chapter Four

Results

Presentation of Data Analyses

This chapter presents the research findings of the study. Findings are organized by four research objectives. The four specific research objectives were as follows:

1. To gain insight into regional and national CRED Extension efforts.
2. To describe the political and social issues facing CRED Extension in the U.S.
3. To examine the perceptions and attitudes of CES administrators and directors regarding research and programming priorities in the U.S.
4. To examine the perceived role of CRED Extension professionals held by administrators and directors in the U.S.

Demographics of Respondents

The state and institution of employment were sought to better understand regional and institutional variations among respondents. Table 4 presents the aforementioned demographic characteristics of all respondents. Contact information was provided by the APLU in the form of e-mail addresses. The researcher e-mailed all 115 administrators, directors, associate administrators and associate directors in relationship to administrative responsibility. This provided for some states to have more respondents possible than others.

The question was asked as to which state, territory or district respondents were employed; which was later used to categorize them according to a specific geographic region. Geographic regions were gleaned from the websites of the regional rural

development centers and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). They are defined as follows:

- Northeast: VT, NH, RI, CT, NJ, DE, MD, PA, WV, NY, MA, ME, and DC
- North Central: ND, SD, NE, KS, MO, IA, MN, IL, WI, MI, IN, and OH
- South: FL, GA, SC, NC, VA, TN, AL, MS, LA, AR, OK, TX, PR, and VI
- West: WA, OR, CA, ID, NV, UT,AZ, MT,WY, CO, NM, HI , AK, FM, MP and GU

The survey had a total response rate of 36.5% (42/115); (40.4% coming from the South, 26.1% from the Northeast, 16.6% from the North Central and 16.6% from the West).

A question was asked as to whether respondents represented an 1862 or an 1890 institution. The survey had a 28% response rate for 1890 institutions and a 36.8% response rate for 1862 institutions. The researcher aimed to observe institutional variation as well as regional variation but due to the low response rates of 1890 institutions and to the survey in general analysis was limited to providing a picture of regional variation or national consensus. Overall, 35 (1862) institutions and seven (1890) institutions responded.

Objective One

Research objective one was to gain insight into regional and national perceptions of CRED Extension efforts, as qualified by human and financial resources. Analysis was conducted to provide a picture of regional variation or national consensus. This analysis was accomplished by employing MANOVA/ANOVA tests for the numerical responses to questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and10 and chi-squared analyses on categorical responses to

questions 7 and 8.

Table 4. Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Region	Percent	State, District or Territory	1862	1890
South	40.4%		10	7
	4.7%	Alabama	X	X
	4.7%	Florida	XX	
	2.3%	Georgia	X	
	4.7%	Kentucky	X	X
	2.3%	Louisiana	X	
	4.7%	Mississippi	X	X
	2.3%	North Carolina	X	
	4.7%	Oklahoma		XX
	4.7%	Tennessee	X	X
	4.7%	Texas	X	X
North Central	16.6%		7	0
	2.3%	Indiana	X	
	2.3%	Iowa	X	
	2.3%	Michigan	X	
	2.3%	Missouri	X	
	2.3%	North Dakota	X	
	2.3%	Ohio	X	
	2.3%	Wisconsin	X	
Northeast	26.1%		11	0
	2.3%	District of Columbia	X	
	2.3%	Maine	X	
	7.1%	Maryland	XXX	
	2.3%	New Hampshire	X	
	2.3%	New Jersey	X	
	2.3%	New York	X	
	2.3%	Vermont	X	
	4.7%	West Virginia	XX	
West	16.6%		7	0
	2.3%	Alaska	X	
	2.3%	Guam	X	
	2.3%	Idaho	X	
	2.3%	Montana	X	
	2.3%	Nevada	X	
	2.3%	Oregon	X	
	2.3%	Utah	X	
Total	99.7%*	32	35	7

* Due to rounding errors.

A MANOVA procedure was employed to test the between-group (regions) differences in perceived CRED Extension efforts. A MANOVA test was conducted because the researcher desired a single, overall statistical test done on each set of dependent variables, rather than each individual dependent variable (Carey, 1998). If results were found to be statistically significant (p= .05 or less) then individual ANOVA tests were conducted to see which items differed. Pairwise comparison was then done for significant items to see how regions differed. If significant variation did not occur, consensus was found and a national picture was provided. Chi-squared analyses were conducted on questions 7 and 8 to test for statistical significant differences (p = .05 or less) between-groups (regions). If significant variance was found then the adjusted residual was analyzed to see which regions differed and how they differed from one another. An adjusted residual of >2 was used to describe occurrences which were more likely to agree with the item indicated and an adjusted residual of <-2 was used to describe those occurrences which were less likely to agree with the item indicated.

Question three (N=42) was designed to measure whether perceived human resource allocations were sufficient to meet institutional CRED Extension objectives. The results of the MANOVA test for question three of the survey was: Wilks' Λ=.386, F (18, 93.82) =2.083, p=.012. Therefore, individual ANOVAs were conducted to see which items differed. It was found that regions differed (p=.001) in regards to one dependent variable in this set of variables. "The number of funded FTE's devoted to CRED Extension programming is sufficient at your institution" was found to have significant variance between regions. Pairwise comparison exposed that the North Central region varied

significantly from all other regions. Tables 5 and 6 present the national consensus and regional variation that occurred among respondents (N=42) in this set of variables. It was found that the North Central region was significantly more likely to "agree", though neutral, with the aforementioned dependent variable than every other region. In general, respondents perceived that human resource allocations to CRED Extension programming were insufficient to meet institutional CRED Extension objectives.

Table 5. National Consensus in Efforts; Combined County and Campus-Based FTE's

Dependent Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
The current programming done by CRED county-level professionals matches the needs of those counties.	2.48	1.21
The current research done by CRED university-based specialists matches your state's needs.	2.36	0.95
CRED programming is sufficient to meet your Extension System's community development objectives.	2.31	0.97
The current level of funded FTE's is sufficient for the Extension System at your institution.	2.07	0.97
The number of Extension FTE's devoted to CRED research is sufficient at your institution.	1.98	0.83
The number of funded FTE's devoted to CRED Extension programming is sufficient at your institution.*	1.93	0.83

* Regional Variation

Table 6. Regional Variation in Efforts; Combined County and Campus-Based FTE's

Dependent Variable	Region (I)	Region (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Region (I) Mean	Significance
The number of funded FTE's devoted to CRED Extension programming is sufficient at your institution.	South	Northeast	-.26	1.64	.767
		North Central	-1.35*		.001
		West	.08		.995
	Northeast	South	.26	2.09	.767
		North Central	-1.09*		.013
		West	.34		.750
	North Central	South	1.35*	2.71	.001
		Northeast	1.09*		.013
		West	1.43*		.003
	West	South	-.08	2.42	.995
		Northeast	-.34		.750
		North Central	-1.43*		.003

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

Question four sought the number of FTE's employed at the respondent's institutions. The researcher decided to eliminate this question due to a high number of invalid responses in addition to the low response rate the survey received.

Question five (N=42) sought to measure perceived distribution of human resource allocations among the four base program areas of Extension. The results of the MANOVA test for question five of the survey was: Wilks' Λ=.519, F= (12, 84.95) =1.99, p=.035. Therefore, individual ANOVAs to see which items differed. It was found that half of the items differed (p=.037, p=.034) in this set of four variables. Tables 7 and 8 show national consensus and regional variation in FTE's devoted to the four base program areas in Extension. Percentage of FTE's devoted to Agriculture and Natural Resources (p=.037) and Family and Consumer Sciences (p=.034) were found to be significantly difference between regions. Pairwise comparison exposed that the South

and North Central regions varied significantly from one another in percentage of FTE's devoted to Family and Consumer Sciences; the North Central region having a significantly higher percentage of FTE's devoted to Family and Consumer Sciences than the South. It was also found that in the ANOVA test the North Central and West appear to have significantly lower percentages of FTE's devoted to Agriculture and Natural Resources, however, pairwise comparisons and mean differences did not show any significant difference.

Table 7. National Consensus; Percent FTE's Devoted to Program Area

Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Agriculture and Natural Resources	49.74%	17.34
Family and Consumer Sciences*	22.59%	9.02
4-H Youth Development	22.23%	9.62
CRED	8.31%	6.71

* Significant regional variation.

Question six (N=42) was designed to measure perceived human resource distributions among the various geographic levels of Extension. The results of the MANOVA test for question six were: Wilks' Λ=.854, F (9, 82.89) =.616, p=.780. MANOVA analysis found no significant differences between regional means. Nationally, most FTE's were perceived as being campus-based (mean, 53.2%, std. deviation, 32.54) followed by county-based (mean, 29.2%, std. deviation, 32.85) and region-based (mean, 14.7%, 25.19).

Table 8. Regional Variation; Percent FTE's devoted to Program Area

Dependent Variable	Region (I)	Region (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Region (I) Mean	Sig.
Agriculture and Natural Resources	South	Northeast	.66	55.56	1.000
		North Central	16.13		.138
		West	17.90		.110
	Northeast	South	-.66	54.90	1.000
		North Central	15.47		.223
		West	17.23		.179
	North Central	South	-16.13	39.42	.138
		Northeast	-15.47		.223
		West	1.76		.997
	West	South	-17.90	37.66	.110
		Northeast	-17.23		.179
		North Central	-1.76		.997
Family and Consumer Sciences	South	Northeast	-3.44	18.56	.736
		North Central	-10.72*		.036
		West	-7.94		.210
	Northeast	South	3.44	22.00	.736
		North Central	-7.29		.302
		West	-4.50		.723
	North Central	South	10.72*	29.28	.036
		Northeast	7.29		.302
		West	2.79		.931
	West	South	7.94	26.50	.210
		Northeast	4.50		.723
		North Central	-2.79		.931

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

Question seven (N=42) was designed to measure perceptions on changes in FTE's allocated to the four base programs in the last two years. The results for the chi-squared test for question seven of the survey was: chi-square=6.543, df=6, p=.365 for agriculture and natural resources; chi-square=2.310, df=6, p=.907 for family and consumer sciences; chi-square=2.686, df=6, p=.847 for 4-H youth development; chi-square-5.436, df=6,

p=.489 for CRED. Table 9 shows perceived changes in FTE allocation in the last two years among the four base program areas. Significant regional variation was not found. It was found that the majority of FTE's were decreasing or remaining the same in all four base program areas.

Table 9. National Consensus; Perceived Changes in Program Areas

Dependent Variable	Count Increasing	Percent	Count Decreasing	Percent	Count Remaining the Same	Percent
Agriculture and Natural Resources Programming	10	23.8%	21	50.0%	11	26.2%
Family and Consumer Sciences Programming	7	16.7%	23	54.8%	12	28.6%
4-H Youth Development Programming	10	23.8%	19	45.2%	13	31.0%
CRED Programming	8	19.0%	17	40.5%	17	40.5%

Question eight (N-42) sought the perceptions on the percent budget allocated to CRED programming in fiscal year 2009. Chi-squared analysis for question number eight yielded: chi-square=8.340, df=3, p=.039. Statistically significant variance was found (p=.039) and the adjusted residual was analyzed to see which regions differed and how. Tables 10 and 11 show national consensus and that the South and West varied significantly in categorical responses. The South had more system resources devoted to CRED in the 1%-5% category than every other region and less devoted in the 6% or more category than every other region. The West had more system resources devoted in the 6% or more category than every other region. In addition, it shows that the majority of regions devote more than 6% of total system resources to CRED programming.

Table 10. National Consensus; Percent Budget Devoted to CRED Programming

Dependent Variable	Frequency	Cumulative Percent
1%-5%	15	35.7
6%-10%	20	83.3
11%-15%	3	90.5
16%-20%	1	92.9
21%-25%	2	97.6
51+%	1	100.0

Table 11. Regional Variation of Extension System Resources Devoted to CRED Programming

	Independent Variable		1%-5%	6% or more	Total
Region	South*	Count	10	7	17
		% within Region	58.8%	41.2%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	2.6	-2.6	
	Northeast	Count	3	8	11
		% within Region	27.3%	72.7%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-.7	.7	
	North Central	Count	2	5	7
		% within Region	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-.4	.4	
	West*	Count	0	7	7
		% within Region	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-2.2	2.2	
Total		Count	15	27	42
		% within Region	35.7%	64.3%	100.0%

* Significant regional variation.

Question nine (N=29) sought perceptions on the perceived source of funding for CRED Extension programming. Thirteen responses contained invalid data and the researcher chose to eliminate those responses. MANOVA analysis for question number nine of the survey yielded: Wilks' Λ=.560, F (12, 58.49) =1.195, p=.308. Significant variance did not occur between regions. Most Extension funding was perceived to have originated from state sources with a mean of 45%, and a std. deviation of 24.6, followed

by federal sources (mean, 27%, std. deviation, 24.86), local sources (mean, 19.5%, std, deviation, 23.79) and private sources (mean, 13.37, std. deviation, 14.46).

Question ten (N=42) was designed to measure perceptions as to what budget constraints may be limiting support for CRED Extension programming. The results of the MANOVA test for question number ten of the survey was: Wilks' Λ=.723, F (12, 92.89) =1.008, p=.448. Significant variance did not occur between regions. The respondents identified state budget constraints (mean, 4.10, std. deviation, .906) as those that affected support for CRED programming most. Respondents indicated that they were slightly more neutral in perceiving limited external grant support (mean, 3.05, std. deviation, .987) as affecting support for CRED programming than federal budget constraints (mean, 3.29, std. deviation, 1.019) or local budget constraints (mean, 3.36, std. deviation, 1.1).

Objective Two

Research objective two was to describe the political and social issues facing CRED Extension programming and Extension as a whole. This was accomplished by employing MANOVA/ANOVA tests for the numerical responses to questions 17, 18 and 19. A MANOVA procedure was employed to test the between-group (regions) differences in perceived social and political issues. A MANOVA test was conducted because the researcher desired a single, overall statistical test done on each set of dependent variables, rather than each individual dependent variable (Carey, 1998). If results were found to be statistically significant (p= .05 or less) then individual ANOVA tests were conducted to see which items differed. Pairwise comparison was then done for

significant items to see how regions differed. If significant variation did not occur, consensus was found and a national picture was provided.

Question seventeen (N=42) of the survey was part of an environmental scan with the purpose of measuring perceived internal and external political support for CRED Extension programming and to a lesser degree, Extension as a whole. The results of the MANOVA test for question seventeen of the survey yielded: Wilks' Λ=.469, F (27, 88.258) =.967, p=.520. No significant difference occurred between regions. Table 12 indicates perceived internal and external political support for CRED programming and Extension as a whole. Administrators did not agree that political support was waning or that program relevance limits political support.

Question eighteen (N=42) sought perceptions as to how CRED Extension might improve political support and public awareness of CRED Extension programming in regards to what programs Extension has to offer. The results of the MANOVA test for question eighteen yielded: Wilks' Λ=.496, F (94.26, 15) =1.817, p=.043. Significant variation occurred, therefore, individual ANOVAs were conducted to see which items differed. It was found that regions differed (p=.002) in regards to one dependent variable in this set of variables. "Mass media should be used more to build awareness of what the Extension System has to offer." was found to have significant variance between regions. Pairwise comparison exposed that the North Central and South varied significantly from one another. Tables 13 and 14 present the national consensus and regional variation that occurred for this question. It was found that the South was more likely to agree (4.47) with the aforementioned variable than the neutral North Central (3.0) region. It was

found that increased organizational linkages and mass media would improve political support and public awareness for CRED Extension programming.

Table 12. Perceived Political Support and Image Constraints

Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Extension System at my institution has maintained a positive image among the general public.	3.95	1.011
The Extension System at my institution has maintained a positive image among legislators.	3.79	1.138
My institution's CRED Extension programming has maintained a positive public image.	3.71	.970
Lack of public awareness limits support for CRED Extension efforts at my institution.	3.21	1.071
My institution's CRED Extension programming enjoys a broad base of political support.	3.17	.853
University-level support is constraining CRED Extension efforts at my institution.	2.98	1.070
Political support for my institution's CRED Extension programming is waning.	2.60	1.231
Program relevance limits support for CRED Extension efforts at my institution.	2.50	1.088
Political support is waning for the Extension System at my institution.	2.48	1.273

Table 13. National Consensus; Building Political Support for Extension

Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Increased external organizational linkages would improve political support for CRED Extension efforts at my institution.	4.12	.504
Mass media should be used more to build awareness of what Extension has to offer.*	4.00	.911
Broadening the target audience would improve political support for my institution's CRED Extension efforts.	3.93	.838
Increased marketing would improve political support for my institution's CRED Extension programming.	3.93	.712
Increased university-level linkages would improve political support for CRED Extension efforts at my institution.	3.90	.692

* Regional Variation.

Table 14. Regional Variation; Building Political Support for Extension

Dependent Variable	Region (I)	Region (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Region (I) Mean	Significance
Mass media should be used more to build awareness of what the Extension System has to offer.	South	Northeast	.56	4.47	.262
		North Central	1.47*		.001
		West	.47		.542
	Northeast	South	-.56	3.90	.262
		North Central	.91		.092
		West	-.09		.995
	North Central	South	-1.47*	3.00	.001
		Northeast	-.91		.092
		West	-1.00		.095
	West	South	-.47	4.00	.542
		Northeast	.09		.995
		North Central	1.00		.095

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

Table 15. National Consensus; Demographic Factors Affecting Extension CRED Programming

Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Technological Innovations in Communications	3.83	.730
Multi-cultural Issues	3.71	.673
Globalization	3.64	.821
Increased Urbanization	3.40	.798
Immigration	3.38	.623
The Aging of America	3.29	.891

Objective Three

Research objective two was to examine the perceptions and attitudes of CES administrators regarding research and programming and emerging issues in their region. The top five programming and research priorities and emerging issues were analyzed for regional variation using a chi-squared test. Tests were conducted on questions 12, 13 and

14 for statistical significant differences (p = .05 or less) between-groups (regions). If significant variance was found then the adjusted residual was analyzed to see which regions differed and how they differed from one another. An adjusted residual of >2 was used to describe responses which were more likely to agree with the item indicated and an adjusted residual of <-2 was used to describe those responses which were less likely to agree with the item indicated. National consensus was found for each item.

Question twelve (N=42) sought perceptions as to what the current institutional priorities of CRED programming. This was done in an effort provide national or regional pictures of what programming Extension is offering. Chi-squared analysis for question number twelve yielded: chi-square=2.471, df=3, p=.481 for leadership and civic engagement; chi-square=3.950, df=3, p=.267 for economic development; chi-square=1.939, df=3, p=.585 for sustainable development; chi-square=.568, df=3, p=.904 for natural resources and environmental management; and chi-square-3.741, df=3, p=.291 for health and nutrition. There were no significant regional variations among the top five current CRED programming priorities. Table 16 presents the national consensus on the top five current CRED programming priorities as well as the observed agreement and disagreement among respondents. The top five current CRED programming priorities were identified, in descending order, as leadership and civic engagement, economic development, sustainable development, natural resources and environmental management, and health and nutrition. Other current programming identified by the population consisted of:

- Entrepreneurship and Business Development (five separate respondents)
- Community Participatory Planning Process, Downtown Revitalization and Land

Use Change (three separate respondents)

- Public Policy and Public Issues Education (two separate respondents)
- Energy and Energy Development (two separate respondents)
- Local Government Education and Training of Local Officials (two separate respondents)
- Sustainable Agriculture and Local Food (two separate respondents)
- Organizational Development
- Tourism

Table 16. National Consensus and Observed Agreement on Current Extension CRED Programming

Dependent Variable	Count No	Percent No	Count Yes	Percent Yes
Leadership and Civic Engagement	3	7.1%	39	92.9%
Economic Development	8	19.0%	34	81.0%
Sustainable Development	12	28.6%	30	71.4%
Natural Resources and Environmental Management	14	33.3%	28	66.7%
Health and Nutrition	17	40.5%	25	59.5%

Question thirteen (N=42) was designed to measure perceptions of current institutional research priorities for CRED. Chi-squared analysis for question number thirteen yielded: chi-square=3.283, df=3, p=.350 for economic development; chi-square=1.747, df=3, p=.627 for sustainable development; chi-square=1.80, df=3, p=.615 for natural resources and environmental management; chi-square=3.41, df=3, p=.333 for agriculture in transition; chi-square=3.777, df=3, p=.287 for health and nutrition. Table 17 presents the top five current CRED programming priorities for which consensus was

reached as well as the observed agreement and disagreement among respondents. Other current research priorities identified by the population were:

- Entrepreneurship
- Land Use

Table 17. National Consensus and Observed Agreement on Current Extension CRED Research

Dependent Variable	Count No	Percent No	Count Yes	Percent Yes
Sustainable Development	16	38.1%	26	61.9%
Economic Development	16	38.1%	26	61.9%
Natural Resources and Environmental Management	17	40.5%	25	59.5%
Agriculture in Transition	19	45.2%	23	54.8%
Health and Nutrition	22	52.4%	20	47.6%

Question fourteen was designed to measure perceptions on emerging CRED issues in respondents' states. This was done to better help Extension respond to upcoming issues and to aid in strategic planning. Chi-square analysis for question number fourteen: chi-square=4.207, df=3, p=.240 for sustainable development; chi-square=2.803, df=2.803, df=3, p=.423 for workforce development; chi-square=.646, df=3, p=.886 for economic development; chi-square=4.292, df=3, p=.232 for natural resources and environmental management; chi-square=6.944, df=3, p=.074. Therefore, no significant difference was found between regions for the top five emerging CRED issues respondents saw emerging within the next five years. Table 18 presents national consensus on five emerging CRED issues as well as the observed agreement and disagreement among respondents. Other emerging issues identified by the population

were:

- Energy Development
- Entrepreneurship
- Climate Change and Variability

Table 18. National Consensus and Observed Agreement on Emerging CRED Issues

Dependent Variable	Count No	Percent No	Count Yes	Percent Yes
Sustainable Development	15	35.7%	27	64.3%
Workforce Development	15	35.7%	27	64.3%
Economic Development	16	38.1%	26	61.9%
Natural Resources and Environmental Management	18	42.9%	24	57.1%
Population Change/Immigration	18	42.9%	24	57.1%

Objective Four

Objective four was to examine the perceived role of CRED professionals held by administrators and directors of Extension. This was accomplished by employing MANOVA/ANOVA tests for the numerical responses to questions 11, 15, 16, and 20. A MANOVA procedure was employed to test the between-group (regions) differences in the perceived role of CRED Extension professionals held by administrators and directors of Extension. A MANOVA test was conducted because the researcher desired a single, overall statistical test done on each set of dependent variables, rather than each individual dependent variable (Carey, 1998). If results were found to be statistically significant (p= .05 or less) then individual ANOVA tests were conducted to see which items differed. Pairwise comparison was then done for significant items to see how regions differed. If

significant variation did not occur, consensus was found and a national picture was provided.

Question number eleven (N=42) was designed to measure support for the role of CRED programming among administrators and directors in the suite of base programs which Extension offers on a national level. The results of the MANOVA test for question eleven yielded: Wilks' Λ= .676, F (12, 92.893) =1.236, p=.271. Table 19 presents national consensus on support for CRED programming in the suite of Extension base programs. Administrators were more likely to agree (4.43) that Extension has a significant role to play in CRED in their state but were less likely to agree (3.31) that this should be accomplished solely through CRED programming. Furthermore, they were less likely to agree (3.05) that the Extension System at their institution has evolved sufficiently to meet society's changing needs.

Table 19. National Consensus; Support for CRED Programming

Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Extension System at my institution has a significant role to play in CRED in my state.	4.43	.668
CRED programming is essential in achieving the mission the Extension System at my institution.	4.38	.854
'CRED Extension efforts can be accomplished through our family and consumer science, agriculture and natural resource and/or 4-H youth development programming.'	3.31	1.316
The Extension System at my institution has evolved sufficiently to meet society's changing needs.	3.05	1.081

Question fifteen (N=42) sought the perceived role of CRED Extension programming held by administrators. The results of the MANOVA test for question

fifteen yielded: Wilks' Λ=.837, F (9, 87.765) = .741, p=.671. No regional variation was found. Administrators were more likely to agree (mean, 4.62, std. deviation, .492) that the role was to broadly improve the quality of life in communities and less likely to agree (mean, 4.55, std. deviation, .550) improve decision-making in communities through the application of research-based knowledge and least likely to agree (mean, 4.26, std. deviation, .587) with the role of facilitating community development through community learning.

Question number sixteen (N=42) was designed to provide a picture of either national consensus or regional variation as to which CRED specializations CRED Extension professionals should possess or obtain to effectively work in community development. Specializations were extracted from the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals' Foundation of Practice (2005). The MANOVA test for question sixteen yielded: Wilks' Λ=.306, F (27, 88.258) =1.636, p=.045. Significant variation occurred, therefore, individual ANOVAs were conducted to see which items differed. It was found that regions differed (p=.035) in regards to one dependent variable in this set of variables. Tables 20 and 21 expose national consensus and regional variation on the perceived specializations that CRED Extension professionals should possess to effectively work in community development in their state. Public issues education was found to have significant variance between regions. Pairwise comparison exposed that the North Central and Northeast varied significantly from one another. The North Central region was more likely to find it to be more important (4.71); the Northeast significantly less important (3.81).

Table 20. National Consensus; Perceived Importance of CRED Extension Personnel Specializations

Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Leadership and Civic Engagement	4.60	.544
Economic Development	4.57	.630
Group Process and Facilitation	4.43	.590
Organizational Development	4.31	.715
Local Government	4.24	.759
Public Issues Education*	4.17	.660
Workforce Development	4.05	.825
Natural Resources	4.02	.841
Community Services	3.74	.767

*Regional Variation.

Question twenty was designed to measure administrative perceptions as to whom Extension CRED programming serves. The MANOVA test for question twenty yielded: Wilks' Λ=.727, F (12, 92.893) =.993, p=.462. No significant regional variation was found. Table 22 presents the picture of national consensus of perceptions of whom Extension CRED programming serves. It was found that administrators disagreed most (mean, 2.83, std. deviation, .794) that Extension CRED programming serves limited resource individuals adequately and that CRED Extension programming serves minority populations adequately (mean, 2.88, std. deviation, .861). They were slightly neutral (mean, 3.26, std. deviation, 1.127) in regards to CRED serving primarily rural clientele.

Table 21. Regional Variation; Perceived Importance of CRED Extension Personnel Specializations

Dependent Variable	Region (I)	Region (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Region (I) Mean	Significance
Public Issues Education	South	Northeast	.30	4.11	.591
		North Central	-.60		.150
		West	-.17		.928
	Northeast	South	-.30	3.81	.591
		North Central	-.90*		.022
		West	-.47		.403
	North Central	South	.60	4.71	.150
		Northeast	.90*		.022
		West	.43		.536
	West	South	.17	4.28	.928
		Northeast	.47		.403
		North Central	-.43		.563

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

Table 22. National Consensus; Perceived CRED Extension Audience

Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our CRED Extension programming has primarily rural clientele.	3.26	1.127
Our CRED Extension programming is significantly involved in urban communities.	3.10	1.008
Our CRED Extension programming serves minority populations adequately.	2.88	.861
Our CRED Extension programming serves limited resource individuals adequately.	2.83	.794

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

Extension was established in 1914 to increase informational transfers from the nation's educational centers to those citizens who are not engaged in an effort to reduce obstacles in the development of the country's human and natural capital. As the primary public outreach and public service function of the land-grant universities, its duty is to bring those immense human capital and research oriented programs from the land-grant universities to bear on locally defined problems that are relevant to a diverse constituency (USDA-NASULGC, 1983; Weber, 1984). Extension, as a dynamic and flexible organization charged with diffusing practical information to the masses, has constantly changed to accommodate various societal demands. Few organizations have been allowed this flexibility in adapting to changing societal needs. Extension has been afforded this opportunity because it has remained responsive to societal demands and defined its role as primarily educational in nature.

In 1914, agricultural and rural development was a priority for decision-makers because of a primarily rural and agrarian population. Roughly 30% of workers were employed in agricultural occupations in 1930 (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). Today, 2% of the population is engaged in farming with less than 8% of the workforce in rural areas being employed by farming or agricultural support services (Cowan, 2001). The country's population is approaching 80% urban with significantly less demand for production agriculture information. These social trends, among others, have resulted in

new environmental demands for Extension. As a result, Extension has altered its programming, revised its mission and broadened its focus to serve a diverse constituency as the primary public service entity of the land-grant university system (Warner and Christenson, 1984).

Extension programs and the direction of the organization are related to the attitudes and perceptions of its administration, which are responsible for allocating funds and guiding policy directives (Yukl, 1998). They also influence the attitudes of personnel and help to create a shared vision (Senge, 1990). Administrators and directors of Extension are charged with the difficult task of gauging the public's educational needs and allocating Extension system resources to the various programs to address these needs. If change does not occur through administrative leadership, Extension risks change through legislative mandate or worse funding cuts.

A political contract influenced by social perception of organizational effectiveness allocates resources to Extension (Warner and Christenson, 1984). Various stakeholders in the political process communicate to influence externally derived system resources. The traditional image and message communicated is one of an agricultural agency that is no longer valid and could constrain resource flows (Warner and Christenson, 1984). Today, Extension is a public outreach organization that addresses contemporary issues relevant to constituents residing within and beyond its traditional rural and agrarian heritage (Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, 2002). Building awareness and organizational understanding of organizational purpose is essential in providing effective programming in a competitive political environment. By clearly understanding and specifying its role in the economic development educational

process, Extension should be able to more effectively serve the leaders and citizens of America's communities (Weber, 1987).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the attitudes and perceptions of Extension administrators and directors in regards to the perceived role, function and direction of CRED Extension programming as well as the social-environmental factors that could be affecting system resources. The study was descriptive and cross-sectional and sought to provide a picture of perceived efforts. The following research objectives were developed for this study:

1. To gain insight into regional and national CRED Extension efforts
2. To describe the political and social issues facing CRED Extension in the U.S.
3. To examine the perceptions and attitudes of CES administrators and directors regarding research and programming priorities in the U.S.
4. To examine the perceived role of CRED professionals held by administrators and directors in the U.S.

Methods

The population for this descriptive survey included all 115 administrators and director and associate administrators and directors in the Extension system of the U.S. Both groups of administrators were chosen to effectively cover the group.

This population was selected due to their position and responsibility within the Extension system. Administrators and directors are responsible for allocating funds, providing organizational support and guiding and implementing policy. Comer,

Birkenholz and Stewart (2004) emphasize this by stating that administration in an organization such as Extension must support new priorities and initiatives for changes to successfully occur.

The purpose of the instrument was to elicit perceptions regarding CRED Extension efforts, function and role as well as the external environment in which it operates. The researcher elected to use an online survey because of the wide geographical area covered in this survey and the timeliness of distribution and response rates. In addition, Dillman (2000) states that university faculty, government employees, and other professionals make ideal candidates for e-mail based surveys. The instrument was created using Market Research Interview (MRInterview). The tool allowed for the researcher to design the survey in a web browser that continually collected data. The questions were set as variable labels, which later became value labels in an SPSS file. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 17.0.

Personalized invitations to participate were sent via e-mail with an attached Word document that contained the live survey link as well as an explanation of the purpose of the survey. Several methods were used to improve the response rate of the population, which was anticipated to be low due to the deluge of surveys that administrators and directors in Extension receive and the multitude of demands on their time. The researcher chose to employ a multiple contact strategy to overcome the potential for a low response rate (Dillman, 2000). An e-mail was sent by a University of Tennessee CRED Extension specialist to fellow colleagues across the Land-Grant System urging them to follow-up with their institution's appropriate administrator as the instrument was designed with as partial fulfillment of the Southern PLN-CRD Committees 2010 Plan of

Work. An e-mail was then sent by the director of the Southern Rural Development Center prompting the population to respond. Personalization of the initial message and the following reminders was done to increase response rate. The final reminder was personalized with information on current response rates of their region to all those who had not yet completed the survey. Dillman (2000) states that the message most likely to get a response is the one that was personalized. The e-mail content was kept brief and described the purpose and benefit of the survey to Extension. Brevity was of the utmost importance because of the heavy reliance on e-mail by the population and the deluge of surveys that they receive fostering less attentive reading behavior (Dillman, 2000).

Discussion of Findings

The majority of respondents were from the South (40.4%) and the Northeast (26.1%), followed by the North Central (16.6%) and the West (16.6%). Overall, seven (1890) and 35 (1862) institutions responded. All of the 1890 respondents originated from the South. The North Central has one 1890 institution and the Northeast has three 1890 institutions, neither regions 1890 institutions participated in the study.

Objective One

Research objective one sought to gain insight into regional and national perceptions of CRED Extension efforts, as qualified by human and financial resources. Analysis was conducted to provide a picture of regional variation or national consensus.

The study found for question three that the respondents did not agree that the FTE's devoted to CRED programming (mean, 2.07, std. deviation, .97) or research (mean, 1.98, std. deviation, .83) were sufficient. They did not agree that CRED

programming (mean, 2.31, std. deviation, .97) was sufficient to meet their institutional community development objectives nor did they agree that the programming (mean, 2.48, std. deviation, 1.21) or research (mean, 2.36, std. deviation, .95) being done, by county-based and university-based, respectively, met the needs of the county or state in which they serve. Regional variation for this question exposed possible regional differences in system allocations to CRED that were highlighted by Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum (2003). Ahearn, Yee and Bottum (2003) found that the South had the smallest proportion of FTE's devoted to CRED programming every year from 1977 through 1992. The North Central and the South also had the greatest variance between the four regions in proportion of FTE's devoted to CRED in 1992; the North Central having 8% and the South having 4% of total system FTE's devoted to CRED programming. The South was significantly less (p=.001) likely to agree (1.64) that the number of funded FTE's devoted to CRED programming is sufficient than the North Central (2.71). The North Central was also significantly more likely to agree that FTE's were sufficient than the West (mean, 2.42, p=.003) and the Northeast (mean, 2.09, p=.013). Failure in demonstrating the worth of CRED Extension activities and meeting the needs of the public will result in continued funding and political issues for CRED Extension.

Question five revealed that agriculture and natural resources was perceived as comprising the majority (49.74%) of FTE allocations among the four traditional base programs followed by family and consumer sciences (22.59%), 4-H youth development (22.23%), and CRED (8.31%). CRED remains the lowest funded program area. The perceived allocations of FTE's to CRED programming are higher than the 5.9% national allocations of 1992. From 1977 to 1992 the FTE's allocated to CRED programming had

dropped 34% (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). The perceived increase and trend upwards from 1992 figures could be due to misconceptions of participants or increases in CRED FTE allocations. Small proportions of FTE's devoted to CRED Extension activities bring up issues regarding obtaining a critical mass in CRED to effectively address the community development objectives of the central institution. Bottum (1970) first brought up an issue that seems to be still relevant today, one of obtaining a critical mass at the central institution as well as in the field to effectively address community development problems at the local level. Bottum (1970) states that if community development educational efforts are to be effective in Extension, there must be:

1. A critical mass at the central institution dedicated to research.

2. Timely and relevant research, with calls for joint Extension and research appointments to be the norm.

3. A critical mass at the community level.

Question six revealed that perceived FTE distributions among the various geographic levels of which Extension operates were predominately campus-based (53.2%), followed by county-based (29.2%) and region-based (14.7%). Over two-thirds of FTE's devoted to CRED Extension activities were not at the local level. This could be a trend towards increased centralization of the Extension system, which could bring issues relevant to a consistently engaged community in the economic development process, "outsiders" addressing locally defined development issues, and a lack of critical

mass at the community level. Increased joint extension-research appointments will help more fully engage stakeholders at the county-level while increasing the capacity to provide relevant research and programming.

The study found for question seven that perceived FTE allocations to the four base program areas were decreasing or had been remaining the same over the past two years. The biggest decreases were perceived as being in family and consumer sciences (54.8%), followed by agriculture and natural resources programming (50%), 4-H youth development (45.2%) and CRED (40.5%). Furthermore, it was found that the vast majority of FTE's were either decreasing or remaining the same in every program area; family and consumer sciences (83.4%), CRED (81%), and agriculture and natural resources and 4-H each having a combined decreasing remaining the same percentage of 76.2. The study also found that agriculture and natural resources (23.8%) and 4-H youth development (23.8%) had the highest perceived increases in FTE's in the last two years. These results follow similar trends in system resources from the late seventies through nineteen ninety-two. From 1977 through 1992 there was an 8.7% decline in total FTE's. During this time period administrators seemed to allocate resources to agriculture and natural resource (.06%) and family and consumer sciences (7%) programming and away from CRED (-34.7%) and 4-H youth development (-27.1%) programming. Comer (2002) found that administrators in North Carolina believed that political support will have a negative impact on Extension funding. Investing more evenly in the suite of diverse programs that Extension currently maintains could be essential in improving the image of the organization and making it more relevant to the vast majority of the public.

ECOP (2002) proposed that the Extension system address contemporary issues relevant to constituents residing within and beyond the traditional audiences found in rural and agricultural communities. Communicating a message beyond an agricultural agency could be essential in improving the current image that restricts resource flows (Warner and Christenson, 1984; Paluszek, 1992).

Question eight of the instrument indicated that administrators in all regions perceived that total CRED budget allocation was less than 10% of total system resources. The study also exposed regional variation in CRED program budgeting. The West differed significantly and was less likely to have chosen the 1%-5% category, and more likely to have system resources in the 6% or more category. The South differed significantly and was more likely to have 1%-5% of the budget allocated to CRED programming and less likely to have 6% or more of total system budget devoted to CRED programming. Overall, 83% of respondents perceived the CRED programming budget to be 10% or less. A relatively small proportion of total system resources devoted to CRED programming might be a result of multiple program areas contributing to institutional community development objectives as well as multiple university outreach units collaborating to achieve university level land-grant community development objectives. One respondent emphasizes this point at the end of the survey "much community development work is delivered through other program areas and other university units in collaboration with Extension." Others that participated saw "expanding our CRED staffing and programming as a priority…in the next five years." And "Extension must place a higher priority on community and economic development

to remain relevant to the concerns of our citizens." Clearly, there is some diversity of opinion as to how best to achieve the community development objectives of Extension. More clearly specifying its own role, at the regional and state levels, and the roles of others in the economic development education process, Extension will be better able to effectively serve the leaders and citizens of America's communities (Weber, 1987). Extension is political in terms of funding and the policy process and as a result building awareness and organizational understanding of organizational purpose is essential in today's competitive, political environment (Comer, 2002).

Questions nine and ten sought perception on where funding originates and whether the respondents perceived them as constraining support for CRED Extension programming. The study found that state budgets (mean, 45%, std. deviation, 24.6) were the majority of funding originates. State budget constraints were also perceived as an issue regarding support for CRED Extension programming. The respondents perceived the remainder of CRED Extension funding originating from federal sources (mean, 27%, std. deviation, 24.86), local sources (mean, 19.5%, std. deviation, 14.46) and private sources (mean, 13.37%, std. deviation, 14.46). Respondents were found to be neutral as to whether local budget constraints (mean, 3.36, std. deviation, 1.1), federal budget constraints (mean, 3.29, std. deviation, 1.01), or limited external grant support was an issue in regards to support for CRED Extension programming. Perceived funding is relatively even with major funding sources in 2000. In 2000, 49% of the budget came from state sources, 24% from federal sources, and 27% from local sources (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). As governmental budgets constrict it is imperative that Extension

continually assess its programs and institutional priorities so as to continually demonstrate their effectiveness and worth to society (Warner and Christenson, 1984).

Objective Two

Research objective two sought to describe the perceived political and social issues facing CRED Extension activities and Extension as a whole. This environmental scan was conducted to better understand whether recent trends in social-demographic factors were perceived as affecting CRED Extension programming; if political support and image were perceived as constraining support; and what Extension might do to improve image, awareness and support for CRED Extension programming. Analysis was conducted to find regional variation or national consensus.

Question seventeen sought perceived internal and external political support for CRED Extension programming. Respondents were neutral (mean, 3.95, std. deviation, 1.01) in regards to Extension maintaining a positive public image and CRED Extension programming maintaining a positive public image (mean, 3.71, std. deviation, .970). Administrators did not agree that political support was waning or that program relevance limits political support. They disagreed that university-level support constrains CRED Extension efforts (mean, 2.98, std. deviation, 1.07) or that program relevance limits support for CRED Extension efforts (mean, 2.50, std. deviation, 1.08). They also disagreed that political support was waning for CRED programming (mean, 2.60, std. deviation, 1.23) or that it was waning for the Extension System at their institution (mean, 2.48, std. deviation, 1.27). Current programming and research done by CRED

professionals was perceived as not matching the needs of the public in question three. Furthermore, the FTE's devoted to CRED research and programming was perceived as insufficient. The findings from question three contrasted with those of question seventeen raise questions as to how long the public's economic development educational demands can go unmet without negatively affecting legislator and public program support, in addition to negatively affecting the organizations image. CRED programming and research that is relevant to public demands, as well as a critical mass to achieve community development objectives should be pursued to ensure continued public and legislator support and a positive image among stakeholders. One respondent identified sagging public support for higher education as limiting growth in Extension programming.

The study found for question eighteen that respondents were agreed that increased external organizational linkages would improve political support (mean, 4.12, std. deviation, .504) and that mass media should be used more to build awareness of what Extension has to offer (mean, 4.00, std. deviation, .911). The study also found significant regional variation in regards to one dependent variable. The North Central and South varied significantly from one another with the South significantly more likely to agree that mass media should be used to build awareness that the North Central. Strategic Directions for Extension: Community Resource and Economic Development (2009) identified improved marketing and developing and enhancing partnerships as strategic imperatives for CRED programming. Developing increased financial and political support and strengthening partnerships will help to ensure effective programming and a

viable organizational subunit of Extension (Southern Rural Development Center, 2009). Success of an organization is partly dependent upon awareness of the organization, its purpose and its potential value (Katz et al., 1975). Properly branding CRED Extension work through various mass media outlets will help to develop the public awareness, political support and the partnerships CRED Extension desires.

The study found that administrators were neutral in regards to the major social-demographic trends the researcher chose to include. Social and demographic trends alter the way Extension operates. There have been changes in audience and programs as a result of societal trends throughout Extension's history. Zald and Denton (1963) contend that as the environments of organizations change, organizations must, if they are to remain viable be able to adopt goals, structures and services that meet environmental demands. Perceptions on what environmental trends might positively or negatively affect Extension can help to identify future opportunities for programming and research. Respondents thought "Technological innovations in communications" would most positively affect, though neutral (mean, 3.83, std. deviation, .730), and "The aging of America" as most negatively affecting, though neutral (mean, 3.29, std. deviation, .891), Extension CRED programming. Technological innovation in communications can be used to broaden target audiences through non-traditional communication avenues such as webinars and the Internet. As more of the population gains access to broadband Internet, Extension can capitalize on this opportunity by developing webinar based information sessions on economic development education. Also, Extension's new website (eXtension.org) brings the benefits of an interactive learning environment and extension

educational programming to a broader audience. Though Extension has maintained its edge because its personal nature, new technologies can reduce costs while bringing quality programming to a more diverse audience from afar.

Objective Three

Research objective three was to examine the perceptions and attitudes of administrative perceptions regarding current research and programming priorities as well as emerging issues relevant to CRED Extension programming. This activity was conducted to better understand CRED emphasis and any regional variation that may occur. It was hoped that the results would better allow CRED Extension to speak with a more unified voice. Speaking with a more unified voice was identified as a strategic imperative for CRED programming. The study sought to find agreement or variation at the regional level among research and programming priorities. Regional variation or national consensus was also sought for emerging issues relevant to CRED Extension. Identifying emerging issues will allow CRED Extension to be better positioned to respond to future trends.

The study found that the top five most selected current programming priorities had no significant regional variation. Currently, leadership and civic engagement has the highest mean with 92.9% of respondents identifying it as a current programming priority, followed by economic development (81%), sustainable development (71.4%), natural resources and environmental management (66.7%), and health and nutrition (59.5%). No regional variation showed that there was common agreement on what CRED Extension

focuses on and seeks to achieve.

No regional variation was found in the top five most selected current research priorities of CRED Extension. Administrators perceived sustainable development (61.9%), economic development (61.9%), natural resources and environmental management (59.5%), agriculture in transition (54.8%), and health and nutrition (47.6%) as being the most common current research priorities for CRED Extension. Common agreement was found on the top five current national research priorities. Emphasizing research revolving around natural resource and agricultural science issues has been fundamental to Extension success (APLU, 2009).

The study found no regional variation in the top five most selected emerging issues. The study found sustainable development (64.3%), workforce development (64.3%), economic development (61.9%), natural resources and environmental management (57.1%), and population change and immigration (57.1%) as being the most common emerging issues for CRED Extension. CRED Extension programming should be ready to respond to these emerging issues. Sustainable development and natural resources and environmental management CRED activities could be a function of increased environmental awareness and demand for environmental education. Population change and immigration is significantly affecting many areas as the baby boomer generation retires and seeks warm climates and non-metropolitan areas to retire (Lambert et al., 2007). As a result of population shifts and immigration, land-use and sprawl are major concerns of a rapidly developing urban/suburban America. Between 1982 and 2001, roughly 34 million acres were converted to developed uses (NRCS, 2001).

Extension has been historically suited for land use and community engagement programming (Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development and National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals, 2005). Extension is well placed to capitalize on this emerging issue and develop quality programming that is relevant to communities educational development needs.

Objective Four

Objective four sought the perceived role of CRED professionals held by administrators and directors. It is important to speak with a unified voice regarding who is the primary audience, what CRED programming is seeking to achieve in local communities, and what specializations can best equip CRED Extension professionals to accomplish the task (Southern Rural Development Center, 2009).

Question eleven sought the perceived role of CRED programming among administrators in the suite of traditional base programs which Extension offers at the state level. Administrators agreed that Extension has a significant role to play in CRED in their respective states (mean, 4.43, std. deviation, .688) and that CRED programming is essential in achieving the mission of the Extension System at their institution (mean, 4.38, std. deviation, .854). They were less likely to agree that CRED efforts can be accomplished solely though CRED programming (mean, 3.31, std. deviation, 1.31). They were also less likely to agree that the Extension system at their institution has evolved sufficiently to meet society's changing needs (mean, 3.05, std. deviation, 1.08). Maintaining a critical mass of CRED Extension professionals and developing

programming and research priorities that effectively address the needs of communities will strengthen CRED Extension activities while clearly communicating the diversity, flexibility, and credibility of CRED Extension activities to stakeholders who allocate resources to the Extension System.

Question fifteen sought administrative perceptions as to the role of CRED Extension programming in communities. It is important to speak with a unified voice as to what CRED Extension programming is seeking to achieve within the communities in which it operates. Administrators were most likely to agree that the primary role of CRED Extension programming should be to improve the quality of life in communities (mean 4.63, std. deviation, .492); less likely to agree that the role should be to improve decision-making in communities through the application of research-based knowledge (mean, 4.55, std. deviation, .550); and least likely to agree that the role should be to facilitate community development through community learning (mean, 4.26, std. deviation, .587). However, the APLU's mission (APLU, 2001): "…to enable people to improve their lives and communities through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work" better reflects the original mandate of the Smith-Lever Act. Few organizations have been allowed the flexibility to change to societal needs as Extension has. Extension as an organization has been given this flexibility because it has defined its role as primarily educational in nature, which has allowed for the subject matter and audience to align with societal needs (Warner and Christenson, 1984). The perceived role being primarily an educational organization which contributes to the improved quality of life in

communities might be essential in communicating the community development goals of Extension that are in line with legislative mandates and organizational purpose.

Question sixteen sought to qualify what the most important perceived CRED specializations CRED Extension personnel should possess to effectively work in community development. Regional variation occurred regarding the public issues education variable. The North Central (4.71) was significantly more likely to agree in the importance of this specialization than the Northeast (3.81). Administrators perceived the most important CRED Extension specializations as: leadership and civic engagement as the (mean, 4.60, std. deviation, .544), and the least important, though neutral, specialization as community services (mean, 3.74, std. deviation, .767). Table 22 presents national consensus on the perceived importance of CRED Extension personnel specializations among administrators. Leadership and civic engagement have been historic strengths in Extension programming dating back to the 1940s. Strengthening current capacities while hiring staff or developing competency in specializations that align with the identified emerging issues may allow Extension to better respond to and capitalize on societal demands for educational programming that arise from societal trends.

Question twenty sought administrative perceptions on whom CRED Extension serves. Administrators disagreed that CRED Extension programming serves minority populations adequately (mean, 2.88, std. deviation, .861) or limited resource individuals adequately (mean, 2.83, std. deviation, .794). Administrators were neutral as whether CRED Extension programming has primarily rural clientele (mean, 3.26, std. deviation,

1.12) or if CRED Extension programming is significantly involved in urban communities (mean, 3.10, std. deviation, 1.00). One respondent of the survey added "CRED is centered in work with elected officials, partnerships, and rural audiences." Another respondent noted "…that it is difficult at best to discern rural from urban." Roughly eighty percent of the U.S. population now lives in urban areas (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003). The U.S. has slightly more than one-third (34%) of the population that claims minority status (Minckler, 2008). The growth rate of minorities and urban areas is continuing to rise with implications for funding if Extension does not adequately serve a broader audience. Effectively serving all constituents in the communities in which Extension operates is essential to the credibility of the organization. Increasing the capacity of Extension CRED professionals in working in multi-cultural communities through cultural and language training and hiring multi-cultural staff will aid in effectively serving perceived underserved audiences.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were based upon the interpretation of the data of this study:

- Administrators perceive Extension to have a significant role to play in CRED in their state and as essential in achieving the mission of the Extension System at their institution.
- Extension has perceived priorities, in regards to human and financial, in the traditional programming (agriculture and family/consumer sciences) originally mandated by the Smith-Lever Act in 1914.

- Administrators perceived the primary role of CRED Extension programming to improve the quality of life in communities.
- Respondents perceived the most important CRED Extension specializations to be, in descending order, leadership and civic engagement, economic development, group process and facilitation, organizational development, local government, public issues education, workforce development and natural resources.
- Respondents perceived CRED programming to be insufficient to meet their institutions community development objectives.
- Administrators perceived the number of FTE's devoted to CRED programming and research to be insufficient, with the majority of FTE's perceived as being campus-based.
- Respondents perceived the top five current programming to consist of, in descending order, leadership and civic engagement, economic development, sustainable development, natural resources and environmental management, and health and nutrition.
- Respondents perceived the top five current research priorities to consist of, in descending order, sustainable development, economic development, natural resources and environmental management, agriculture in transition, and health and nutrition.
- Administrators perceived the top five emerging issues relevant to CRED to consist of, in descending order, sustainable development, workforce development,

economic development, natural resources and environmental management, and population change and immigration.

- Respondents perceived CRED Extension programming and research being done as failing to meet the needs of the people they serve at the county and state levels.
- Administrators perceived that minority populations and limited resource individuals were served inadequately.
- Administrators perceived CRED to be the lowest funded program among the four traditional base programs, with the majority allocating less than 10% of the budget to this programmatic area.
- Extension System resources were perceived to be primarily decreasing in all program areas.
- State sources were identified as the primary perceived origination of funding and also as the largest constraint on system resources.
- Respondents perceived that university-level support and program relevance did not limit support for CRED Extension programming.
- Administrators perceived that increased external organizational linkages and mass media could build support and awareness for Extension.

Implications

A political contract influenced by social perceptions of organizational effectiveness allocates resources to Extension (Warner and Christenson, 1984).

Administrators perceived that political support was not waning for Extension CRED programming or the Extension System as a whole. However, the current research and programming was perceived as not aligning with the needs of the public at the county and state levels. Furthermore, the level of funded FTE's devoted to Extension CRED research and programming was insufficient. These highlight potential serious political consequences as to how long the public's community resource and economic development educational needs can go unmet without negatively affecting legislator and public support. Administrators also perceived Extension CRED work as failing to adequately serve minorities and limited resource individuals. Roughly 80% of the U.S population is now urban with over 34% of the U.S. claiming minority status (Ahearn, Yee, and Bottum, 2003; Minckler, 2008). The growth rate of minorities and urban areas is continuing to rise with implications for funding if Extension does not adequately serve a broader audience. Effectively serving all citizens is an obligation as the public-outreach educational service of the land-grant universities and is essential to the credibility and image of the organization. Paluszek (1992) contends that Extension has a reputation deficit and that it must boost communication if it is to retain increasingly redirected public funds. Administrators perceived that increased use of mass communication and increased external organizational linkages would improve political support and awareness for Extension. The traditional image and message communicated is one of an agricultural agency which is no longer valid and could constrain resource flows (Warner and Christenson, 1984). Coming to a common understanding and specifying the role of Extension CRED in communities will allow Extension to speak with a more unified voice

as to what Extension CRED programming and research have offer to the citizens and communities of America.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were formulated based upon the interpretation of the findings of this study:

- Increase the capacity of CRED Extension programming to better serve multi-cultural, minority and limited resource populations through cultural training and language training for existing personnel and hiring more diverse, multi-lingual staff.
- Strengthen core capacities of CRED Extension programming while observing emerging societal opportunities on which Extension could capitalize.
- Continue the use of consistent programmatic and research programmatic themes across state boundaries to communicate effectively to stakeholders and better address the dynamic issues of the today.
- Continue to use technological innovations in communications to bring timely educational programming to the broadest possible audience at the lowest possible cost to taxpayers.
- Increase the use of various forms of mass media to communicate the appropriate image and build awareness of all that Extension has to offer.
- Develop external organizational linkages to improve effective programming and build political support.

- Document programmatic impacts and communicate the right image to demonstrate worth to legislators and other stakeholders.
- Consistently engage diverse audiences at the county-level to ensure awareness and effective programming that meets the needs of the public.
- Help to ensure relevant research and programming that meets the needs of the public through increased joint research-extension responsibilities.
- Engage communities more fully to identify what needs are not being met by CRED activities to ensure, political support, credibility and effective programming.
- Develop a more unified voice across regions as to how best achieve community development objectives.

Recommendations for Further Studies

- Research should be conducted on a state and regional level to obtain perceptions of public CRED Extension needs and awareness.
- Research should also be conducted on a state and regional level to obtain legislative knowledge and perceptions of how Extension relates to CRED work in their state.
- Further research should be conducted on knowledge and perceptions of diversity related issues of Extension personnel.

- Research should be conducted to identify regional variations or national consensus in how administrators seek to achieve their institutional community development objectives.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Initial and Reminder Personalized E-mails to Participants

Initial E-mail to Participant (May 6, 2010)

Dear Dr. Sample Participant:

Please see the attached Word document for a link to an important survey conducted by Seth Urbanowitz, a graduate student at the University of Tennessee, related to national *Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) Extension Efforts.*

By completing this brief survey you will help us compile an accurate picture of the role, priorities, and direction of CRED research and extension efforts across the Land Grant System. This information will help us and other partners ensure that we are effectively meeting the needs of CRED extension and research programs in these rapidly changing times. *The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete and all responses are strictly confidential.*

Please complete this survey as soon as possible but no later than May 31, 2010.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Seth C. Urbanowitz

First E-mail Reminder to Participant (May 25, 2005)

Dear Extension Sample Administrator:

About two weeks ago I sent you a survey via e-mail related to Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) Extension efforts. If you have taken the survey thank you and I sincerely apologize for contacting you again; if you have not, please see the link below to the survey that is an effort to compile an accurate picture of the role, priorities, and direction of CRED research and extension efforts across the Land Grant System. Understanding regional priorities, resources, and perceptions of CRED Extension efforts held by administrators and directors will allow Extension to better communicate with stakeholders about organizational efforts and purpose while ensuring that we are effectively meeting the needs of CRED extension and research programs in these rapidly changing times. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete and all responses are strictly confidential.

http://survey.utk.edu/mrIWeb/mrIWeb.dll?I.Project=COMMUNITYRESOURC

Please complete this survey no later than May 31, 2010.

A copy of the summarized results can be made available to you 6 months after your comp letion of the survey by contacting Seth Urbanowitz at: scurbanowitz@gmail.com.

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me via e-mail at surbanow@utk.edu.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Seth C. Urbanowitz

Final E-mail Reminder- Low Response Rate, State Level

(June 2, 2010)

Dear Extension Sample Administrator:

Close to three weeks ago I sent you a survey via e-mail related to Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) Extension efforts. This survey has been extended because of low response rates, with particularly low response rates coming from your state. Your response will help in getting the best possible picture of regional and national CRED Extension efforts. If you have taken the survey thank you and I sincerely apologize for contacting you again; if you have not, please see the link below. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete and all responses are strictly confidential.

http://survey.utk.edu/mrIWeb/mrIWeb.dll?I.Project=COMMUNITYRESOURC

Please complete this survey no later than June 9, 2010.

A copy of the summarized results can be made available to you 6 months after your comp letion of the survey by contacting Seth Urbanowitz at: scurbanowitz@gmail.com.

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me via e-mail at surbanow@utk.edu.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Seth C. Urbanowitz

Final E-mail Reminder, Low Response Rate, Regional Level

(June 2, 2010)

Dear Extension Sample Administrator:

Close to three weeks ago I sent you a survey via e-mail related to Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED) Extension efforts. This survey has been extended because of low response rates, with particularly low response rates coming from your region. Your response will help in getting the best possible picture of regional and national CRED Extension efforts. If you have taken the survey thank you and I sincerely apologize for contacting you again; if you have not, please see the link below. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete and all responses are strictly confidential.

http://survey.utk.edu/mrIWeb/mrIWeb.dll?I.Project=COMMUNITYRESOURC

Please complete this survey no later than June 9, 2010.

A copy of the summarized results can be made available to you 6 months after your comp letion of the survey by contacting Seth Urbanowitz at: scurbanowitz@gmail.com.

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me via e-mail at surbanow@utk.edu.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Seth C. Urbanowitz

APPENDIX B

Survey Instrument

Community Resource and Economic Development Extension Efforts in the United States.

This survey is aimed at analyzing the current role, function, and direction of community resource and economic development (CRED) Extension efforts in the U.S. It is hoped that your completion of this survey will allow for more informed organizational decisions and assist with strategic planning. This survey is 23 questions long and should take no more than 15 minutes of your time. All individual responses will be held strictly confidential. Access to individual responses will be limited to the researchers conducting the survey. Only summaries of the survey will be reported.

Definitions:

Land-Grant College: An institution of higher learning in the United States designated by each state to receive benefits of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 and the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994.

Community Resource and Economic Development (CRED): 'Helping local governments, public/private partnerships, entrepreneurs and community groups investigate and create viable options for economic and community development, such as improved job creation and retention, small and medium sized business development, effective and coordinated emergency response, workforce education, leadership development and land use planning.' CRED Extension efforts are also frequently referred to as Resource Development (RD), Community Resource Development (CRD), Community and Economic Development (CED) and Community Vitality. Based on: http://www.csrees.usda.gov/qlinks/extension.html

1. Please select the state, territory or district in which you are employed.

Alabama	Iowa	New Jersey	Vermont
Alaska	Kansas	New Mexico	Virginia
Arizona	Kentucky	New York	Washington
Arkansas	Louisiana	North Carolina	West Virginia
California	Maine	North Dakota	Wisconsin
Colorado	Maryland	Ohio	Wyoming
Connecticut	Massachusetts	Oklahoma	
Delaware	Michigan	Oregon	American Samoa
District of Columbia	Minnesota	Pennsylvania	Guam
Florida	Mississippi	Rhode Island	Micronesia-Kolonia
Georgia	Missouri	South Carolina	Northern Marianas
Hawaii	Montana	South Dakota	Puerto Rico
Idaho	Nebraska	Tennessee	Virgin Islands
Illinois	Nevada	Texas	
Indiana	New Hampshire	Utah	

2. Please indicate whether you represent an 1862, 1890, or 1994 institution.

1862
1890
1994

3. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The current level of funded Full-Time Equivalents (FTE's) is sufficient for the Extension System at your institution.				
The number of funded FTE's devoted to CRED Extension programming is sufficient at your institution.				
The number of Extension FTE's devoted to CRED research is sufficient at your institution.				
The current level of CRED programming is sufficient to meet your Extension System's				

community development objectives.
The current programming done by CRED county-level professionals matches the needs of those counties.
The current research done by CRED university-based specialists matches your state's needs.

4. How many FTE's were employed at your institution in fiscal year 2009?

5. Approximately what percentage of total FTE's at your institution were devoted to the following in fiscal year 2009: (Should equal 100%)

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
CRED
4-H Youth Development

6. Of the funded FTE's in CRED, what percentage are:
(Should equal 100%)

Percentage of FTE's:
Campus-based:
Region-based:
County-based:

7. In the last 2 years the level of funded FTE's is increasing, decreasing, remaining the same in:

Increasing	Decreasing	Remaining the Same
Agriculture and Natural Resources		
Family and Consumer Sciences		
CRED		

4-H Youth Development

8. Approximately what percentage of the Extension System's budget at your institution was devoted to CRED programming in fiscal year 2009?

1%-5%
6%-10%
11%-15%
16%-20%
21%-25%
26%-30%
31%-35%
36%-40%
41%-45%
46%-50%
51+%

9. Please enter the approximate percentage of funding for CRED Extension programming at your institution that originated form the following sources in 2009:

Percentage of Funding From:	
Federal Sources (0-100)	State Sources (0-100)
Local Sources (0-100)	Private/Other (0-100)

10. Please indicate how well you agree with each of the following statements.

A level of support for CRED Extension programming at your institution is an issue due to:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Federal Budget Constraints				
State Budget Constraints				
Local Budget Constraints				

Limited External Grant Support

The next set of 6 questions is aimed at analyzing CRED Extension priorities and direction. You have 10 questions left.

11. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The Extension System at my institution has a significant role to play in CRED in my state.				
CRED programming is essential in achieving the Extension System at my institution.				
CRED Extension efforts can be accomplished through our family and consumer science, agriculture and natural resource and/or 4-H youth development programming.				
The Extension System at my institution has evolved sufficiently to meet society's changing needs.				

12. Please identify the current Extension priorities of CRED programming at your institution. (Please check all that apply)

(Current Extension priorities: currently conducting programming in this area)

Sustainable Development
Economic Development
Agriculture in transition
Education and Human Capital Development
Leadership and Civic Engagement
Workforce Development
Poverty and Inequality
Rural-Urban Interface Growth Management
Public Services/Public Infrastructure
Population Change/Immigration

Natural Resources and Environmental Management
Information and Communication Technologies
Health and Nutrition
Housing
Financial Capital Resources
Disaster Management
Other :
Other :
Other :

13. Please identify the current research priorities for CRED at your institution. (Please check all that apply)

(Current research priorities: currently conducting research in this area.)

Sustainable Development
Economic Development
Agriculture in transition
Education and Human Capital Development
Leadership and Civic Engagement
Workforce Development
Poverty and Inequality
Rural-Urban Interface Growth Management
Public Services/Public Infrastructure
Population Change/Immigration
Natural Resources and Environmental Management
Information and Communication Technologies
Health and Nutrition
Housing
Financial Capital Resources
Disaster Management

Other :
Other :
Other :

14. Which of the following CRED issues do you see emerging in the next 5 years in your state? (Please check all that apply)

(Emerging: programming has yet to be deployed)

Sustainable Development
Economic Development
Agriculture in transition
Education and Human Capital Development
Leadership and Civic Engagement
Workforce Development
Poverty and Inequality
Rural-Urban Interface Growth Management
Public Services/Public Infrastructure
Population Change/Immigration
Natural Resources and Environmental Management
Information and Communication Technologies
Health and Nutrition
Housing
Financial Capital Resources
Disaster Management
Other :
Other :
Other :

15. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements. The primary role of CRED Extension programming should be to:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Facilitate community development through community learning.				
Improve decision-making in communities through the application of research-based knowledge.				
Improve the quality of life in communities.				

16. Please indicate the level of importance for the areas of specialization that CRED Extension professionals should possess to work effectively in economic and community development in your state.

Least Important	Not Very Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Most Important
Economic Development				
Local Government				
Natural Resources				
Group Process and Facilitation				
Organizational Development				
Leadership and Civic Engagement				
Public Issues Education				
Community Services				
Workforce Development				

17. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Political support is waning for the Extension System at your institution.				
Political support for my institution's CRED Extension programming is waning.				
The Extension System at my institution has maintained a positive image among legislators.				

The Extension System at my institution has maintained a positive image among the general public.
My institution's CRED Extension programming enjoys a broad base of political support.
The Extension System at my institution has maintained a positive image among the general public.
My institution's CRED Extension programming has maintained a positive public image.
Program relevance limits support for CRED Extension efforts at my institution.
Lack of public awareness limits support for CRED Extension efforts at my institution.
University-level support is limiting CRED Extension efforts at my institution.

18. Please indicate how well you agree with each of the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Increased marketing would improve political support for my institutions CRED Extension programming.				
Increased external organizational linkages would improve political support for CRED Extension efforts at my institution.				
Increased university-level linkages would improve political support for CRED Extension efforts at my institution.				
Mass media should be used more to build awareness of what the Extension System has to offer.				
Broadening the target audience would improve political support for my institution's CRED Extension efforts.				

19. Please identify the level to which you see each issue affecting demand for CRED Extension programming.

Very Negatively	Negatively	Neutral	Positively	Very Positively
Increased Urbanization				
Immigration				

The Aging of America
Multi-cultural Issues
Technological Innovations in Communications
Globalization

20. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
Our CRED Extension programming has primarily rural clientele
Our CRED Extension programming is significantly involved in urban communities.
Our CRED Extension programming serves limited resource individuals adequately.
Our CRED Extension programming serves minority populations adequately.

Additional Comments:

VITA

Seth C. Urbanowitz was born in Rockton, Illinois. He received his Bachelor of Science from Southern Illinois University. He received his Master of Science in from the University of Tennessee. He is currently a graduate research assistant in the South Dakota State University Plant Science Department.