

Public Abstract

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Title:The Perceptions Held by FFA Members of Employability Skill Development Associated with Agriculture Career Development Events

Career Development Events (CDEs) are competitive contests organized as an intracurricular component of secondary agriculture programs to provide students with real-world situations to help bridge the gap between attending school and entering the workforce. Most learning objectives of CDEs focus on the technical knowledge and skills which can be measured by performance. It is unknown if participation in CDEs contributes to the development of employability skills highly desired in the workplace. Therefore, the objective of this study was to assess the contribution of participating in CDEs to the development of employability skills, as perceived by participants. All participants of three selected CDEs at the Missouri state competition were provided with a questionnaire which asked them to rate the contribution of participating in their respective CDE to the development of associated employability skills. The contribution to the development of employability skills were established collectively and among characteristics (gender and academic level) for each CDE. Performance was also established among characteristics (gender, academic level and enrollment in a subject related course). The findings provide support for the personal growth and development of participants in the selected CDEs. Ultimately, this study indicates that CDEs, not only strengthens participants' technical knowledge, but also enhances employability skills highly desired in the workplace.