1. APPLICATION FORM

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Project Title: How Families Enact Sustainable Living in Hampton Roads

Please indicate your involvement in the writing of this proposal: 25%

________________________________________________________________________

The following information is collected for assessment purposes only and will NOT impact your application.

Are you a member of the President’s Leadership Program? Yes ☐ No ☒

Are you a member of the Honors Program? Yes ☐ No ☒

Have you applied for or received funds (e.g. Honors Stipend and/or travel award) for previous research activities? Yes ☐ No ☒

If “Yes,” please identify source and explain:

Have you applied for or received funds for the proposed project? Yes ☐ No ☒

If “Yes,” please identify source and explain:
Rachel Bennett

Linda D. Manning

How Families Enact Sustainable Living in Hampton Roads

Summer Scholars Program Proposal

Christopher Newport University

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In an era where the devastating impending effects of climate change are (for the most part) indisputable, this study seeks to understand how climate change and the necessary steps toward environmentally sustainable living are understood and enacted by families who have agreed to participate in the Bay Star Homes program in the Hampton Roads community. In-depth, open-ended interviews with 10-15 families address (a) the extent to which families understand the significance of environmental issues, (b) the practices and behaviors families are enacting to support sustainable/green living, (c) the awareness of local governmental programs available to them to support sustainable/green living, and (d) the areas in which community members need additional support and resources to enact responsible, sustainable living practices.
FULL PROPOSAL

Introduction

A fairly robust canon of research exists on a macro level in which environmental issues are considered in institutional contexts. Extensive prior research on environmental education supports the value of educating students from pre-school to college on best practices regarding sustainability and fostering an appreciation for nature (Anderson & Guyas, 2012; Ardoin, Clark, & Kelsey, 2013; Brymer & Davids, 2013; Collado & Corraliza, 2015; Davis, 2005; Daubenmire, van Opstal, Hall, Wunar, & Kowrach, 2017; Gottlieb, Vigoda-Gadot, & Haim, 2013; Guth, 2016; Omoogun, Egbonyi, & Onnoghen, 2016; Pellow, & Anand, 2009; Sahin, Ertepinar, & Teksoz, 2012; Strife, 2010; Sutton, 2009; Tuncer & Sahin, 2016; Valdes-Vasquez, et al., 2014; Walker, Clary, & Wissehr, 2017). A strong body of research addresses sustainability practices in the workplace (e.g., Ciocirlan, 2017; Tosti-Kharas, Lamm, & Thomas, 2017) and in faith-based institutions (e.g., Taylor, 2016).

However, the family is one important social institution that has been overlooked in terms of environmental issues. The existing research on how sustainability and environmental issues are discussed by families is fairly thin. While some scholars examine the relationship between environmental awareness and consumerism (Thompson, 2010; Waight, 2013; Yan & Xu, 2010), few studies explore the daily living practices of families as they relate to sustainability.

Berry (2015) believes a key component to cultural practices of sustainability is intergenerational conversation, which I believe speaks directly to the need to engage in environmental research in the context of family. Leger and Pruneau (2012) found through
case study research that shared family values of altruism and an appreciation for the biosphere, a belief that their actions made a positive difference in mitigating damage to the environment, and cooperative family dynamics contributed to families engaging in sustained behavioral change regarding positive environmental practices. Barreto, Szóstek, Karapanos, Numes, Pereira, and Quintal (2014) examined the motivations for sustainable behaviors in families and found these behaviors were rooted in individual environmental concerns, individual and family needs for control and security, and the perceived parental role to support responsibility.

Local governments develop and offer programs to support sustainability in the home, but have little understanding of how to reach their target audiences. This study seeks to understand how environmental/sustainability issues are understood and enacted by families in the Hampton Roads community. In particular, the study seeks to answer the following research question: How are environmentally sustainable living issues and practices understood and enacted by families who have agreed to participate in the Bay Star Homes program in the Hampton Roads community?

**Work Proposed**

This project (#018.039) received IRB approval on 5 February 2018. Ten to fifteen families who participate in the Bay Star Homes program (out of a pool of 148 families) will be interviewed. The interviews will be recorded using the Philips voice tracer kit with plate microphones (available through the Trible Library Media Center) and transcribed using Express Scribe transcription software.
The interview protocol is as follows:

1. Why did your family decide to join the Bay Star Homes program? [What triggered your awareness/thoughts about the environment?]

2. What topics first come to mind when you think about sustainability and the environment?

3. What behaviors do you engage in to support sustainability? [What environmentally responsible habits do you practice?]

4. Does your family talk about the environment and/or sustainability issues? If yes, please give an example of how and when these conversations occur?

5. Where do you get information on best practices regarding sustainability and the environment? What messages resonate most with you and/or did you find powerful or compelling? Why?

6. Have you had “environmental failures”-- times when you know you are making unsustainable choices? How do you respond?

7. Is there anything you would like to add about "green living"?

Timeline (June 4, 2018-August 3, 2018)

Spring 2018: Prior to the commencement of the Summer Scholars Program, Dr. Manning will identify study participants and conduct initial phone screenings.

- Initial training on recording equipment and transcription software (June 4-8, 2018)
- Training interviews (June 4-8, 2018): Rachel will observe how Dr. Manning conducts and records two interviews.
- Training on ATLAS.ti to use as a coding tool for data analysis (June 12-16, 2018)
• Data collection—interviews (June 11-July 9, 2018)—anticipates approximately 3-4 family interviews per week and accounts for Wednesday, July 4 holiday.

• Transcription of interviews (June 18-July 13, 2018)—allows for approximately 3 interviews to be transcribed each week.

• Initial draft of method section (July 16-18, 2018)

• Preliminary coding of interviews using ATLAS.ti (July 19-July 26, 2018)

• Initial draft of analysis section (July 30-August 3, 2018)

• Presentation of finding during Getting Started/Welcome Week (August 2018)

Anticipated Results

This preliminary study should begin to explain relevant aspects of green-living in Hampton Roads. Tangible results will include:

• Audio files for 10-15 interviews

• Transcriptions in the form of Word documents of 10-15 interviews

• A final draft of the method section

• A preliminary thematic analysis of the interview data

Expected Products

Additional work by Dr. Manning will yield a manuscript to be submitted to the annual meeting of the Southern States Communication Association (submission deadline September 7, 2018). Following further revision of the manuscript and feedback from the conference, the manuscript will be submitted to a targeted disciplinary journal (anticipated submission date – January 2019).
Dr. Manning will also present a written report of the preliminary findings to Ms. Jennifer Privette, who is the Sustainability Manager for the City of Newport News, and Ms. Katie Cullipher, who is the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) Principal Environmental Education Planner.
REFERENCES


