

Empowering Organizations: Approaches to Tobacco Control Through Youth Empowerment Programs

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Whereas most evaluations of youth empowerment focus on individual outcomes (i.e., were individual youths empowered?), this article focuses on the program as the unit of analysis and seeks to explain how organizational structures, program design features, and processes lead to organizational empowerment (OE). OE is defined as organizational efforts that generate psychological empowerment among members and organizational effectiveness needed for goal achievement. Case studies of five American Legacy Foundation-funded tobacco control youth empowerment programs were conducted during the first 2 years of implementation. Using an OE framework, the authors assessed program design features of the youth empowerment programs that contributed to or detracted from processes leading to OE. Comparing and contrasting the programs led to the identification of models and strategies that contribute to OE. Ecological influences of the state contexts (i.e., political climate, history of tobacco control, and public health infrastructure) were also examined.

Keywords: organizational empowerment; tobacco control; youth; qualitative research

Evaluations of youth empowerment (YE) programs have focused on the individual level or psychological empowerment, "the individual's ability to make decisions and have control over his or her personal life."^{1,2} Less attention has been directed at exploring how the organizational structures in which YE programs are embedded function either to foster or to constrain the empowering process and its outcomes. As a first step in stimulating research directed at an organizational level of analysis, Peterson and Zimmerman have recently presented a framework for conceptualizing organizational empowerment (OE), which they define as organizational efforts that generate psychological empowerment among members and organizational effectiveness needed for goal achievement.³

According to Peterson and Zimmerman, organizations that empower individual members exhibit distinctive internal processes as well as linkages to other organizations that

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support this goal. Peterson and Zimmerman delineate a complex network of OE processes and outcomes that comprise intraorganizational, interorganizational, and extraorganizational factors.³ Intraorganizational factors are those characteristics that represent the internal structure and functioning of organizations; interorganizational factors capture linkages and relationships between organizations; and extraorganizational factors refer to actions intended to affect the larger policy, or other, environments. Peterson and Zimmerman further distinguish factors that are linked to the process of becoming empowered from the outcomes of an empowered organization. Specific constructs within each of these domains are listed and defined in Table 1.

This article applies the OE framework to a comparative case study of five state-level YE tobacco control programs receiving support under the American Legacy Foundation's (Legacy) Statewide Youth Movement Against Tobacco Use (SYMATU). Within the tobacco control context, Legacy has defined YE as the process by which youths (ages 12 to 17) become active participants in the planning and implementation of tobacco control activities within their states and communities.⁴ SYMATU's stated objective is to foster meaningful youth-led tobacco prevention activities or programs to reduce youth tobacco use, to encourage YE, to reduce positive attitudes about tobacco, and to reduce youth exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke. We apply the OE framework to help explain the differences between programs, to illuminate potential relationships between design elements and empowering processes, and to provide guidance to policy makers and practitioners on achieving OE in the design of YE programs. Using the Peterson and Zimmerman framework,³ we categorized the key components of program design that emerged from the case study material according to intraorganizational, interorganizational, and extraorganizational empowerment processes. Because our data were from the first 2 years of the program—including inception and start-up—our analyses focus on the empowering processes rather than on the outcomes of OE.

METHOD

Program Grant Intervention

In fall 2000, Legacy launched a \$35 million grant program for the 46 states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories affiliated with the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) to establish and support statewide youth movements against tobacco use.⁵ Twelve states (later increased to 17) that completed or initiated the Youth Tobacco Survey were awarded program grants ranging from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 per year, for 3 years. Legacy undertook a mixed-methods approach in evaluating the YE programs. All state grantees participated in a structured evaluation of local youth-led tobacco control groups, summarized in other articles in this issue. On the basis of regional and programmatic diversity, 5 states were selected for qualitative case studies (New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia) to examine in greater depth the structure and operation of the program at the state and local level.

Data for five qualitative in-depth case studies were collected through semistructured interviews, focus groups, documents, and observations. We conducted in-person and telephone interviews with state, regional, and local program staff, members of collaborating organizations, and youths for Program Years 1 and 2. Researchers interviewed the same respondents each year (if they were in the same position) at the state and local program level. Adults who participated in the interviews consisted of health department

Table 1. Terms and Definitions of Organizational Empowerment Processes and Outcomes^a

	Processes ^b	Outcomes ^b
<i>Intraorganizational</i> Characteristics of the internal structure and organization function	<p><i>Subgroup linkages</i> Connections between different internal social units of an organization</p> <p><i>Incentive management</i> Facilitate member participation by providing incentives and decreasing costs</p> <p><i>Opportunity role structure</i> Amount of and access to formal roles to provide opportunities to control tasks, improve skills, competencies</p> <p><i>Leadership</i> Provides vision, motivation, and inspiration</p> <p><i>Social support</i> Provides emotional and other resources to cope with challenges in achieving goals</p> <p><i>Group-based belief system</i> Shared values and culture guide efforts</p>	<p><i>Viability and survival</i> The organization has the resources to exist long term</p> <p><i>Underpopulated setting</i> Not enough people to occupy leadership roles due to rate of growth in membership</p> <p><i>Collaboration of empowered subgroups</i> Synergy is created that would not exist without organizational empowerment</p> <p><i>Resolved ideological conflict</i> Internal decision making consistent with overall philosophy</p> <p><i>Resource identification</i> Identify and develop plans to acquire resources</p>
<i>Interorganizational</i> Represents linkages and relationships between organizations	<p><i>Accessing social networks of other organizations</i> Establish links that contribute to goal attainment</p> <p><i>Participating in alliance-building activities with other organizations</i> Active involvement in discussions and operations of members in all organizations. Focused attempt to create connections with other organizations</p>	<p><i>Collaboration with other organizations</i> Coordinate services, exchange information, and develop formal relationships</p> <p><i>Resource procurement</i> Acquire money, people, and facilities from other organizations</p>
<i>Extraorganizational</i> Actions taken by organizations to affect the larger environments of which they are a part	<p><i>Implementing actions in community</i> For example, public meetings, actions, protests, rallies</p> <p><i>Disseminating information</i> For example, public awareness campaigns</p>	<p><i>Influence public policy and practice</i> Public policy is materially changed through organization efforts</p> <p><i>Creation of alternative community programs</i> Contribute to development of organizations with same goals but different organizations and processes</p> <p><i>Deployment of organizational resources in the community</i> Deployment of organizational resources for creating broader community change</p>

a. The reader is referred to Peterson and Zimmerman's³ article for references related to studies on the processes and outcomes highlighted in italics.
 b. According to the framework proposed by Peterson and Zimmerman, *processes* and *outcomes* do not have a one-to-one correlation.

directors, state and local program managers and coordinators, adult youth program coordinators, community-based organization (CBO) directors, and media coordinators.

Focus groups were composed of the youth members of local groups working together in SYMATU. Our sampling strategy allowed for "breadth" and "depth" in local program data collection. We followed a minimum of three local groups in each state for 2 years of the study; we chose groups to achieve ethnic/racial, regional, and social diversity; and we selected groups with varying levels of activity and achievement.

Adult facilitators for these local groups were interviewed in conjunction with the focus groups to provide the researchers with both the adult and youth perspectives on local group functioning and activities. Individual youth leaders in each state were also interviewed to obtain a rich sample of youth perspectives on the programs. In addition, each of the five states provided program documents and reports for review. Many states had sophisticated Web sites that offered program information. Observational reports on youth activities and trainings also served as important data sources.

An analysis of SYMATU would not be complete without examining the context of each state's tobacco control program.⁶ Factors that we considered in the qualitative analysis included tobacco control history and background, funding, political climate, prior tobacco control experience, and other state-level demographic factors. Background materials from the U.S. census, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Youth Tobacco Survey, and Tobacco-Free Kids Campaign documents aided in providing a baseline assessment of the ecological environment in each state.

During the 2-year period, 379 youths in 46 focus groups were interviewed. Two-thirds (64%) were female. All focus group participants were enrolled in school, with the majority of youths at the 11th-grade level or lower (only 10% of youths were seniors in high school). White was the predominant racial or ethnic group (68%), followed by mixed race/other (12%), Black/African American (7%), Hispanic/Latino (5%), and Asian (5%). The majority of SYMATU participants who participated in the focus groups were not employed (61%) or worked 1 to 9 hours per week (19%). Sixty percent of youths in the focus groups reported being involved in SYMATU for 6 months to 2 years.

States were compared across many dimensions. For example, organization charts and program materials were reviewed and compared, and interpretive analysis of key stakeholder interviews and focus groups with youths led us to identify significant contrasts and similarities among the program design elements depicted in the article. Organizational structures were compared assessing commonalities and differences and their associated effects on processes.

Key Definitions

For the purpose of this article, the SYMATU "program" is defined as encompassing several levels of organization: the state or local departments of public health; other state, regional, or county-level organizations; intermediary (subcontractor) organizations; and local youth groups. Although sublevels of the organization can be considered to be organizations in their own right, when we discuss OE, we mean it to include the entire enterprise, not a single level. There are times when a specific level is discussed, and these are noted.

FINDINGS

Each of the five state programs was structured differently, and each had its strengths and weaknesses relative to OE. However, it is important to note that each program was part of a larger system and was directly or indirectly affected by the ecological context of tobacco control in the state. Thus, we describe the effect of ecological context on various aspects of OE prior to addressing other program design elements.

Ecological Context

Ecological context affects what is politically feasible and practical in designing new programs, and this is especially true in state-level agencies (all five programs were located in the State Departments of Health). In terms of tobacco control, ecological context pertains to, but is not limited to, the following: extent of tobacco use among teens, amount of tobacco control funding, degree of political support for tobacco control, and history of tobacco control. We found all of the above influenced SYMATU design to some degree.

In some states, tobacco use among teens was above the national average of 28%, whereas in other states it was below (ranging from 24.5% to 38.5%). The culture of smoking, economics of tobacco (tobacco-growing states generally had higher rates of teen smoking and smokeless tobacco use), and general societal tolerance for smoking accounted for much of the difference between the states.

States with higher levels of funding for tobacco control and prevention had far greater resources and an existing infrastructure on which to establish their SYMATU programs. The pool of adults with experience in teen tobacco programs was greater in states with more resources and a longer history of tobacco control. In addition, the demographics of state residents and the teen population were significant determinants of program design. For example, in one state, youths were more ethnically diverse, and this meant tailoring activities to be culturally appropriate. In a state with large Native American populations that have unique traditions and norms related to tobacco use, Native American elders were involved in developing special programs for those youths. In states with low population density, there were often not enough youths in a specific geographic region to form a local group, and local groups were more likely to be school based because schools were the places where youths congregated. In school-based programs, it was challenging for adults and youths to shed the "flavor" of school, where adults are authority figures, and adopt a YE approach.

Program Contrasts

In comparing the five state programs, we found substantial differences in the following areas: (a) organizational structure, (b) program theory and vision, (c) compensation of adult facilitators, (d) training of adult facilitators, (e) training for youth, (f) statewide youth advisory boards, (g) local activities, (h) relationships with other tobacco control organizations, (i) regional and statewide activities, and (j) media campaigns. However, interpreting these variations was not simple. The OE framework helped us understand why these elements of the program made a difference in the way YE took shape and the process of empowering youths.

The program elements described below frequently crossed the conceptual boundaries between intraorganizational, interorganizational, and extraorganizational components.

For example, organizational structure determined the degree to which each state's program encouraged subgroup linkages (intraorganizational process) and helped access the social networks of the organizations (interorganizational process).

The OE framework helped elucidate program contrasts and also program similarities, ultimately enabling us to categorize the five state programs into three organizational models: centralized, decentralized, and participatory as described below. In the text that follows, we organize our findings according to intraorganizational, interorganizational, and extraorganizational components of OE. Each program element and related OE processes are compared across the three program models shown in Table 2.

Intraorganizational Component of OE

Intraorganizational elements include subgroup linkages, incentive management, opportunity role structure, leadership, social support, and a group-based belief system as defined in Table 1.³

Organizational Structure

One of the first decisions made by each of the states was whether to house and staff the program within the State Department of Health, to subcontract to another organization, or to devise some combination of strategies. This decision had profound implications for all three OE components: intraorganizational, interorganizational, and extraorganizational. Although each state had a unique organizational structure, collectively they can be characterized as *centralized*, *decentralized*, and *participatory* models. The two critical factors in organizational design were coverage of the entire geographic area of the state and use of preexisting tobacco networks and organizations. The number of local youth groups ranged from 15 to 38 across the states. Organizational structure affected subgroup linkages, the degree to which social networks of other organizations were accessed, opportunity role structure, and the group-based belief system.

Centralized Model. In the centralized model, a subcontract was given to a statewide prevention network that had local offices in all counties of the state. Historically, the network conducted tobacco control activities in the state (primarily for adults), and the teen program was added to the organization's initiatives. For youths in this model, regardless of location of residence, there was a local program they could join. Adult facilitators were all employees of the same organization and therefore consistent in their role performance

Decentralized Model. In the decentralized model, the state subcontracted with six regional organizations believing that local organizations can better serve their constituents because they understand both the health needs and the political climate in a community. Each regional organization then established local youth groups in the area it covered. By definition, the way each region set up local groups was unique. Whereas regions covered the entire geographic area of the state, within-region coverage was variable. Most of the regional organizations that received a contract were involved in other tobacco prevention programs, and there was the potential for linkages between the adult and teen programs, although to a lesser extent than in the centralized model.

(text continues on p. 588)

Table 2. Comparison of Program Design Elements and Organizational Empowerment Processes by Centralized, Decentralized, and Participatory Models

Program Design Elements and OE Processes	Centralized Model (n = 1)	Decentralized Model (n = 3)	Participatory Model (n = 1)
Intraorganizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcontract was given to a statewide prevention network that had local offices throughout state • The network conducted tobacco control activities in the state (primarily for adults), and the teen program was added to the organization's initiatives • Each local youth group had a budget of \$5,000 for local activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State subcontracted with a number of organizations believing that regional organizations can better serve their constituents because they understand the health needs and political climate in a community • Each regional organization then established local youth groups in the area it covered • Each region had a budget for regional activities of \$10,000. Local groups could apply to their region for limited funding of activities; incentive was to plan more regional activities than local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted a participatory model; issued a request for proposals to community-based organizations (CBOs) in the state, including tobacco control organizations and youth development organizations • One of the unique aspects of this model was that the local group controlled its own budget of \$2,500 • The youths commented that in other organizations, they spent their time fund-raising, but the Statewide Youth Movement Against Tobacco Use gave them the freedom to focus on activities and gave them control of resources
Theory and vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used developmental theory in the planning and implementation of the youth empowerment (YE) program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral change theories, which focused less on empowerment.—emphasized modification and prevention of health risk behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on empowerment theory principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Opportunity role structure • Group-based belief system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time adult coordinators. Selection criteria included a 4-year college degree, nonsmoker, and preferred experience with youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six full-time paid regional coordinators but relied on volunteers at the local level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adult coordinators were staff members of the CBO grantee organizations, and the youth tobacco program paid for a portion of their salaries. They were oriented to YE but devoted the majority of their time to other needs of their organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensation for adult facilitators • Incentive management 			

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Program Design Elements and OE Processes	Centralized Model (n = 1)	Decentralized Model (n = 3)	Participatory Model (n = 1)
<i>Training for adults</i>			
• Group-based belief system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult coordinators received the same training (amount and content) • Participated in the same statewide training activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to provide same training to each regional coordinator • However, each one worked for a different organization, with its own interpretation of YE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult coordinators attended a statewide training where they were specifically trained in YE principles • Youths were involved in training design
• Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinators were well versed in YE principles and, because the training was consistent, their approaches at the local level were similar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional coordinators, in turn, were responsible for training adult coordinators at the local level • Less consistency in approach to YE among the local coordinators compared to other models 	
<i>Training for youth</i>			
• Opportunity role structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered the largest number of training sessions and the most consistent training sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided some training at the state level, but mostly the regional coordinators organized youth training sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state issued a request for presentations • Youths designed training workshops that were offered at the main statewide training session each year
• Group-based belief system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youths in local groups received standard training from the same trainers and shared a common understanding of how to conduct activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training sessions could be tailored to the specific needs of the youths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youths developed the topics and substance and led the workshops
• Leadership			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although this fostered youth leadership and opportunity role structure, it resulted in less consistency than in other programs

- Statewide Youth Advisory Boards*
- Opportunity role structure
 - Leadership
- Two representatives from each local group were elected to the board by their local groups
 - Most representative of the local level with equal representation by local group
 - Youths were involved in choosing activities and campaigns but less involved in the original development of them— analoguous to choosing from a menu rather than creating the menu
 - Two representatives from each region were elected, and remaining slots were appointed by state program director
 - Included representatives from each region but not each local group
 - Less clear what youth responsibilities were because of the emphasis on regional activities in addition to statewide activities particularly in Year 1 of the program
 - Youths felt adults made significant decisions and were unsure how they could or should fit into the decision-making process
- Activities and meetings*
- Social support
 - Shared group belief system
- Local meetings held at community organizations or local government agencies
 - Youths held regular local meetings at least once a month
 - Local activities included letter writing campaigns, hosting legislative lunches and community forums, and volunteering at migrant worker fairs
- Youth volunteered for the board
 - Not representative of the local groups unless one youth volunteered from each local group
 - Youths were responsible for helping state staff develop training for youths and adults, from designing the content to leading seminars
 - They were part of the planning process from the conceptual phase to implementation
- Local meetings held at community organizations
 - Local activities included field trips and retreats, tobacco-free pledges, newsletters, and creation of youth cessation programs

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Program Design Elements and OE Processes	Centralized Model ($n = 1$)	Decentralized Model ($n = 3$)	Participatory Model ($n = 1$)
<i>Interorganizational</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational structure Access social networks of other organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statewide prevention network was given the contract; there was a built-in connection between the YE program and other tobacco control programs in the state Resources available through subcontracting organization could be brought to the youth program Because of the subcontract with a mature prevention organization that was networked with related organizations, there was a ready-made coalition for the youth program to join Adult coordinators could tap into these other groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the decentralized model, each regional coordinator developed own network using relationships established by host organization Coordinators from this model observed that this was a difficult task to accomplish on top of overseeing a number of local groups, and building relationships one-on-one took an inordinate amount of time Each regional coordinator worked alone and did not have a statewide network to tap into 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each CBO had its own network for the youth program to work with, and the strength of relationships varied from local group to local group

- Extraorganizational**
- Presentations, skits, and workshops for peer and younger youth
 - Antitobacco announcements, materials, and events in schools
 - Smoke-free parties and events
 - Statewide civic action event that attracted youths from all 21 programs
- Activities (local, regional, and state)*
- Presentations, skits, and workshops for peer and younger youths
 - Antitobacco announcements, materials, and events in schools
 - Smoke-free parties and events
 - Statewide youth protest at convenience store, convention against selling tobacco products to youths
- Media*
- The most sophisticated media campaign—TV, radio, magazine, billboards, and branding of a message—but organized at the state level
-
- Presentations, skits, and workshops for peer and younger youths
 - Antitobacco announcements, materials, and events in schools
 - Smoke-free parties and events
 - One of the unique projects that youths developed was a statewide campaign to educate youths on the ways that movies promote smoking—both by characters who smoke and by product placement in the movies
- Media*
- There was a tension between the state and some of the regions that wanted to use media for specific regional efforts
 - Media organized at the state level
- Youths worked closely with media consultant providing expert feedback and contributing content ideas to campaigns
 - Media organized at the state level

NOTE: OE = organizational empowerment. The interorganizational feature “Participate in alliance-building activities with other organizations” was not assessed due to the study design.

and understanding of YE. Because the subcontract went to a community organization, youth meetings were not held in schools, and this encouraged a more diverse group of youth to become involved.

Participatory Model. In the participatory model, the state issued a request for proposals to CBOs in the state, including tobacco control organizations and youth development organizations. After being reviewed by a committee of teens, grants of \$2,500 were awarded to organizations based on their proposed plan, but there were no constraints on the kinds of activities proposed. Demonstrating that there was significant youth contribution to the proposal was mandatory. Because each contract went to a freestanding local organization, in the participatory model, not all geographic areas were covered, and therefore not all youths had access to a local group. Housing the YE programs in other CBOs helped the teens access the social networks of other organizations.

Program Theory and Vision

A striking difference that emerged from interviews with state-level officials in the five states was in program approach and vision. Vision originated at the state level and permeated all levels of the organization. In states with a clear and consistent vision, interviews with youths, adult coordinators, and state program staff solicited consistent responses about the mission of the program. Some of the states had well-conceptualized and articulated YE principles, whereas others were less clear in their approaches. In states where overall vision was ambiguous, youths and adults had different notions about the purpose of the program. The difference in these expressed approaches can be characterized as empowerment versus behavior change theory.

States with an empowerment-oriented vision structured their programs to allow greater decision making by youths and made sure that resources (especially money) went directly to youths. This strategy promoted youth leadership as youths had greater control of decisions and resources. Other states assumed a behavior change approach with the goal of smoking reduction and cessation. These states tended to see the overall purpose of the program as reducing teen smoking rates rather than creating social change agents. These were also the states with more conservative tobacco policies and were under more pressure to show quantitative results to win support from legislators and policy makers for continued funding. Behavior change theories focused less on the YE aspects of the program and instead emphasized modification and prevention of negative health behaviors.

Three substantive areas were important for the states to meld together in developing a vision at program inception: tobacco control strategies, YE techniques, and adolescent development theory. Two programs developed sophisticated approaches that incorporated theory in all three areas. These two states had a number of advantages in that they were designated "comprehensive" tobacco control states by the CDC, were among the top states for tobacco prevention funding, and had longer histories of tobacco control than other case study states. They were also more familiar with YE techniques, having incorporated them into other programs.

Drawing on their expertise in both tobacco control and YE led the two states to develop a clear and well-articulated vision that pervaded their program design and was ultimately reflected in comments we heard from youth participants. Their approaches led to the cre-

ation of formal leadership roles for youths such as officer positions in the local groups or by putting youths in charge of developing peer-training seminars.

Opportunity role structure for youths, defined by Peterson and Zimmerman as the number of, and access to, formal roles to control tasks and improve skills and competencies, was highest in these two states. An additional advantage was the incorporation of adolescent development theories. One program limited membership to high school students exclusively because including younger kids would make the program "uncool" for high school-age youths. Another state developed distinct programs for middle school-age and high school-age adolescents with different activities and slogans, respectively. The remaining states, which did not incorporate adolescent development theories into their vision, struggled with trying to balance the unique needs of younger and older teens who were participating in the program. By definition, the younger teens who were less mature needed more adult guidance to accomplish their goals. These states did not address the issues around being "cool" that are so important to teenagers.

The group-based belief system was more consistent from local group to local group in states that were guided by a theory of empowerment. Youths were clear about what aspects of the program they were leading, and they stated that they were satisfied with their roles. (However, it is important to note that in these states, the youths were often more committed to YE than to the tobacco control mission of the program). In states with a more traditional behavioral change model that emphasized change by reducing tobacco use by individual youths rather than by having youths collectively become empowered, there was more adult involvement than in the states with empowerment approaches. Particularly in Year 1, youths reported that they were being paid lip service regarding their level of decision making. Some were not satisfied with their limited decision-making roles and acknowledged that their adult coordinators controlled most of the decisions. This fact became apparent to state program leaders, and we watched these states make changes between Years 1 and 2 to improve their organizational processes and to redirect decision making toward youths.

Some states involved youths in the conceptual phase of the program, whereas in others, the adults developed menus of activities and youths then selected among them. We viewed this as a profound difference in philosophies among the programs.

Compensation of Adult Facilitators

The SYMATU programs were dependent on adult facilitators at the local level to coordinate the youth groups and provide basic necessities such as transportation and resources for youths, as well as more intangible resources such as tobacco control expertise, motivation and inspiration, guidance in choosing and implementing activities, and help in connecting with other local groups or the larger regional or state structure. Adult compensation could have been structured as full-time, part-time, or volunteer in any of the program models, and the amount of compensation differed greatly by program. In some programs, adult coordinators were full-time paid staff; in others, they were volunteers who received reimbursement for expenses, whereas others received a stipend. Adult compensation, defined as incentive management in the OE framework, facilitates member participation by providing incentives or reducing costs.

Recruitment and retention of adult coordinators was affected by compensation. Programs with full-time, paid adult coordinator positions could advertise for and attract staff with experience in, and/or a passion for, YE. These staff members obviously had more

time to spend on the SYMATU program, and they were not distracted by other job priorities. Programs that recruited volunteer adult coordinators tended to find individuals (e.g., teachers, coaches, parents) who were involved in other kinds of volunteer youth activities but were not skilled in YE and were usually authority figures. Adult coordinators who were paid a stipend but had another job as their primary employment gave priority to the job that was their main source of income.

Training for Adult Coordinators

Training for adult coordinators also varied by program. Three aspects of adult training were important: amount, content, and consistency of training among adult coordinators. The purpose of training was to build skills, and it enabled coordinators to facilitate the youth groups more effectively; to work together across local groups (facilitate subgroup linkages); and to adopt a consistent approach to adult leadership (and by extension, YE). The number of adult training sessions ranged from one to four per year. The benefits of multiple training sessions were that adult coordinators were brought together several times, developed common understanding regarding the program, and shared practical experience.

Some programs placed a strong emphasis on training adults in YE principles, whereas others did not. In states that did not emphasize YE techniques, the adult coordinators' individual philosophies regarding youths were inconsistent and sometimes in direct conflict with the literature on YE. By contrast, in a state where adults were trained in empowerment techniques, a youth commented,

It seems like we make a lot of decisions, and [the adult facilitator] is really just there to help us when we decide to do something, help us go through with it, contact people we need to talk to. She's really just there as a helper, and it's more up to us to get everything done [and] decide what we're doing and everything. We get to choose what we do and what we think would be fun for [other] youth to do.

Youth Training

Youth training varied across programs, just as adult training did, in amount, content, and consistency. Youth had both formal and informal means of gaining leadership skills. They could attend a formal skills training for all involved youths, or they could develop leadership skills experientially; for example, as president of their local group or by leading an activity at the local level. Formal and informal training opportunities were available at the state, regional, and local levels. Content ranged from skill building to political advocacy work. One youth described a state-level training this way:

They had four main workshops: motivate, activate, gyrate, and communicate. And we learned . . . different things . . . communicate you learned public speaking skills, how to talk to the media. Motivate: getting recruitment. Activate: that's like the first activate one was picking the name . . . Gyrate, which that was incorporating like doing different skits, incorporating it in music and different things to like do different activities.

One program had a large statewide training each year that served as both a training and bonding activity for which it issued a "call for presentations." Youths were invited to sub-

mit a proposal for a seminar that they could lead if it was accepted (most were). The training was led by youths and addressed the areas they thought were most important.

Statewide Youth Advisory Boards

One means of assuming a formal leadership role was by becoming a representative to the Statewide Youth Advisory Board, either through election or by volunteering. Statewide Youth Advisory Boards were established by all of the programs, although each state was unique in its number of members, selection criteria, and roles and responsibilities. The boards provided youth leadership at the state level, advised state program staff, and provided direction for the statewide program as a whole. The number of Statewide Youth Advisory Board members ranged from 20 to 72 across programs. Roles and responsibilities of the Statewide Youth Advisory Board members were quite different in each program.

Local Activities and Meetings

What mattered most to the youths and where they had the most exposure to the program was at the local level: working with their peers and the adult coordinators. The way the local groups operated was the result of all of the factors described above: organizational structure, program vision, adult training and compensation, and youth leadership and training. The degree of youth autonomy, resource management, relationships with adult coordinators, and the kinds of activities planned were all consequent to other intraorganizational components. The emphasis on skill building versus political activism at the state level trickled down to the local groups and led to the selection of certain activities over others. Local activities and meetings were the primary vehicle by which the youths gained social support and strengthened the group-based belief system. Youths in focus groups often praised the efforts of others in their group and seemed genuinely proud of each other's successes.

Interorganizational Component of Organizational Empowerment

The interorganizational components of OE include accessing social networks of other organizations and inclusive decision making and task-focused practices of coalitions.³

Organizational Relationships

As previously described, organizational structure not only affected intraorganizational components of OE but also interorganizational components, such as accessing the social networks of other organizations and involvement with related coalitions. One of the SYMATU goals was to develop and/or strengthen tobacco control coalitions. By Year 2 of the program, more attention was paid to this issue and other interorganizational issues than in Year 1, when intraorganizational issues were the main focus. In the centralized model, the subcontract with a mature prevention organization created a ready-made coalition for the youth program that adult coordinators could easily tap. In the decentralized model, each regional coordinator could use his or her host organization's networks, and in the participatory model, each CBO had its own coalition for the youth program to

work with. In both of the latter cases, strength of coalitions varied from region to region or from local group to local group.

Extraorganizational Component of Organizational Empowerment

Extraorganizational processes include implementing actions in the community and disseminating information.³

Statewide and Regional Activities

All of the youth groups participated in local, regional, or statewide activities and implemented actions in the community. Some focused on tobacco education in their schools, whereas others participated in community fairs and events. Youths talked a lot about the statewide events they participated in because they were exciting and made them realize they were part of something big: "When you go to the summit and there's a bunch of people, and there's hundreds of us, and they're all really excited—it's crazy, but it's great."

There were varying levels of sophistication in the types of activities pursued by the groups. For example, one group met with their state representatives en masse.

I wish more people could go. I mean, it's such a great experience. I mean, you're there with, what 300 other people who are saying the same thing you are, and you've put it all together in the [state] capital and marching around with chants and stuff like that, it's just amazing what it looks like and what it is to experience something like that.

Another program that brought youths together from throughout the state held a rally outside a convention of convenience store owners and was featured in *USA Today*. Many youths had participated in "stings" of convenience stores (testing whether they would sell tobacco products to underage youth), and this was a way to take their activism even further.

Some events were a big draw for youths, featuring famous athletes or celebrities; however, there was a tension between holding events that would attract youths because they were hip versus events that focused on a tobacco control message. Although all of the programs were aware of the need to do both, it was not easy to find the right balance.

Media Campaigns

All five programs had an associated media campaign, and all hired outside consultants to conduct the campaigns. (In one state, this changed in Year 2 when the media consultant was brought on staff.) The use of media changed during the first 2 years of the program as youths and adults gained experience in how to use the media, and youths became more involved in helping to develop and execute media campaigns. The media consultants operated at the state level and were focused on statewide initiatives. Disseminating information is one of the extraorganizational components of OE, and it was primarily accomplished through activities and media campaigns in the Legacy project.

None of the programs involved youths in selecting the media consultants at program inception, and the degree to which the media campaigns involved youths in the first 2 years varied dramatically across the programs. Regardless of the media decisions made

by the SYMATU programs and the degree of youth involvement, youths were excited about the media. This generation is aware of the media's impact.

And I also went to the media training at this conference I was at. So I learned how to do that—how to like talk to like the media. And all the workshops have taught me so much, like information, but also like what has happened to people and like stuff that can happen. And like it's just like this whole new thing that's kind of like, it's kind of overwhelming, but it's also like teaching me that like I can do something else later on in life; I can do something big; I can be a part of something big.

Our school has a TV show called Teens In Action, like we try to get all the like things that are going on in the community on it. And Fox News, that's our sponsor, helped us, we send in this video to Channel 1 News, they like wrote to all channels and said, 'How has your school changed the world?' And you had to do a video on it. And they did our video, they helped us with it. That was pretty cool.

DISCUSSION

The Peterson and Zimmerman OE framework was a useful method for analyzing and interpreting qualitative data on YE tobacco control programs. It led us to identify three organizational models among our case study sites and to specify the indicators in YE tobacco control programs that relate to each OE process.

We found advantages and disadvantages associated with each state's program. There was not an overall "best" or "worst" program. As states consider initiating YE programs, they must weigh the benefits and limitations inherent in a program's organizational structure and consider the extent to which organizational design leads to OE and, subsequently, to desired outcomes. Although individual member YE is one obvious outcome of interest, program sustainability is an equally important outcome when looking at the program level of analysis.

Three organizational models emerged from our data: *centralized*, *decentralized*, and *participatory*. States representing the centralized and participatory models were far better endowed than states that adopted a decentralized model; therefore, it is somewhat unfair to contrast the three models equally, especially because the decentralized model contains some of the best aspects of both the centralized and participatory models. The five different state program designs were all successful in empowering youths, meaning that the youths became active participants in planning and implementing tobacco control activities within their state and communities, albeit through different activities and with different messages. In focus groups with youths, it was clear that the activities they were involved in motivated them to affect change in tobacco norms, education, policy, or knowledge. In all five states, the youths who were involved and engaged had become empowered to one degree or another.

Qualitatively, we noticed differences in the level of analytic thinking by youths in different states that we hypothesize are due to differences in strength of OE. (One caution to practitioners is that youth commitment to empowerment can overshadow commitment to the substantive area of interest, and striking a balance is important.) We hope future researchers will be able to link OE processes with outcomes. Each OE factor in the intraorganizational, interorganizational, and extraorganizational components is discussed below.

Subgroup Linkages. Subgroup linkages were strongest in the centralized model for two reasons. First, subcontracting to an existing prevention network that covered all areas of the state ensured that there would be an accessible local group for any youth to join. Second, this network had established relationships with other community organizations, which were then predisposed to work with the youth groups. Although such a network may be rare, contracting with a group that already had relationships with other tobacco groups, knew the smoking prevention field, and had resources to bring to the project beyond the Legacy funding was an advantage in getting the program started.

Incentive Management. For adult coordinators at the local level, a full-time paid salary encouraged dedication to the ongoing success of the program and contributed to program sustainability by strengthening recruitment and retention. In the centralized model, the full-time paid adults had more time to attend training sessions that improved their skills and understanding of YE. Regarding youth incentives, the participatory model elicited the strongest endorsement. Writing a grant that was funded (after being judged by other youths) was an empowering experience in and of itself, but controlling how their own funds were spent was a unique experience for teens.

Opportunity Role Structure. Opportunity role structure was enhanced by participation on the Statewide Youth Advisory Boards where local youths served as representatives and took on additional responsibility for overseeing the statewide program. It was important to youths that the Statewide Youth Advisory Boards had a clear mission and that youths be equal partners with adults. They could differentiate when they were integral to the process and when they were being co-opted.

Leadership. Training of adults and youth was a critical component in promoting youth leadership. Teaching adults about YE helped them to understand their roles relative to the teens, to provide the appropriate level of support, and to become comfortable with a different kind of adult-youth relationship. Training teens was important to their leadership development. Many of them described how they became better public speakers and gained confidence in making presentations because of the training they received. In addition, many talked about what they had learned about Big Tobacco's tactics and were able to recite facts related to smoking and tobacco use. The more decision making was pushed down to youths, the more leadership they were able to demonstrate.

Social Support. Youths derived social support from group activities at the state and local level when they were accomplishing things they felt were important. One of the frequent comments we heard from youths was that they had fun while they were engaged in activities and that this was one reason they stayed in the group. In all states, the youths told us that in their local groups they got to know kids from other "cliques" who they otherwise would not have interacted with. Although their social groups outside of their tobacco work may not have been integrated, their SYMATU groups were, and this was viewed positively.

Group-Based Belief System. Having a strong vision and approach to YE at the state level directly contributed to a shared belief system at the local level. Training for adults and youths was also significant in developing group norms around empowerment and common critiques of Big Tobacco.

Accessing Social Networks of Other Organizations. The participatory model was the most successful in accessing social networks of other organizations because the teen programs were placed in CBOs that were involved in community activities with a broader mission. However, in the second year, almost all of the states paid more attention to developing networks and coalitions and to building relationships with other organizations. Due to study limitations described below, we cannot compare the programs on this component.

Participating in Alliance-Building Activities With Other Organizations. Again, due to study limitations, we were not able to assess strong differences among the programs in this component of OE.

Implementing Actions in the Community. The extraorganizational component of OE was developed later in this project than intraorganizational and interorganizational components, and the programs were just beginning to implement it in Year 2 of the program. We found the extraorganizational factors of the OE framework somewhat problematic in this regard because they seemed by definition to be outcomes of intraorganizational and interorganizational processes rather than a parallel concept.

Disseminating Information. Community activities and media were the two main ways that tobacco information was disseminated during the first 2 years of the project. We observed increasing activities in Year 2 of the project and would expect to see more in future years.

The data in this study were limited to the first 2 years of implementation of the five programs. Consequently, we leave it to future researchers to investigate the relationships between OE components and individual psychological empowerment or program viability outcomes. SYMATU states were funded for 3 years and, although it is not yet clear which programs will last beyond the initial funding stream, the ability to carry on the YE movement is a long-term outcome of interest and one that is directly affected by the structure of the program.

We witnessed increased attention and interest in affecting change at the community level by the SYMATU programs, and although we could not assess extraorganizational OE for 2 years, we hypothesize that as organizations mature, they pay greater attention to the broader level of empowerment, and extraorganizational components of OE may evolve later than interorganizational and intraorganizational factors. This is an area for future research.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

When designing YE programs (for tobacco control as well as other behavioral health issues), it is useful to consider how potential program design features will affect the empowering processes and outcomes included in the Peterson and Zimmerman framework. Our findings benefit practitioners in several ways.

First, ecological contexts in a state, region, or community may constrain options and influence program design elements. For example, funding agencies may dictate required elements, and/or political winds may not be conducive to certain kinds of programs. However, ecological context notwithstanding, our findings indicated that practitioners can successfully influence OE.

Second, organizing program features by the categories of intraorganizational, interorganizational, extraorganizational allows practitioners to link OE processes and health behavior indicators. For example, our findings show that the *group-based belief system* process (i.e., shared values and culture guide efforts) was robust in states with a clear vision and theoretical approach to a program that combined tobacco control, YE, and tobacco control strategies. As another example, *subgroup linkages* (i.e., connections between different internal social units of an organization) were strongest in the youth tobacco control program that subcontracted to an established statewide prevention network.

Finally, while we applied the categories of intraorganizational, interorganizational and extraorganizational processes to help us evaluate YE programs retrospectively, we encourage practitioners to *prospectively* plan their programs in a way that will maximize the six intraorganizational empowerment processes: subgroup linkages, incentive management, opportunity role structure, leadership, social support, and a group-based belief system. Using a prospective approach to designing behavioral health programs will increase the degree to which the organization is empowering and empowered.

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