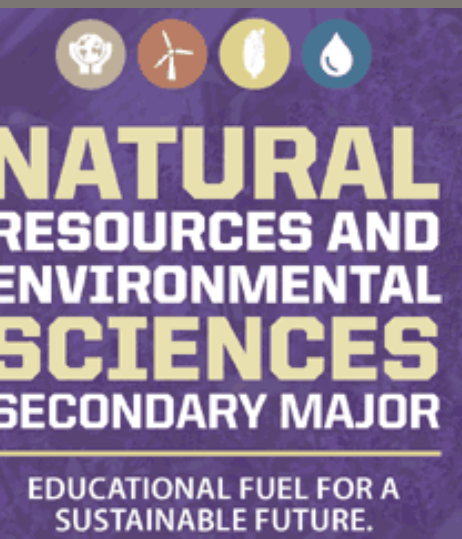


# THE OBSCURE VALUE OF NATURE WITHIN A CAMPUS SETTING:

## Unveiling Intrinsic and Extrinsic Stakeholder Values Concerning Native Flora Plots

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### Introduction

- During this project, the team worked to bridge previous NRES research endeavors focused on the tallgrass prairie ecosystem through a differentiating perspective: to research and identify various scopes of **value** associated with native flora plots within a campus setting (i.e., Kansas State University).
- This aids in creating a comprehensive and complete body of research on natural grasslands in a college setting. Our research focuses on relating the impact of tallgrass plots and native flora on people through an explanatory case study.
- Throughout our study we focused on the connection between human and nature through five separate lenses, **natural, physical, mental, emotional, and social**.
- Evaluating the individual lens provided a unique view on how an individual connects to nature and the outcomes that occur in response to each unique human connection.

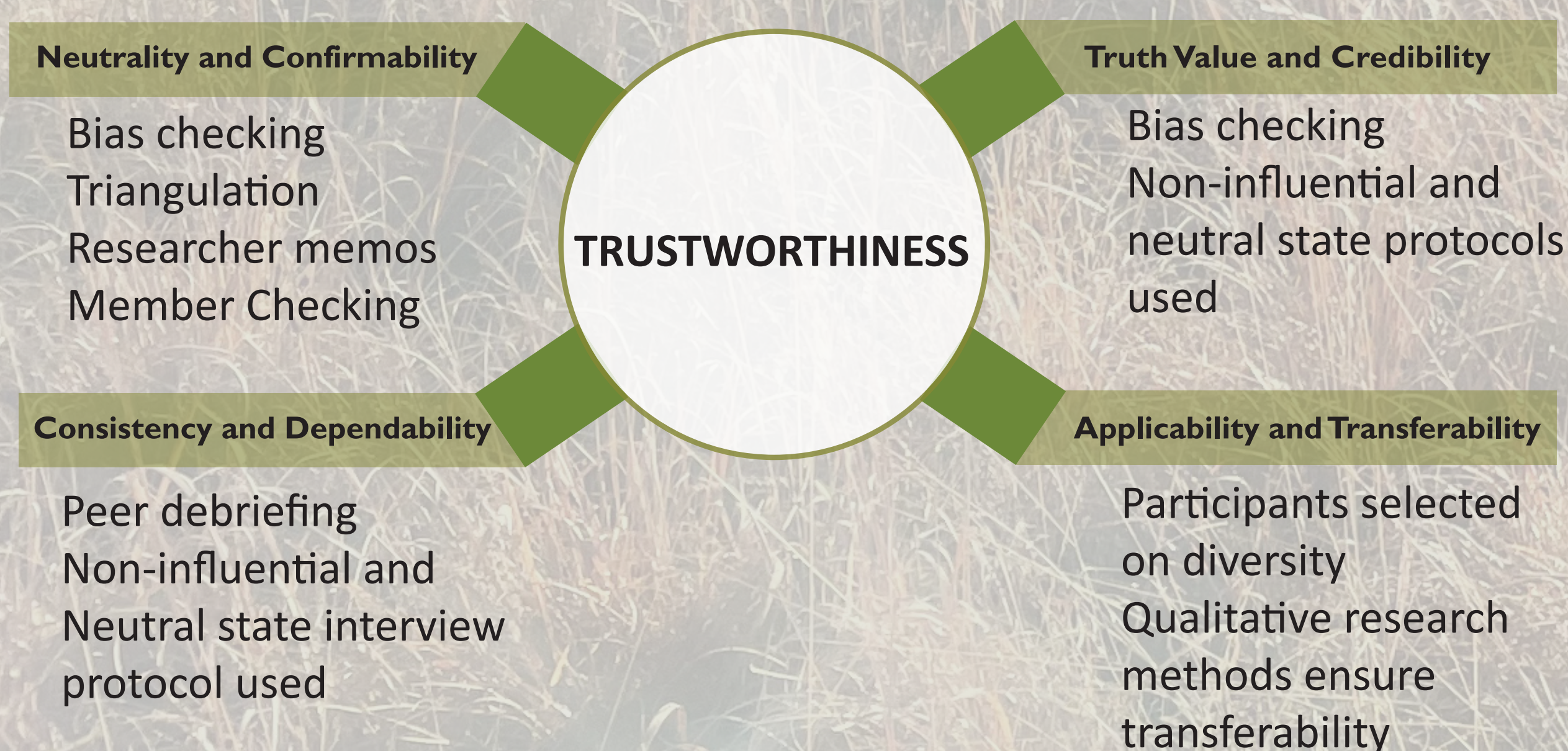
### Research Question

- How do staff, faculty, and students value native flora plots located on the Kansas State University campus?

### Methods

- Throughout this qualitative research process, an explanatory case study framework was used.
- Semi-structured Interviews were conducted with participants chosen through purposeful sampling, including academic faculty, maintenance staff, and students.
- Data was then analysed using deductive coding, sourcing frequencies of common words used in interviews
- Trustworthiness was ensured utilizing Krefting (1991) *Rigor in Qualitative Research* outline.

Figure 1: Trustworthiness Criteria



### Results

Figure 2: Demographics of Participants

Demographics	Data (Percentage, Range)	
Mean Age:	38.3 (21-53)	
Ethnicity:	Caucasian	100% (6)
Gender:	Male	50% (3)
	Female	50% (3)

- Natural flora tended to be preferable over lawns.
- Ecosystem services were important to note on many interviews, mainly in controlling flooding within the Manhattan area.
- Maintenance of these natural plots tended to be a concern.
- Air and water quality were mentioned by multiple participants.
- Native plots are thought of being very calming, soothing, and relaxing.

Figures 3-7: Data Analysis

Initial Code	Subcode	Frequency
<i>Natural:</i>		
	Plant(s)	65
	Native(s)	61
	Meadow	31
	(Eco)system	20
	Spring	10

Initial Code	Subcode	Frequency
<i>Social:</i>		
	People	16
	Helping/ Assisted	7
	Solitude/Alone	7
	Students	7
	Family	4

Initial Code	Subcode	Frequency
<i>Emotional:</i>		
	Time	12
	Enjoy(ing)	8
	Concern of Pesticides	6
	Relaxation	5
	Peaceful	4

Initial Code	Subcode	Frequency
<i>Physical:</i>		
	Walk(ing)	69
	Maintenance	17
	(Physical) Ability	13
	Function	8
	Run(ing)	5

Initial Code	Subcode	Frequency
<i>Mental:</i>		
	Think	34
	Value	26
	Feel(s)	25
	Experience	13
	Learning Experience	7

Figure 8: K-state Meadow



Figure 9: K-state Meadow (Kingery-Page, 2020)



### Discussion

After analysing the interview data, a handful of common themes emerged:

- Existing native plots and how they already impact the individuals.
- Ecosystem services, the importance of stormwater management, air, and water quality.
- Physical activity that is promoted by including these spaces on a college campus.
- Mental benefits from these spaces such as solitude, calm, relaxation, and recharge.
- Associated maintenance needs and costs.

### Conclusion

- From the research, certain themes and topics were recurring throughout direct quotations from interviewees.
- Ecosystem services- specifically those involved with the regulating and cultural categories were present throughout.
- Interviewees each expressed different valuations of what native flora plots currently offer/could potentially offer to daily campus and personal use.
- One of the interviewees expressed a concern for implementation and maintenance and native flora plots, which is an important discussion and worth further exploration in future research.

### References

- Kingery-Page, K. (2020). Kansas State University. The Meadow. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from <https://blogs.k-state.edu/meadow/>.
- Krefting, L. (1991). Rigor in qualitative research: The assessment of trustworthiness. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 45(3), 214–222. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.45.3.214>