Is Anyone Listening? The Dichotomous Perspective of School Administrator Listening Skills

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Abstract

Listening is a critical element in leadership with previous research suggesting that communication may impact the success of an organization. Seeking to add to the literature on listening skills and leadership in the educational setting, this study investigated self-perceptions and teachers’ perceptions of administrators’ listening skills. Several hypotheses were examined using the following independent variables: school level (elementary school, middle school, or high school), years of experience, and gender. The sample consisted of 115 administrators and 552 teachers from a large school district in south central Texas.

A listening skills instrument used in business was modified and tested in a pilot study. Based on the pilot study, a new instrument was developed based on four factors (respect, response, empathy, and trustworthiness) of listening as compared to the original six factors (respect, response, open-mind, empathy, memory, and attention). Factor analysis of the results confirmed the reliability and structure of the instrument.

The results of the study supported the hypothesis that school administrators felt they had better listening skills than perceived by their teachers. In addition, elementary school teachers had significantly better perceptions of their school administrator’s listening skills than secondary school teachers did. There were no statistically significant differences found involving gender, years of experience, and what teachers and administrators felt were the most important characteristics of a good listener.
Introduction

“Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are the four basic types of communication. But consider this: you spent years learning how to read, write, and speak, but what about listening? What type of training have you had that enables you to listen so that you really, deeply understand another human being from that individual’s own frame of reference?” (Covey, 1989, pp. 237-238).

The statement above is pertinent when discussing leaders of organizations. According to Tate (2001), leading an organization is about bringing people together in order to accomplish specific goals. These goals are attained by the recognition and appreciation of different perspectives from people within the organizations. Unfortunately, many leaders do not realize the success of an organization may be determined by their ability to be familiar with the ideas of the people under them. This oversight can be the difference between being a manager or a leader and the success or failure of an organization. In order to influence people; to interact effectively with people; and earn people’s trust; it is necessary to understand them (Covey, 1989). Without the establishment of this relationship, leadership is questionable at best and organizational effectiveness is placed at risk. To that end, good communication techniques enhance the effectiveness of a leader and increase the probability for success in an organization.

Theoretical Background

Kratz and Kratz (1995) and Fitzwater (1978) discussed the importance of effective communication for leaders. To become effective communicators, leaders must attend to three elements of the communication process: the sender, the channel of communication or medium, and the receiver.
The goal of the sender is to communicate an idea formulated within their mind. Although the sender sees the idea as clear, factors such as the sender’s level of communication skills, current frame of mind, and familiarity with the receiver affect the outcome.

A medium or channel of communication is selected, either written or oral. Written communication is vulnerable to various interpretations of words and symbols, as well as poor production. Although the written message may be clear, it may be ignored or neglected due to excessive length, improper grammar/spelling skills, or the use of an incorrect format (memo or letter).

Similarly, oral communication is susceptible to noise interference, distracting voice, or poor hearing. The sender must take speech tone and velocity into consideration. Body language is an important element in oral communication. It is imperative for the messenger to read the body language of his/her receiver in order to evaluate the degree of comprehension. Once the message reaches the receiver, it is succumbed to emotional and physical conditions, preconceived notions, and various levels of receptivity.

Whereas identifying all the elements of communication is essential, it is the position of the leader as receiver that determines the effectiveness of their leadership. A study by Kratz and Kratz (1995) revealed that most people spend as much as 90 percent of their working day in one of the four modes of communication: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Approximately 55 percent of that time is spent listening, 30 percent to radio and/or television and 25 percent to other people. However, people in leadership/managerial positions spend as much as 70 percent of their entire day listening to other people. Therefore, it is unsurprising that listening is considered an essential quality for effective leadership.
Earlier it was stated that people receive little or no training in listening, yet organizational leaders may spend the majority of their day listening. Interestingly, although we don’t receive much training in listening, the relationship between effective leadership and listening has been around since biblical times. King Solomon, perhaps one of the greatest leaders of his time, was given the opportunity to ask God for whatever he desired. King Solomon chose a “wise and listening heart” for he knew that listening was an essential element of leadership (Wakefield, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

Whether the organization is a business or a school, the importance of communication skills for leaders remains the same. Principals strive to develop a shared vision to initiate, expecting loyalty and dedication towards the vision. Teachers look to the principal for guidance, professional development, and school improvement. Good communication is critical for both parties’ expectations to be met. As leaders of an organization, school administrators are obligated to work toward understanding the teachers on their campus. With the success of children at stake, school administrators must be familiar with the needs and values of their staff. The administration may be responsible for leading a staff consisting of hundreds and a student body consisting of thousands. In order to be effective leaders, school principals need to understand the day-to-day experiences of their teachers and support staff (Marlow, 1992). School administrators need to listen to what motivates, frustrates, ignites, and excites their teachers and students so that campus goals can be attained. The literature concerning educational leadership discusses how school leaders motivate followers to achieve the school’s mission, but little has been written about how school leaders become acquainted with the school community well enough to know what motivates each individual member to achieve that mission (Tate, 2001). McKewan (2002)
stated that the major difference between highly effective principals and their less effective colleagues is that successful administrators learn early in their careers that the ability to listen is not just a nice thing to do: it is an essential skill to surviving and thriving in the principalship.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the self-perceptions of school administrators’ listening skills in comparison to the perceptions of their teachers in a South Central Texas metropolitan school district. To achieve this purpose, a review of the extant literature on listening was undertaken. After reviewing the literature, research questions posed in this study were developed along with the research methods used. Subsequently, the results are presented followed by a discussion of their meaning and the implications for school leaders.

Review of Relevant Literature

There exists a vast amount of literature focusing on educational leadership. One facet of this literature focuses on the intersection between leadership and communication. Listening is one part of communication, but it arguably comprises the largest component. However, as Covey (1989) pointed out, listening is the element of communication we receive the least amount of training. This section serves to help better understand the concept of listening. It begins with a general discussion of communication and its relationship to leadership. Next, a detailed examination of listening is presented. Finally, this section ends with a review of the literature on listening and its linkage to educational leadership.

Communication

Effective leadership requires clear communication between leaders and their followers. In Fitzwater’s (1991) book, You Can Be a Powerful Leader, seven traits of successful leaders are mentioned including: 1) A positive attitude which exhibits optimism and enthusiasm; 2) An ego
which needs satisfaction; 3) An understanding of human behavior; 4) Effective communication; 5) Constant planning; 6) Ability to connect seemingly unrelated events; and 7) Projection of an image of power. Two of the traits center on communication including the importance of leaders to be able to communicate effectively and understand human behavior. Fitzwater believed leaders need to convey their message in relationship to the goals they want to achieve. He also believed that leaders ‘read’ people and effective communication allows needs and fears to be recognized so the organization can become a complementary group. In another study on the impact of effective communication on leadership, White (1984) examined six higher education institutions in Oklahoma. Her interview design was comprised of questions focusing on demographic information, personal philosophy, communication style, and communication during a crisis. The results showed communication plays a key role in leadership, a statement supported by Hooijberg’s (1996) efforts, which found a leader’s job title, gives their authority, but it is behavior that earns respect. Pool (1997) believed a leader must operate in a manner that promotes communication with his or her subordinates. The manner in which communication is promoted may have a direct link to a subordinate’s performance, and thus the leader’s goals for the organization.

The Elements of Communication

Communication is composed of four elements: the sender, the message, the channel of communication, and the receiver. The sender has something to communicate; the message entails encoding, the process of translating a thought into a message; the channel of communication is the medium in which the message is translated; and the receiver decodes the message. The receiver obtains the message in four phases: sense or become aware of the message; interpret or understand the meaning of the message; evaluate or decide if the message is important; and
respond by acting or sending another message. It is the leader’s position as the receiver or listener that can determine success or failure of his/her leadership, especially when considering the amount of time a leader spends listening.

If we know communication is an essential element to leadership, and listening is the major component of a leader’s communication, then why, as leaders, are we not better listeners? In the following sections, this question along with others will be addressed as part of a detailed review on listening and its relevance to leadership.

Listening

The word listen is derived from the Middle English word listnen, which originated from Old English hlysan (hlud = loud), and simply referred to paying attention to sound. In present day literature, listening contains a more sophisticated definition: listening is an in-depth process beyond hearing. Webster’ dictionary (Agnes, 2003) defined listening as to make a conscious decision to hear.

The International Listening Association (ILA) defined listening as “the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages” (Emmert, 1996, p. 2). Bakhtin (1993) and Burley-Allen (1995) argued that listening is a process, entailing a sophisticated mental model requiring energy and discipline. Bakhtin (1993) believed that every word in a conversation is a response to another word. Listeners must prepare to respond to what they hear. He further believed when the listener perceives and understands the meaning of speech, the listener takes an active responsive attitude towards it. Simultaneously, the speaker expects some kind of response such as agreement, sympathy, criticism, etc. (Shotter, 1993; Tate, 2001).
Listening was not considered a focus for study as an aspect of speech communication until the work of Ralph Nichols, commonly known as the father of listening. In 1954, Nichols and Lewis published a guide to effective oral communication that emphasized the importance of listening in becoming an effective speaker. Three year later, Nichols (1957) was co-author of the book, *Are You Listening?*, the first book devoted to listening. Soon scholars and business people took interest in Nichols’ work as the importance of communication between supervisors and subordinates became more apparent (Orick, 2002).

Since Nichols’ work, numerous factors have been associated with the concept of listening. In their work, Brandt, Brandt, Emmert, and Emmert (1992), discussed six specific elements of listening: open mind, empathy, memory, attention, respect, and response. They adopted these concepts in developing the Listening Practices Feedback Report (LPFR). In their study, 860 individuals representing 22 companies in a variety of businesses and industries participated in their survey. The survey asked them to list the names of three associates or colleagues whom the participants perceived to be a ‘good listener’ and five qualities or habits used to determine an effective listener. They were also asked to list three colleagues or associates who they perceived as a ‘poor listener’ and three reasons the participant viewed them as a poor listener. Although there was not a significant difference between the two groups (good listeners and poor listeners), the results obtained were used to group specific characteristics into general concepts (attention, respect, response, memory, empathy, and open-mind) to develop the LPFR.

According to the Brandt Management Group (1999), an *open mind* refers to being free from personal biases; considering content and logic and not being critical of delivery, appearance, grammar, vocabulary, etc.; not becoming emotional or defensive when encountering
a difficult situation; maintaining an appropriate balance between talking and listening; and avoiding emotion-packed (trigger) words, phrases, or clichés (Brandt Management Group, 1999).

In his book, The Ten Highly Effective Traits of Principals, McEwan (2003) encompassed the characteristics of ‘attention’ as related to school organizations and stated it as “attending.” According to McEwan, *attending* is a term to describe when the listener uses their body, face, and eyes to tell the speaker that he is the most important thing that exists at that specific moment. It involves the listener’s non-verbal communication (not waving at other people, rustling papers, turning off cell-phone, pager, etc.) as well as the degree the listener creates a private listening environment (e.g., sitting at a table side by side or face to face with the other person as opposed to talking across a desk) (McEwan, 2003).

**Empathy**, according to Stephen Covey’s (1989) fifth habit, refers to a person longing to understand what the other person thinks and feels. It describes a person willing to understand another’s paradigm even though it is different from theirs. It entails willingly being in the other person’s shoes and seeing the world through their eyes. He believed empathy was a key to finding common ground and creating a productive relationship. According to the Brandt Management Group (1999) empathy is demonstrated by repeating, paraphrasing, or summarizing comments to ensure understanding by the listener; placing oneself in the speaker’s position and understanding their concerns and feelings; encouraging others to give views on subjects under discussion as well as thinking about the subject under discussion before responding; correctly anticipating where the conversation is going.

**Memory** refers to the result of listening. A good listener will produce an outcome consistent with agreed-upon instructions or guidelines, accurately recalling comments
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(paraphrasing), and relating messages to a third party, and taking notes when it is appropriate (Brandt Management Group, 1999).

*Respect* is measured in several ways. First, it is the ability to keep a confidence and listen sincerely without just going through the motions. Respect is expressed by taking time and having patience during a conversation. It also refers to acknowledging others’ words and ideas regardless of business, social, or economic status (Brandt Management Group, 1999).

*Response* refers to the reaction by the listener. A good response occurs when the listener asks relevant questions for clarification of points that are technical or misunderstood. Appropriate verbal and non-verbal responses, such as nodding or facial expressions, are key elements to response. Response may also refer to the prior knowledge or preparation that was done by the listener before the conversation. However, it can simply be shown by acknowledging humorous remarks during the conversation (Brandt Management Group, 1999).

Why Listen?

A question that often arises is, “Why is it important for leaders to listen to their subordinates?” Osterman (1993) pointed out Covey (1989) may have answered this question when he stated, “the greatest need of a human being is psychological survival—to be understood, to be affirmed, to be validated, and to be appreciated” (p. 241). When one listens carefully to another person, one gives that person “psychological air.” Once that vital need is met, one can then focus on influencing or problem solving.

Swanson (1997) contended effective listening could be learned and taught. The result of good listening skills for leaders is: they gain knowledge; they are able to build and maintain relationships; and they can create a bias for persuasion.
In 2001, Tate discussed the work done by Bennis (1997), which outlined a rationale for listening. In his book, *Managing People is Like Herding Cats*, Bennis (1997) discussed four characteristics that people want in their leaders. These characteristics included a sense of purpose, a sense of trust, optimism, and the ability to obtain results. He further wrote: “One of the best ways to build trust is by listening. It’s the most powerful dynamic of human interaction, when people feel that they are being heard. Listening doesn’t mean agreeing, but it does mean having the empathetic reach to understand one another” (p. 75).

In Peter Drucker’s *Effective Executive* (2002), he discussed his five part effectiveness model: 1) Executives must carefully choose how to spend and not to spend their time; 2) Executives must consciously choose what they want to contribute to the organization and ask their subordinates to make such a choice also; 3) Executives must choose people to perform tasks based on their individual strengths and fit between strengths and tasks; 4) Executives must deliberately choose long-term business priorities; and 5) Executives must choose from among all of the alternative opinions offered within their organization. Drucker’s model greatly depends on listening ability, particularly in steps one, two, and five. In step one, listening is required to understand subordinates’ plans and progress in order to avoid direct control of everything, hence voiding step one. Step two emphasizes Drucker’s belief that an organization’s effectiveness is dependent upon subordinate contribution. When managers and subordinates voice their contributions now and for the future, it gives everyone ownership and a role in the overall effectiveness of the organization. In step five, Drucker emphasizes the importance to the executive of making decisions and putting plans into action by searching for opinions and inquiring about the basis for those opinions, as opposed to going forward based on pre-arranged
ideas. This requires listening with genuine curiosity in order to encourage others to speak and support their opinions, rather than simply setting forth proposals in hope of universal agreement.

In a 1994 study, Brownell developed a survey using communication practices found in fourteen management communication textbooks. In addition, she conducted five focus groups in order to search for common themes on transcriptions from the focus group sessions. From the results, she formed a questionnaire asking the amount of time managers (91 general managers and 153 middle managers) in the lodging industry found themselves engaged in the following activities: writing memos; writing reports; giving oral presentations; managing interpersonal conflict; listening; and leading groups. She found that listening was directly related to managerial effectiveness and it became more important as the level of management increased. Listening was the activity that upper management said they spent the most time doing (Orick, 2002).

Johnson (1995) reported the findings of an exploratory study that considered leadership and listening effectiveness in small groups. His study examined the perceptions from members of 23 (130 total college students) task-oriented classroom small groups regarding the variables of leadership and listening. Half of each group completed a leadership assessment instrument while the other half completed a listening assessment instrument. Correlation coefficients were computed on the data gathered. Johnson’s results found a significant positive correlation between member rankings of leadership behavior and member rankings of listening effectiveness. Johnson surmised that listening influences leadership emergence (Orick, 2002).

In addition, Johnson (1998) conducted another study involving fifty-one undergraduate students in ten leaderless groups. The groups met for twelve weeks prior to participating in the study and were videotaped during decision-making discussions. Following the discussions, the participants completed three survey instruments that focused on recall, leadership behavior, and
leadership-perceptions. The results of the study indicated emergent leaders display more effective listening skills.

Kouzes and Posner (1987) found that pioneer leaders are willing to step into the unknown. They listed five practices common to successful leaders: 1) Challenge the process; 2) Inspire a shared vision; 3) Enable others to act; 4) Model the way; and 5) Encourage the heart. In their five leadership practices necessary for successful leadership, they emphasize the power of encouragement. They noted that encouragement is attained through recognition and listening. Furthermore, listening had a direct effect on organizational productivity, effectiveness, and absenteeism. This statement was supported by Orick (2002) who cited several studies that discussed the relationship of supervisor listening skills to subordinate job performance.

The first study cited by Orick (2002) was done by Lobdell, Sonoda, and Arnold (1993), who looked at the relationship between employees’ perceptions of their supervisors’ listening behaviors and organizational commitment by conducting a study that involved 278 employees at a southwestern utility company. Using a Likert-type questionnaire, the employees (subordinates and managers) responded in areas including: communication in the organization, supervisory relationship, feelings about the organization, and self-report of listening skills. Using factor analysis on each of the four sections, the items were grouped into seven subcategories: supervisor responsiveness; openness; empowerment; poor listener; good listener; negative comment; and positive comment. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed between the variables generated from the factor analysis. The results showed strong relationships exist between employees’ perceptions of their supervisors’ listening behavior and organizational commitment.
The second study was carried out by Cooper and Husband (1993) at a large petroleum corporation with 182 workers receiving training in managerial communication. Factor analysis revealed supervisors, colleagues, and subordinates perceive listening skills to be highly related to general impressions of organizational effectiveness.

A third study by Stine, Thompson, and Cusella (1995), surveyed 89 people from all departments of a tool manufacturing organization. The researchers examined the relationship of supervisory listening behaviors to the subordinates’ perception of trust and support, as well as subordinate productivity and absenteeism. Through the use of Pearson correlations, partial correlations, and multiple regression, the results showed that supportive listening behaviors were positively related to higher productivity and less absenteeism.

Although, the rationale for listening may seem obvious, the manner in which leaders listen is important as well. In the next section, the types of listening are discussed with an emphasis on empathetic listening.

Types of Listening

In her work, Tate (2001) briefly described four types of listening as put forth by Purdy (1997). First, comprehensive listening is when one listens for an understanding of the message. Second, critical listening occurs when one wants to make an intelligent response to a persuasive message. Third, therapeutic listening is a non-judgmental way of listening with the interests of the speaker in mind. Finally, appreciative listening is a relaxing method in which the message is enjoyed for its own sake. In addition, Kratz and Kratz (1995), described five types of listening: 1) Social Contact: Listening to Bond; 2) Entertainment: Listening to Appreciate; 3) Information: Listening to Learn; 4) Persuasion: Listening to Decide; and 5) Catharis: Listening to Enable.
1. **Listening to Bond** refers to the communication that occurs to build relationships with friends and family. For example, “How are you today?” is used to build a relationship bond as opposed to hearing about the person’s medical history.

2. **Listening to Appreciate** occurs when listening to music. A person doesn’t usually listen to analyze or criticize, but to simply appreciate the music.

3. **Listening to Learn** refers to sharing information. Instead of listening to judge, the listener seeks to understand the speaker and gain knowledge.

4. **Listening to Decide** involves listening to criticize because it is persuasive. A person listens for a weakness in order to determine the validity of the speaker.

5. **Listening to Enable** allows the speaker to “get something off their chest.” The listener enables the person to relieve stress or frustration without being judgmental or critical.

**Effective Listening**

Effective listening was described by O’Toole (1996) as an active process where meaning is attached to sound. Effective listening means giving full attention to what is being said, and stopping the speaker when something is not clear. It entails the use of questions, such as “Now, did I understand you to say…?” or “Is that what you meant?” (Fitzwater, 1991).

In her book, *Listening: The Forgotten Skill*, Burley-Allen (1995) stated that effective listeners are powerful people because they are able to find the most valid information in anything they hear. It is an active process because it entails: keeping an open, curious mind; listening for new ideas everywhere and integrating what is listened to with what is already known; listening to others with total awareness and being; listening with the heart to remain non-judgmental; paying attention to details; focusing attention to the speaker’s ideas; and possessing the desire to critically examine and understand.
The effective listener is short of becoming completely involved with the speaker. The listening “filters” are still present, but with little interference or noise to distract them. Yet there is another type of listening in which the listener becomes one with the speaker to the point that a great effort is made to see everything through the speaker’s eyes. This form of listening is known as empathetic listening.

Empathetic Listening

Gerald Egan (1977) provided an excellent description of an empathetic listener:

“One does not listen with just his ears; he listens with his eyes and with his sense of touch, he listens by becoming aware of the feelings and emotions that arise within himself because of his contact with others…He listens to the words of others but he also listens to the messages that are buried in the words…He listens to the voice, the demeanor, the vocabulary, and the gestures of the other, to the context, the verbal messages, the linguistic patterns, and the bodily movements of the other. He listens to the sounds and the silences” (Brownell, 1986, pp. 122-123).

In 1986, Brownell stated that empathetic listening is concerned with the indirect indicators that provide essential information about the speaker and his or her message. The empathetic listener is one who suspends his own attitudes and beliefs and whose primary interest is to evaluate what he hears. He enters the speaker’s frame of reference in order to share his or her worldview.

Covey (1989) addressed empathetic listening in the fifth habit, “First Seek to Understand Then To Be Understood,” in his Seven Habits for Highly Effective People. Covey emphasized the importance, power, and in some situations the necessity of not merely going through the mechanical responses that might be required for ordinary listening, but opening oneself to the
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talker to the point where one can actually feel what they are feeling. He believed that in many professional and personal situations the only way to establish communication is by becoming the person you are listening to. He described an empathetic listener’s intuition as “sensing,” or the information a listener can perceive through true empathetic listening. Covey declared that everyone is capable of standing in another person’s shoes and seeing the world through their eyes, but most of us rarely take the opportunity. The result of empathetic listening, according to Covey, is a whole new level of communication and problem solving because a person is able to see situations from multiple points of view (Wilson, 2000).

In summary, empathy bridges a gap between people, but requires a great deal of openness. The empathetic listener offers a bond that comes from working a little harder at understanding the other person before asking him to do the same for the listener. The listener suspends all preoccupations and assumptions and willfully is at the service of the other person. Whereas sympathy entails feeling from a distance and “feeling for another,” empathy requires a person to logically, strategically, or analytically infer the thoughts and attitudes of others, or “feeling with another” (Bruneau, 1993; Tate, 2001). Chopra (2002) believed empathy to be such a valuable trait, he developed an acronym from the word “leaders” in which both ‘listen’ and ‘empathy’ were used: Look and Listen; Empowerment; Awareness; Doing; Empathy; Responsibility; and Synchronicity.

Since empathetic listening is an active process, there are guidelines to help one obtain this essential leadership skill. The guidelines include: be attentive; be interested in other’s needs; possess an attitude to be a sounding board; be non-judgmental, non-critical and don’t ask a lot of questions; don’t grill the person; and act like a mirror and reflect back feelings. Furthermore, refrain from statements such as, “It’s not that bad,” “You will feel better tomorrow,” or “You are
making a mountain out of a mole hill.” In addition, you should not allow yourself to get angry, upset, or hurt and use brief expressions to show you are listening—“I see,” “Interesting…” Nonverbal clues should be used, such as maintaining eye contact, head nod, and touching, and door openers should be utilized, such as, “Tell me about it,” or “Let’s discuss it.” Don’t interrupt, interrogate, preach, or give advice (Burley-Allen, 1995).

Empathetic listening is different between genders. Borishoff and Hahn (1997) noted that both men and women are very capable of empathetic listening. However, women listen for feelings when they apply empathetic listening and men offer solutions as empathetic listening. This leads into a discussion of gender and listening differences in the next section.

Gender and Listening

On a daily basis, one can see differences between the manner in which males and females communicate. One of the differences lies in the concept of listening. In her research, Orick (2002) discussed various authors who noted that listening techniques vary between males and females. For example, Judi Brownell (2005) stated:

“Men and women communicate differently. While little boys play competitive games in hierarchical groups, tell stories, and joke, girls play games where everyone gets a turn and where winning and losing is much less important. Talk among young women establishes connections and intimacy. Listening to little girls and listening to little boys, listening to women and listening to men, are two different experiences” (p. 355).

In their research, Emmert, Emmert, Brandt and Brandt (1992) surveyed 53 men and 137 women from several major companies. They sought to find out if women would rate higher in the areas of attentiveness and support and men would rate higher in listening areas related to information seeking. Through factor analysis, the results of their study showed both men and
women scored very well in non-interruption and attentiveness; however, women scored much higher on supportiveness than men.

Tannen (1990, 1994) and Brownell (2005) argue that the ‘supportive’ nature can be interpreted as weakness. A female’s verbal feedback is often characterized by elements that create an image of powerlessness and uncertainty. Questions are often followed up with, “Isn’t that correct,” or prefaced with, “This may not sound right, but…” Whereas this form of communication may promote a supportive climate, it also has the potential to reveal uncertainty and weaken credibility (Brownell, 2005; Tannen, 1990, 1994).

Orick (2002) discussed the gender differences in listening styles found by Tannen (1994) and Marsnik (1993). When listening, women signal they are listening, typically by maintaining eye contact, nodding, and offering responsive phrases. Men interpret this behavior as agreement with the speaker. When a male listens, he makes occasional eye contact, does little or no nodding, and employs physical activities, such as walking around the room. Men tend to use put downs, jokes, and bantering in order to be in a ‘one-up’ position, a position that refers to men’s need to dominate. Women interpret this style to be demeaning or to mean that men are not listening.

In 2001, Tate referred to the work of Hegelson (1990), who found women to be more intense, thoughtful, and tentative in their listening. Women value their listening skills as a way to make others feel comfortable. Listening is also a method of encouragement. Hegelson’s research demonstrated that more men are becoming open to this way of thinking because traditional methods are less productive in many situations. Following Hegelson’s theory that listening was a way of making people feel that their ideas and beliefs are of value, she shadowed strong female leaders in order to better understand what made them successful.
1. Frances Hesselbein was the former National Executive Director of Girl Scouts of America. She felt that a leader’s job was to bring out the best in people. She believed in the value of patience, caring, and listening, so she made herself available for whatever suggestions people had to share. As a result, she led 3 million members, 750,000 adult volunteers, 500 paid staff members; and controlled a $26 million budget.

2. Dorothy Brunsen used effective listening skills to manage her staff and advertisers for several radio and television stations she owned. She attributes her company’s net profit of $15 million to employing excellent listening skills.

Ultimately, gender is just one of many filters that affect listening skills. The next section takes a closer look at other filters, which prevent us from being effective and empathetic listeners.

Other Listening Filters

Barker and Watson (2000) found three common assumptions preventing people from being better listeners:

1. Speakers control communication more than listeners. However, listeners control communication by tuning in and out of conversations, electing whether or not to pay attention, adding interpretations, evaluating messages as important or not, and/or responding to information at will.

2. We can listen well when we really have to. However, listening harder does not necessarily mean listening better and listeners overestimate how much information they remember—fifty percent remembered immediately after a ten minute conversation and less than ten percent after twenty-four hours.
3. When we start talking, others start listening. However, it takes time for us to engage as listeners.

Besides these basic assumptions, we also listen through filters. Our memories, values, beliefs, attitudes, assumptions, experiences, expectations, prejudices, feelings, gender, race, political persuasion, religion, age, physical appearance, educational background, lifestyle, and geographical location are all filters that control how we listen. One of the most popular examples of this involved an incident with the president of Harvard University many years ago. A plain-looking older couple went to see him and after being persistent, they were allowed to speak to him. The couple was interested in a memorial for their recently deceased son. The president told them that memorial statues were not to be erected on campus. The couple told him they were not interested in a statue, but rather a building. The president smirked and told them that they must not be aware of the cost of a building. Seeing that no progress was being made, the couple left Harvard and chose to build their son’s memorial in Palo Alto, California. This is where Mr./Mrs. Leland Stanford built Stanford University in remembrance of their son (Barker & Watson, 2000).

Listening and Educational Leadership

Twenty years ago, listening skills were mainly emphasized in the business industry and the military. However, it can be argued that organizations such as schools require the same leadership qualities that lead to success in businesses. Principals spend most of their day listening to concerns, problems, suggestions, and everyday dialogue, while effectively communicating specific goals to stakeholders. Principals devote a brief amount of time to a large number of decisions that tend to center around specific well-defined issues and problems (Weick, 1995). Important and trivial issues arise in unplanned and random ways. Quick mental shifts are required as the administrator goes from topic to topic. There are many brief contacts with people.
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interspersed with planned meetings of prolonged duration (Tate, 2001). Therefore, it is imperative that principals possess the necessary listening skills to be successful in an environment where multiple and diverse sources of input are provided.

“I try to use good listening techniques, making sure I am giving them eye contact and not using distracting body language, and making sure I summarize or ask questions to fully understand what they are saying…” (McEwan, 2003, p. 8).

Pool (1997) defined effective leadership as “the ability of a leader to influence subordinates in performing at the highest level within an organizational framework which may then influence the subordinate’s job satisfaction” (p. 272). Dunklee (2000) applied the definition of a school leader as being a “reasonable and prudent person who leads a school and the profession forward while always keeping a primary focus on mission, improvement, and distinction” (p. 5). Communication, including listening, is a key ingredient in determining the degree to which the leader is able to influence others.

Furthermore, Shotter (1993) believed effective principals were not successful because they found and applied brilliant principles. Their success is largely due to the ability to sort out and make intelligent sense of all that they deal with. This ability begins with listening. Proper listening skills can help principals to better understand the concerns within their organizations. Marlow (1992) mentioned the importance for principals to understand their teachers’ daily experiences. The success of a principal’s leadership can be based on having knowledge of the worries and frustrations of their faculty and staff. As McEwan (2003) wrote, “A major difference between highly effective principals and their less effective colleagues is that successful administrators learn early in their careers that the ability to listen isn’t just a nice thing to do: It is an essential skill to surviving and thriving in the principalship” (p. 7).
In 1996, Fleming showed that listening, along with self-presentation and clarification, are statistically significant predictors of leadership and teacher empowerment. The results supported listening to be a crucial element in schools undergoing change. In addition to Fleming’s study, Johns (1997) conducted a study with 317 randomly selected public school principals to determine the communication competencies necessary for effective educational leadership as perceived by public school principals. In all the responses to each of the four categories (superiors, subordinates, co-workers, and clients), listening ranked in the top three along with information exchange and relationship building.

Finally, in a study of 375 teachers, Bulach and Peterson (1999) found their main complaint about principals was there was not enough listening and trust in their teacher-principal relationship. Listening and trust were found to be necessary prerequisites to establishing an open, trusting, and honest reciprocal relationship between teachers and their principals (NASSP Bulletin, 2003).

Teachers must feel of important and appreciated in order to teach at high levels. The principal is the key person for creating the environment for this to happen. Goals and a vision may not be achieved if teachers feel they are not sincerely listened to. Through the implementation of empathetic and caring attitudes towards the lives and ideas of their staff, school administrators create the conditions that benefit everyone, including and most importantly, the students.

Conclusion

Listening has become a valuable element in the area of leadership. However, when examining the area of educational leadership and listening, there exist gaps in the literature. There is much to be studied and understood. This study attempts to fill some of the existing gaps
in the field of educational leadership and play a part in bridging the communication between school administrators and teachers. In order to examine the listening skills of school administrators, this study had to develop an instrument to assess the listening skills of school administrators (self-assessment and assessment from teachers). After the instrument was tested for validity and deemed reliable, the following research questions were used to guide this study:

1. What are the major facets of listening skills and how can they be measured?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between how principals/assistant principals self-perceive their listening skills versus how teachers perceive their listening skills?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers’ perceptions of administrators’ listening skills based on years of teaching experience?
4. Is there a significant difference in teachers’ perceptions of administrators’ listening skills between elementary, middle, and high school teachers?
5. Is there a statistically significant difference in administrators’ listening skills between female and male teachers?
6. Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of listening skills between female and male administrators?
7. Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the listening skills between elementary, middle, and high school administrators?
8. Is there a statistically significant difference in the characteristics of a good listener between teachers and school administrators?
Methods

Participants

The sample consisted of 115 administrators and 552 teachers. Seven campuses (3 elementary, 2 middle, and 2 high schools) from a large metropolitan school district in south central Texas participated in this study. The average years of experience for elementary school teachers was 14.57, for middle school teachers – 11.42, and for high school teachers – 15.24. The survey found that 71 (62%) female administrators and 44 (38%) male administrators participated along with 417 (76%) female teachers and 135 (24%) male teachers. In terms of school level, there were 66 (57%) administrators at the elementary level, 25 (22%) at the middle school level, and 24 (21%) at the high school level; whereas, 160 (29%) teachers worked at the elementary level, 124 (22%) teachers worked at the middle school level, and 268 (49%) teachers worked at the high school level. When asked on the survey to note their years of experience, 4 (3%) administrators had 1-5 years of experience, 13 (11%) administrators had 6-10 years of experience, 18 (16%) administrators had 11-15 years of experience, 18 (16%) had 16-20 years of experience, and 62 (54%) had 20 or more years of experience. The majority of administrators were in the “more experienced” area while the majority of the teachers were in the “less experienced” area: 152 (28%) teachers had 1-5 years of experience; 134 (24%) teachers had 6-10 years of experience; 96 (17%) teachers had 11-15 years of experience, 61 (11%) teachers had 16-20 years of experience, and 109 (20%) teachers had 20 or more years of experience.

Instrumentation

Dr. Janice Brandt, one of the developers of The Listening Practices Feedback Report (LPFR), provided written permission to use the instrument and make modifications for this study. The participants were asked to complete a “modified” version of the LPFR, a multi-rater
360-degree survey instrument developed by Richard and Janice Brandt (Brandt, et.al., 1992; Emmert, Emmert, & Brandt, 1994). The LPFR has been used since 1982 to study listening in businesses and to deliver listening training to over one hundred organizations. The survey uses a 10-point Likert scale with ratings of 1 (Almost Never) to 10 (Almost Always). However, the “modified” version used a 5-point Likert scale with ratings of 1 (Almost Never) to 5 (Almost Always) (See Appendix A for copy of instrument).

During the development of the LPFR, listening practices were grouped into six factors with three to five statements for each factor. First, separate factor analysis was conducted on observer and listener surveys. Then, using factor analysis with principal components analysis and varimax rotation, six indices were determined by the LPFR including: attention, empathy, memory, open mindedness, respect, and response (Emmert, et.al., 1994). As stated earlier, the LPFR was designed for business organizations and although many of the same indices are applicable to education, the investigator “modified” the LPFR’s indices based on the extant literature used for this study. Therefore, the “modified” LPFR measured the categories of open mind, attending, empathy, memory, respect, and response.

Reliability and Validity

The reliability results for the leaders’ survey, which measures leaders’ perceptions of their own listening practices for the total LPFR were reported by Emmert, Emmert, and Brandt (1994) to have a Cronbach alpha of .84. The Cronbach alpha for the total averaged associates’ LPFR was reported to be .94, resulting in a high reliability rating for the LPFR (Emmert, et al., 1994). However, the individual factors produced low Cronbach alphas, ranging from .43 to .66. Due to the low alpha coefficients, serious concerns were raised about the utility of the instrument in its present or modified form.
With respect to instrument validity, according to the Brandt Management Group (1999), the total LPFR has been found to correlate with the Listening Preference Profile (LPP), another self report instrument that measures listener preferences for receiving or attending to particular types of information, indicating a moderate construct validity ($r = .3140$, $p < .01$) (Orick, 2002).

In order to get a practical view of the instrument, two activities were undertaken. First, the instrument was shown to several colleagues to determine its ‘face validity.’ Second, the instrument was presented to an university committee for critique. After reviewing the modified instrument for validity, the instrument was further refined for reliability.

Refinement of the Instrument

In hopes of increasing the reliability values and to void any unclear statements, a pilot study was conducted. The pilot study sample consisted of a high school faculty in the same district where the study was completed. The instrument was administered at a faculty meeting, where 113 teachers and 6 administrators participated.

The limitations of the instrument were discussed with the participants. First, the instrument did not measure how well administrators listen or retain a thought, but rather how they appear as listeners to others. Second, the instrument did not serve as a job evaluation tool. Third, the instrument was not a personality profile. Rather the instrument serves as a snapshot in time and did not take into account changing conditions and objectives. Finally, the instrument had no absolute meaning other than the application each participant brings to his or her own situation (Brandt, et.al., 1992).

The responses for each statement were re-scaled to five point Likert scale with 1 representing “Almost Never” and 5 representing “Almost Always.” The results were fed into Data Link using an electronic reader, which downloaded to a computer. From Data Link, an
EXCEL file was constructed and then exported to Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS). Means were calculated and a rating for each factor was assigned to each range of values: 4-5 = excellent; 3-3.9 = moderate; 2-2.9 = low; and 1-1.9 = very low. These ratings were consistent with those of the original instrument (Listening Practices Feedback Report).

The results of the pilot study were informative as a new instrument was developed. The new instrument consisted of 4 demographic statements (position, gender, years of experience, and school level) and 21 items focusing on 4 listening dimensions (response, attending, trustworthiness, and empathy), and 1 qualitative statement. Sample items for each listening factor are provided in Table 3-5 (Appendix B). The results section discusses the new instrument, the Listening Assessment Inventory for School Leadership (LAISL) in greater detail.

Procedure

This study was conducted from April 2005 through June 2005. The instrument was distributed via seven faculty meetings (3 elementary, 2 middle, and 2 high schools) for teacher responses and one leadership meeting for administrator responses. The later part of the school year was chosen because faculty meetings were more flexible and less stressful due to the end of the year when all standardized testing was completed.

As with any study, it was important to have a high percentage of participants at each site. In order to get a large number of teachers, permission was obtained from each principal to distribute the survey at a campus faculty meeting. To increase participation at the faculty meetings, the teachers were told the importance of the study along with the potential implications of the study, including the presentation of the results at the next district level principals’ leadership development meeting. It was stressed that the survey would not be analyzed by campus, thus removing any potential fear of perceived negative repercussions.
For administrators, permission from the director of administrative staff development along with the Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction was given to conduct the data collection at the June 2005 leadership meeting. The importance of the survey was stressed, as well as the relationship of leadership to effective listening.

Data Analysis

EXCEL and SPSS software were used to analyze the mean data obtained from the surveys. In SPSS, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) were utilized to analyze the null hypotheses. A MANOVA allows variations to be measured within a collection of data where there are multiple associated dependent variables involved. After the MANOVA was performed, the probability value was examined to see if it fell below .05. If the MANOVA technique produced a statistically significant Wilk’s Lambda, then multiple post-hoc tests were conducted to determine where the differences occurred. The multiple post-hoc test used was the Tukey Honesty Significant Difference (HSD) test.

Scoring for the qualitative portion of the instrument was completed in the following manner. The qualitative statement asked participants to list three to five of the most important characteristics of a good listener with the first choice being the most important, the second choice the second most important, etc. Almost all participants listed three characteristics; therefore, the top three became the focus. A column was made for each listening dimension in which a score of one to three was noted for the characteristic listed. For example, if a participant listed eye contact, smiling, and paraphrasing as their most important characteristics, then “eye contact” received three points for a first choice, “smiling” received two points for the second choice, and “paraphrasing” received one point for the third choice. Once all the surveys were evaluated for each group (teachers and administrators), a total was derived for each dimension.
Finally, a percentage was calculated to represent which characteristic was the most important listening dimension to teachers and administrators. Using SPSS, a Chi-square analysis was carried out to test for statistically significant differences between teachers and administrators.

Results

The purpose of this section is to present the results of the study. This section is divided into two parts. The first part presents the analysis of the development and refinement of the Listening Assessment Inventory for School Leadership (LAISL), while the second part addresses the findings based on the research questions.

Research Question #1

The first research question of this study examined: What are the major facets of listening skills and how can they be measured? To answer this question, the study began with an exploration of the extant listening literature in an attempt to locate any empirical indicators of listening in the educational setting. The search led the investigators to a measure designed by Brandt and his colleagues (1992) to assess listening skills in a business setting. Their efforts represented a beginning for this study. Items were formulated to map listening skills in an educational setting, specifically measuring campus administrators’ listening skills. Using the LPFR, a list of items was generated to represent the six listening dimensions.

A pilot study was initiated to map the domains and refine the measure and meaning of listening through factor analytic techniques. To obtain an empirical check on this set of items, pilot study participants were also asked to examine and critique the items.

Along with the pilot study participants’ critique of the items, the instrument was subjected to an exploratory factor analysis to examine which items clustered together and which items did not. In addition to ensuring each listening referent contained items targeting all six
dimensions of listening, items with initial factor loadings in the exploratory analysis of at least .40 were retained (Kerlinger, 1973). Items were discarded if their factor loadings fell below .40. These two methods, participant critique and factor analysis, resulted in an initial list of twenty-eight items becoming one of twenty-one items. The newly derived LAISL consisted of four factors with the following number of statements per concept: attending was represented by three items; empathy was represented by six items; trustworthiness was presented by six items; and response was represented by six items.

In further refining the listening instrument, a principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used to examine the 21-item measure. Using a scree test with eigenvalues greater than one, four dimensions of listening were identified. The 21 items loaded onto four factors of listening and explained 65% of the variance (see Appendix B). The first factor was called response and described the general preparation and feedback the teacher received from the administrator. Response was measured using items such as “Administrators show appropriate non-verbal responses such as nodding and facial expressions,” and “Administrators prepare or become informed when such preparation or knowledge is necessary.”

The second factor, trustworthiness, denoted the respect and follow-through administrators show towards teachers and was tapped by such items as “Administrators produce results consistent with agreed upon instructions or guidelines,” and “Administrators accurately recall comments or positions at a later date.”

The third factor, empathy, described the administrator’s willingness to listen with complete understanding. Items used to assess this factor included: “Administrators repeat, paraphrase, or summarize comments to ensure understanding,” and “Administrators think about the subject under discussion before responding.”
The fourth factor, attending, described the awareness the administrator exhibits towards the teacher. Attending was assessed by statements like “Administrators give their full attention and are not preoccupied with other concerns during discussions” and “Administrators seem hurried or impatient during conversations and meetings.”

Reliability

Reliability was a major concern in developing and assessing the new instrument, LAISL. In order for the instrument to be acceptable, it was necessary to achieve higher reliability scores than the original instrument reported, which ranged from .43 to .66.

Whereas the previous alpha coefficients ranged from .43 to .66, the new reliability values ranged from .66 to .89. Table 2 displays the reliability coefficients for each listening dimension before and after the pilot study as reported by an SPSS analysis. The overall reliability of the LAISL was .96 as compared to .84 for the LPFR.

Table 2: Reliability Coefficients Before and After the Pilot Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening Dimension</th>
<th>Before Pilot Study</th>
<th>Listening Dimension</th>
<th>After Pilot Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>Attending</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-Mind</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the remaining research questions, the independent and dependent variables used were categorical and continuous. The independent variables in this study were position (administrator or teacher), gender, years of experience (1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 20+ years), and school level (elementary, middle, or high school). The dependent variables were the four facets of listening: attending, empathy, response, and trustworthy.

Research Question #2

The second research question addressed: Is there a statistically significant difference between how principals/assistant principals self-perceive their listening skills versus how teachers perceive their listening skills? To address this, each listening factor was analyzed using an ANOVA. Table 3 shows the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening Dimension</th>
<th>Admin. Mean (N = 115)</th>
<th>Teacher Mean (N = 552)</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig. (p &lt; .05)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>9.04</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>38.89</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.803</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 3 indicates, there were statistically significant differences between the teachers’ perceptions and the administrators’ self-perceptions in three listening dimensions (response, trustworthy, and empathy). For each dimension, administrators had significantly higher self-perception of their listening skills than their teachers. The only dimension to produce a non-
significant result was attending. In fact, closer inspection shows that teachers had a higher mean score than administrators in the area of attending.

Research Question #3

The third research question asked: Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers’ perceptions of administrators’ listening skills based on years of teaching experience? A MANOVA was utilized to answer this question. Since there were multiple levels of the dependent and independent variables being tested, if a statistically significant $p$ value was found, then a post-hoc test was performed to determine where the significant difference between years of experience groups occurred. For any hypothesis that qualified, the Tukey HSD post-hoc test was performed. It should be noted that rejection level was set at .05. This meant that each individual test had a 5% chance of being significant purely due to random chance. For this comparison, the MANOVA yielded a non-significant $p$ value (Wilk’s lambda = .983; $F = .575$; $df = 24$; and $p = .904$); therefore, a post-hoc test was not necessary. Table 4 shows the results for teacher experience.
Table 4: Teachers’ Perceptions of Administrators’ Listening Skills According to Level of Experience (Means and Standard Deviations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Response Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Trustworthy Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Empathy Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Attending Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>3.88 (.67)</td>
<td>3.57 (.77)</td>
<td>3.54 (.75)</td>
<td>3.77 (.73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=152</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>3.91 (.61)</td>
<td>3.58 (.63)</td>
<td>3.56 (.65)</td>
<td>3.77 (.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=134</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>3.86 (.76)</td>
<td>3.61 (.76)</td>
<td>3.58 (.77)</td>
<td>3.81 (.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>3.81 (.66)</td>
<td>3.55 (.78)</td>
<td>3.55 (.80)</td>
<td>3.77 (.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+</td>
<td>3.81 (.69)</td>
<td>3.51 (.77)</td>
<td>3.51 (.76)</td>
<td>3.78 (.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results failed to reject the null hypothesis as there were no statistically significant differences in teachers’ perceptions of administrators’ listening skills based on years of teaching experience. Based on this finding, it appears that experience levels did not affect teachers’ perceptions concerning administrator listening skills.

Research Question #4

The fourth research question examined: Is there a significant difference in teachers’ perceptions of administrators’ listening skills between elementary, middle, and high school teachers? The MANOVA yielded a statistically significant $p$ value (Wilk’s lambda = .926, $F = 5.37, df = 8, p = .000$). Since there was a significant $p$ value and several dependent and independent variables were compared, a Tukey HSD post-hoc test was utilized to determine where the significant differences existed. Table 5 reveals the results used to test the third hypothesis.
Table 5: Teachers’ Perceptions of Administrators’ Listening Skills by School Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary Teachers (N=160)</th>
<th>Middle School Teachers (N=124)</th>
<th>High School Teachers (N=268)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response Mean (SD)</strong></td>
<td>4.01 (.54)</td>
<td>3.99 (.75)</td>
<td>3.71 (.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trustworthy Mean (SD)</strong></td>
<td>3.63 (.67)</td>
<td>3.75 (.80)</td>
<td>3.44 (.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empathy Mean (SD)</strong></td>
<td>3.58 (.70)</td>
<td>3.71 (.81)</td>
<td>3.46 (.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attending Mean (SD)</strong></td>
<td>3.83 (.70)</td>
<td>3.89 (.83)</td>
<td>3.70 (.69)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When comparing elementary and high school teachers, elementary teachers scored higher on all four listening dimensions. Furthermore, there was a statistically significant difference between elementary teachers and high school teachers in the listening dimensions of response (df = 2; F = 13.3; p = .000) and trustworthy (df = 2; F = 9.1; p = .000). Empathy and attending yielded non-significant p values of .208 and .180 respectively.

In comparing elementary and middle school teachers, middle school teachers scored higher in three of the four listening dimensions (trustworthy, empathy, and attending). Despite this, there were no statistically significant differences between elementary and middle school teachers (response, p = .973; trustworthy, p = .336; empathy, p = .267; and attending, p = .733).

In looking at middle and high school teachers, middle school teachers scored higher on each listening dimension. In addition, there was a statistically significant difference between middle school teachers and high school teachers in all four of the listening dimensions: response
Listening 38

(df = 2; F = 13.3; \( p = .000 \)); trustworthy (df = 2; \( p = .000 \)); empathy (df = 2; F = 5.5; \( p = .003 \)); and attending (df = 2; F = 3.5; \( p = .009 \)). This result may be correlated with the relationship of administrators’ listening skills and the size of the school faculty.

Research Question #5

The fifth research question stated: Is there a statistically significant difference in administrators’ listening skills between female and male teachers? An ANOVA was used to determine whether there were any statistically significant differences. Table 6 displays the results.

Table 6: Female Teachers’ versus Male Teachers’ Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening Dimension</th>
<th>Female Teachers Mean (SD) (N=417)</th>
<th>Male Teachers Mean (SD) (N=135)</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig. (( p &lt; .05 ))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>3.87 (.69)</td>
<td>3.84 (.63)</td>
<td>.312</td>
<td>.732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td>3.56 (.74)</td>
<td>3.57 (.71)</td>
<td>.554</td>
<td>.575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.53 (.74)</td>
<td>3.60 (.73)</td>
<td>.843</td>
<td>.431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending</td>
<td>3.78 (.75)</td>
<td>3.77 (.69)</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.953</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results showed there was not a statistically significant difference between male and female teachers’ responses to administrators’ listening skills in any of the listening dimensions. This is an intriguing result since previous studies cited in the literature review noted the prominence of gender differences when looking at various traits of leaders, such as communication skills. This will be further elaborated on in the discussion section.

Research Question #6
The sixth research question in the study stated: Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of listening skills between female and male administrators? Means and variances were used to compare female and male administrators using an ANOVA to analyze any statistically significant differences. The results are shown on Table 7.

Table 7: Administrators’ Self-Perceptions and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening Dimension</th>
<th>Female Admin. Mean (SD) (N=71)</th>
<th>Male Admin. Mean (SD) (N=44)</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig. (p &lt; .05)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>4.06 (.57)</td>
<td>4.08 (.43)</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td>3.96 (.51)</td>
<td>4.08 (.43)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.77 (.49)</td>
<td>3.82 (.56)</td>
<td>.204</td>
<td>.651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending</td>
<td>3.76 (.56)</td>
<td>3.77 (.45)</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 7, there were no statistically significant differences when comparing male and female administrators’ self-perceptions. Furthermore, males reported higher scores in each of the listening dimensions.

Research Question #7

The seventh research question asked: Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the listening skills between elementary, middle, and high school administrators? As with prior null hypotheses, a MANOVA was used to test for any significant differences. There was not a significant p value (Wilk’s Lambda = .872; F = 1.267; df = 12; p = .237); therefore, a post-hoc test was not utilized.
Table 8: Administrators’ Self-Perceptions and Level (Means)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary Admin. (N=64)</th>
<th>Middle School Admin. (N=25)</th>
<th>High School Admin. (N=24)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Mean (SD)</td>
<td>4.11 (.49)</td>
<td>4.05 (.51)</td>
<td>3.98 (.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy Mean (SD)</td>
<td>3.98 (.50)</td>
<td>4.09 (.42)</td>
<td>3.99 (.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy Mean (SD)</td>
<td>3.79 (.50)</td>
<td>3.83 (.44)</td>
<td>3.74 (.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending Mean (SD)</td>
<td>3.80 (.52)</td>
<td>3.71 (.44)</td>
<td>3.69 (.61)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In examining Table 8, elementary administrators had lower scores for trustworthy when compared to both middle and high school administrators and empathy when compared to middle school administrators. For attending and response, elementary administrators reported a higher score; however, there were no statistically significant differences between elementary administrators and secondary administrators for any of the listening dimensions. The high scores reported and the fact there was no significant difference suggests that administrators at all levels view themselves as having good listening skills.

Research Question #8

The final research question of this study stated: Is there a statistically significant difference in the characteristics of a good listener between teachers and school administrators? A
percentage was obtained using the method described in chapter three and a Chi-square analysis was performed. Table 9 illustrates the results.

Table 9: Characteristics of a Good Listener (Teachers’ Perceptions vs. Administrators’ Perceptions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attend.</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Empathy</th>
<th>Trustworthy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (%)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators (%)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. Level (.05)</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td>.157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was little difference between teachers and administrators when discussing the characteristics of a good listener. Teachers and administrators felt that attending was the most important, followed by empathy and response. When reading the results, both administrators and teachers felt eye contact and sincerely trying to understand the speaker were two practices pertinent to being a good listener. Some mode of follow-up by the administrator was reported to be very important as well.

As Table 9 shows, there was not a significant difference between teachers’ perceptions and administrators’ perceptions in listing the most important characteristics of a good listener. As a result, teachers and administrators held congruent views of what characterized a good listener.

Summary of Results

This study produced an instrument with greater reliability and more factor precision than a previously conceptualized instrument. The LAISL demonstrated there were four factors of
listening instead of six as previously found by Brandt and others. The four factors of listening found by LAISL were: attending, response, empathy, and trustworthy.

When looking at the teachers’ perceptions of administrators’ listening skills compared to administrators’ self-perceptions, a statistically significant difference in three of the four listening dimensions: response, trustworthy, and empathy was found. Therefore, when it involves concepts of understanding and caring for the speaker, remembering the important aspects of the conversation, and following-through with results, administrators view themselves as performing these tasks much more than teachers view administrators performing them.

In relation to whether or not there was a statistically significant difference between less experienced teachers and more experienced teachers when assessing administrators’ listening skills, this study found that teachers with 1-5 years of experience did not score higher than more experienced teachers on any of the four listening dimensions.

When contrasting the perceptions of elementary teachers versus the perceptions of secondary teachers, this study revealed elementary teachers and middle school teachers posted higher scores in all of the listening dimensions when compared to high school teachers. There was a statistically significant difference between elementary and high school teachers on the listening factors of response and trustworthy. In addition, there were no statistically significant differences between elementary and middle school teachers. However, there was a statistically significant difference between middle school and high school teachers in all four listening dimensions.

When looking at the perceptions of male teachers versus the perceptions of female teachers of school administrator listening skills, male teachers scored higher means in trustworthy and empathy, whereas female teachers scored higher means in response and
attending. Despite these differences, there were no statistically significant differences between male and female teachers when assessing administrators’ listening skills.

In comparing the self-perceptions of male and female administrators, males recorded a higher score in each of the four listening dimensions. However, there was not a significant difference in the scores between male and female administrators. It was noteworthy that while there was no statistically significant differences found between female and male administrators, male administrators had higher self-perceptions of their listening skills. This may be a direct relationship to males’ need to dominate and fear to be subordinate as discussed by Tannen (1994).

The final quantitative part of the study compared the self-perceptions of elementary and secondary administrators. This analysis found that there was not a significant difference between the self-perceptions of elementary administrators when compared to the self-perceptions of middle or high school administrators.

For the qualitative piece of the study, teachers and administrators were asked to identify their top characteristics of a good listener. This study revealed no statistically significant differences for any of the listening dimensions. Both teachers and administrators listed attending, empathy, and response as their top three characteristics of a good listener. Based on these results, it is pertinent for administrators to give teachers their full attention, make valid efforts to understand and care for what the teacher is saying, use humor and non-verbal responsive gestures, as well as follow up with teachers.

To conclude this study, our discussion outlines the conclusions and implications of these findings. Furthermore, recommendations for replicating this study and for further studies involving school leadership and listening are put forth.
Discussion

With greater challenges facing teachers, it is becoming more imperative for school administrators to listen to what motivates, frustrates, and excites their teachers on an everyday basis. Changes in demographics and higher accountability standards are just a couple of the challenges that teachers face each year. Listening is one-thing administrators can offer to teachers to show them an understanding and caring attitude.

The purpose of this study was to explore the comparison of self-perceptions of school administrators’ listening skills to the perceptions of their respective teachers in a large south central Texas school district. To examine this, seven schools (three elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools) were surveyed along with the district’s school administrators for a total of 552 teachers and 115 administrators.

In the previous sections, an introduction, literature review, participant and instrument details, data collection methods, and an analysis of the results were presented. In this section, the results are discussed in the context of the extant literature. This section concludes with implications and recommendations for future studies involving leadership and listening.

Perhaps the most important contribution of this study was the development of a new instrument (LAISL), which statistically proved to be more reliable and valid than previously used listening assessments. Researchers now have a tool in which school administrators’ listening skills can be measured to a reliable degree. The factor analysis of the listening items produced four distinct factors. The first factor, response, described the general preparation and feedback the teacher received from the administrator; the second factor, trustworthy, denoted the
trust and respect the administrators show towards their teachers, as well as the follow-through actions done by the administrators; the third factor, empathy, described the administrator’s willingness to listen with complete understanding; and the fourth factor, attending, described the awareness the administrator exhibits towards the teacher when the teacher is speaking.

It was unsurprising to see a statistically significant difference between teachers’ perceptions and administrators’ self-perceptions in three of the four listening factors. Unfortunately for administrators, they are not as good as listeners as they think they are. Despite this result, the silver lining for administrators is that teachers rated “attending” higher than administrators did. Attending was the highest rated characteristic by teachers and administrators for the qualitative statement.

However, the fact that a significant difference existed in three of the four listening factors, is disturbing when considering the work of Fitzwater (1991), Pool (1997) and White (1984), who discussed listening as a key element for successful leadership. In addition, Marlow (1992) and Shotter (1993) believed the ability to listen and understand teachers were directly related to the success of the principal.

For this study, teachers’ experience was not a factor in assessing administrator listening skills. It was thought that less experienced teachers might report statistically significant higher mean values simply due to fewer interactions with administrators and less chance for “bad situations” with administrators. Furthermore, the results suggest all teachers, without considering years of experience, rate administrators as moderate listeners.

School level proved to be a pertinent variable when assessing administrators’ listening skills. Both elementary and middle schools had statistically significant higher listening values when compared to high schools. In addition, middle schools were statistically significant in all
four listening dimensions when compared to high schools and none when compared to elementary schools. This may be due to the hierarchical structure of middle schools. They employ department heads (curriculum and data analysis) and team leaders (logistics), which meet with the administrators on a regular basis. In turn, each group has a meeting with their department or team to convey the administrators’ messages. In high schools, department heads meet with the curriculum administrator and the message is conveyed in department meetings. In middle schools, team meetings and department meetings are made up of a dozen people, but a high school department meeting may consist of twenty or more teachers. The result is that middle school teachers hear the administrators’ message in two small meetings whereas high school teachers hear the message in one large meeting.

Perhaps the most unexpected results focused on gender. It was believed that female teachers would rate administrators’ listening skills significantly different than male teachers. Based on the works of Brownell (2005), Tannen (1994), and Marsnik (1993), females generally utilize more caring and understanding listening strategies in comparison to males. Males tend to implement dominating-type listening strategies; therefore, male teachers may not relate to the listening strategies of female administrators and feel ‘less dominant’ to the male administrator. However, the results showed gender was not a significant variable in this study for either teachers or administrators.

For administrators, it was believed female administrators would rate themselves significantly higher than male administrators. Surprisingly, male administrators rated themselves higher in each listening facet. This may be attributed to Marsnik’s (1993) belief regarding the males’ need to dominate or be one-up.
Although the results were unexpected based on the previous literature, the results were consistent with the work of Kathryn Jones (1990). In her work, she discussed forty-two empirical articles that claimed to test the gender difference hypothesis; however, none of which met the sampling design criteria established for behavioral science inquiries. Therefore, these studies could not accurately say that there was a difference amongst gender. Furthermore, of the 147 gender differences studied by Jones (1990), only six proved to statistically support a gender difference hypothesis. When looking at this study, the cited literature did not mention the utilization of stratification procedures in selecting equal sampling units; therefore, the research on gender may be flawed to some extent.

The final aspect of this study focused on the characteristics of a good listener according to teachers and administrators. Attending was the dominating factor for both teachers and administrators. This result helps to summarize the entire study. Although there were areas where significant differences occurred, teachers and administrators never scored below moderate (3-3.9) for any of the analyses. Therefore, as represented by the scores produced in this study, teachers and administrators generally recognize the important elements of being a good listener.

Implications

Research Implications

This study was an attempt to explore the relationship of administrators’ listening skills through the perceptions of administrators and teachers. From this study, other research questions arose, as well as an instrument (LAISL) that proved to be more reliable and valid than the original instrument (LPFR) for research in school leadership. Given the importance of listening to organizational commitment and effectiveness, additional research questions worthy of investigation are:
1. Is there a statistically significant difference in listening skills between principals and assistant principals?

2. Is there a relationship between job satisfaction and administrators’ listening skills?

3. Is there a relationship between administrators’ listening skills and the school’s accountability rating?

4. Is there a relationship between administrators’ listening skills and school climate?

5. Is there a relationship between an administrator’s age and their listening skills?

6. Is there a statistically significant difference in listening skills between administrators who attend a listening program and those who do not?

Practical Implications

Based on the LAISL, this study measured administrators’ listening skills in four different dimensions: attending, response, empathy, and trustworthy. According to Kouzes and Posner (1987), listening skills foster effective leadership. Despite the result that administrators had higher self-perceptions of their listening skills than what teachers perceived, this study illustrated the listening levels of school administrators were moderate. Thus, suggesting that while there was room for improvement, school administrators’ listening skills were not poor or very poor.

As a result, this study gives rise to some practical suggestions for administrators and their supervisors to employ as they develop an organization where communication is not a quandary but a priority:

5. Principals’ supervisors should provide training for principals in the area of listening.

5. Overall, principals should concentrate on improving their listening skills in the areas of trustworthiness, empathy, and response.
5. Communication should be an emphasis for school leaders and school leadership preparation programs.

5. Administrators should provide formal and informal mechanisms for teachers to voice their personal and professional thoughts.

Conclusion

According to Guarino (1974), there is no skill more important than listening in the area of leadership. As noted by Gorton and Snowden (2002), all major national school administration associations emphasize effective communication skills, yet schools are a target for criticism in the area of communication. This study produced a measurement that can be used in the future to address such criticism. Districts can employ the instrument to assess the listening skills of the administrators on their campuses. It also gives teachers a method of input and provides them with the satisfaction of being heard. Every year teachers are evaluated by administrators, but this study provides a way for teachers to provide constructive feedback to administrators on their listening skills, perhaps a practice not utilized nearly enough. Although some of the results were surprising and somewhat ironic, it is vital that administrators remember that listening is an interactive process. It can be just as important as transmitting the message and without implementing the proper listening skills; the communication process is incomplete and susceptible to misinterpretations and errors.
LISTENING ASSESSMENT INVENTORY FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP (LAISL)

LISTENING PRACTICES QUESTIONNAIRE
(ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS)

I. PROFILE INFORMATION
Please fill in the appropriate bubble on your answer sheet.

1. I am a(n):  a.) teacher    b.) administrator
2. I am:        a.) male       b.) female
3. I have:      a.) 1-5        b.) 6-10        c.) 11-15        d.) 16-20    e.) 20+ years of experience.
4. I work at:   a.) elementary school  b.) middle school     c.) high school

II. QUESTIONNAIRE
To what extent do you observe the following behaviors in administrators? Your responses should not be based on one individual administrator, but rather on a total collection of administrators based on your personal experiences. Record the letter that best applies to each practice by filling in the appropriate bubble on your answer sheet.

A—Almost Always
B—Usually
C—Sometimes
D—Rarely
E—Almost Never

5. Administrators respect others’ ideas and words regardless of business, social, or economic status.
6. Administrators give their full attention and are not preoccupied with other concerns during discussions.
7. Administrators show appropriate non-verbal responses, such as nodding and facial expressions.
8. Administrators ask relevant questions for clarification of points that are technical or misunderstood.
9. Administrators prepare or become informed when such preparation or knowledge is necessary.
10. Administrators show confidence in the speaker.
11. Administrators accurately recall comments or positions at a later date.
12. Administrators follow up with prompt actions.
13. Administrators encourage others to give their views on subjects under discussion.
15. Administrators smile or otherwise acknowledge humorous remarks.
16. Administrators correctly anticipate where the conversation is going.
17. Administrators accurately relate messages to a third party.
18. Administrators maintain comfortable eye contact with the speaker.
19. Administrators allow others to finish without interrupting.
20. Administrators repeat, paraphrase, or summarize comments to ensure understanding.
21. Administrators think about the subject under discussion before responding.
22. Administrators place themselves in the speaker’s position and understand their concerns and feelings.
23. Administrators avoid emotion-packed (trigger) words, phrases, or clichés.
24. Administrators consider content and logic and are not critical of others’ delivery appearance, grammar, vocabulary, etc.
25. Administrators produce results consistent with agreed upon instructions or guidelines.

III. LISTENING PRACTICES

In the space below, list three to five of the most important characteristics of a good listener. Your first choice will be considered the most important, second choice the second most important, etc.
Appendix B

Table 2  Factor Analysis of LAISL: A Four-factor Varimax Solution (N=X)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attending</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Administrators give their full attention and are not preoccupied with other concerns during discussions.</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Administrators smile or otherwise acknowledge humorous remarks.</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Administrators allow others to finish without interrupting.</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empathy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Administrators appear to listen with an open mind free from personal biases.</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Administrators repeat, paraphrase, or summarize comments to ensure understanding.</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Administrators think about the subject under discussion before responding.</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Administrators place themselves in the speaker’s position and understand their concerns and feelings.</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Administrators avoid emotion-packed (trigger) words, phrases, or clichés.</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Administrators consider content and logic and are not critical of others’ delivery appearance, grammar, vocabulary, etc.</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Administrators show appropriate non-verbal responses, such as nodding and facial expressions.</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Administrators ask relevant questions for clarification of points that are technical or misunderstood.</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Administrators prepare or become informed when such preparation or knowledge is necessary.</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Administrators show confidence in the speaker.</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Administrators correctly anticipate where the conversation is going.</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Administrators maintain comfortable eye contact with the speaker.</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trustworthy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Administrators respect others’ ideas and words regardless of business, social, or economic status.</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Administrators accurately recall comments or positions at a later date.</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Administrators follow up with prompt actions.</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Administrators encourage others to give their views on subjects under discussion.</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Administrators accurately relate messages to a third party.</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Administrators produce results consistent with agreed upon instructions or guidelines.</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue | 15.37 | 1.42 | 1.18 | 1.03 |
Cumulative % of Variance | 52.99 | 57.89 | 61.94 | 65.48 |
References


and supervisory listening indicators on subordinate support, trust, intrinsic motivation, and performance. *Journal of the International Listening Association, 9*, 84-105.


Tate, J. (2001). The *sense-making strategies of school leaders: The specific impact of listening*. (Doctoral Dissertation, George Mason University, 2001). (UMI No. 3042786)


