A STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION
BETWEEN A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION AND ITS MEMBERSHIP

by

STEPHANIE ANN RAY

(Under the Direction of Jeffrey K. Springston)

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the role face-to-face communication plays in nurturing good relationships between a nonprofit organization and its membership. Its ultimate purpose is to add to the amount of public relations’ literature devoted to face-to-face communication and to suggest future research opportunities specifically related to face-to-face communication. The results of this empirical study, carried out with the assistance of the Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America, lend significant evidence to organizations, practitioners and scholars that face-to-face communication is not only important but is also necessary for an organization’s success; even its survival. Hopefully, as a direct result of this evidence, organizations, firms and individuals will better understand what public relations practitioners already know. Public relations is not simply a luxury; it is a necessity.

INDEX WORDS: Face-to-Face, Communication, Public Relations, Nonprofit
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DEDICATION

Dedicated to Steve and Karen Ray, my loving and supportive parents, who have seen me through every step of the way, who encouraged me every single day and who always had faith in me even when I did not have faith in myself.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Numerous friends and family members have offered their help and support in various ways throughout this undertaking. While it would be impossible to fully express my gratitude to each and every person, I would especially like to thank the following people for their help and their many sacrifices, which made this project possible: To Dr. Jeff Springston for his patience and understanding while dealing with my inexperience during the many phases of this project. To Dr. Charles McPeake for his willingness to listen and his advice even when our conversations took longer than “just a minute of his time.” To Dr. Ruth Ann Lariscy for offering her organizational expertise to my thesis committee and her enthusiasm about the topic of this study. To Shannon Kahlbaum for her friendship and advice given during many coffee shop talks. To Alexander & Sherry Abrams for their much appreciated friendship, their help with late night data analysis and their statistical expertise. To the Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America without their assistance and support, this research project would not have been possible. I am eternally grateful for the time and resources the TLBAA offered and for the association’s understanding during this extensive research process.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal communication is essential to the public relations profession. Ferguson (1984) challenged researchers to return to a “public relationship” focus. Stressing a relational rather than organizational focus was central to Ferguson’s challenge. Anecdotally, many public relations practitioners and scholars acknowledge the importance of face-to-face communication. However, little public relations research has focused on the role of face-to-face communication since Ferguson’s work. Toth (2002), Flaherty et. al. (1998) and Leeds-Hurwitz (1995) specifically acknowledge its importance in interpersonal communication and relationship management literature. This thesis explores the importance of face-to-face communication in a membership organization.

Society is becoming more inundated with technological advancements every day. These advancements in technology are certainly beneficial, but when they are used in place of face-to-face communication, there can be serious ramifications. People may feel alienated or unimportant when the personal touch of a face-to-face conversation is lost to an e-mail or phone call.

While it can be argued that relationships can be established and maintained through various technological methods such as e-mail, Web sites and the Internet, these methods may not be the most effective or successful way of establishing and maintaining relationships. For example, Web sites such as E-Harmony.com prove that personal relationships can and do begin without any face-to-face contact; however, in order to prolong the relationship, it is assumed that
a face-to-face meeting must eventually occur. Therefore, the success of the long-term relationship relies on face-to-face communication. Of course, these types of relationships are more intimate than a customer or member professional relationship, but the basic elements involved during establishment and building of relationships are the same. Trust, dependence, and openness are present regardless of the relationship’s intimacy level.

Implicit to the idea of communicating face-to-face is the importance of building and maintaining relationships. It can be argued that by engaging in face-to-face communication one is establishing, attempting to establish, or maintaining an already existing relationship with another person or “public.” Grunig and Huang (2000) describe this crucial area of public relations and note T. M. Williams (as cited in Grunig and Huang, 2000, p. 25) lecture entitled, “Putting Relationships Back into Public Relations.” Williams (1996) states:

I believe that the public relations business on the whole is moving away from being a relationship-based business and towards becoming a more impersonal, technologically based business. We think about placement, sound bytes, canned stories. We forget about people. But the basis of the very words “public relations” is connections between people. (p.2)

While the importance of relationships is a common theme in scholarly public relations literature, a clear-cut definition of relationships has not been identified. Grunig and Huang (2000) explain,

Although the concept of relationships is implicit in the term public relations and both scholars and practitioners regularly use the term in explaining the value of public relations, neither scholars nor practitioners have defined the concept carefully or have developed reliable measures of relationship outcomes. (p. 25)

Esposito and Koch (2000) address this issue as well by establishing the notion that “Relationship is a very broad term in general usage” (p. 221), but Coombs (2000) makes the point “Relationship is primarily a concept associated with interpersonal communication” (p. 74). Coombs (2000) further explains how “[p]eople have a relationship when they are linked together
in some way” (p. 74). Thomlison (2000) carries Coomb’s (2000) definition of relationships further by describing a relationship as “a set of expectations two parties have for each other’s behavior based on their interaction patterns” (p. 178). Regardless of a specific definition, Thomlison (2000) explains that it is not enough to simply recognize when a relationship exists. He posits the most important part of building and maintaining relationships is learning what creates “satisfying interpersonal relationships” (p. 178). Broom, Casey and Ritchey (1997) join the previously mentioned authors in a valiant search for a clear definition of “relationship” by challenging scholars to develop a “conceptual or operational definition” to aide in furthering the understanding of organization-public relationships for the purpose of continued improvement of organizations.

Along these same lines, when a practitioner realizes that a certain relationship exists within a public, he must be proactive in implementing key relationship management techniques in order to further develop the newly formed relationship into a lasting one. While technology can be used to establish or maintain an organization-public relationship, this study will attempt to determine if face-to-face communication is the most effective method for managing those relationships.

**Purpose of Study**

This thesis focuses on relationships between the Texas Longhorn Breeder’s Association of America (TLBAA) and its membership. While many studies refer to the importance of the organization-public relationship, relatively few of these studies mention face-to-face communication between the organization and its membership. The closest link between face-to-face communication and public relations relates to employees and their superiors or communication between co-workers.
Burton and Stone (2003) explain how approximately “…fifty-five percent of communication is body language (facial expression, hand movements and so on), only thirty-eight percent is the tone of voice and only seven percent is the actual words. So by writing to someone, you are disposing of ninety-three percent of your ability to put across what you have to say” (p.44). Along these same lines, an article from the Economist entitled “Press the Flesh, Not the Keyboard” cites London School of Economics economist Tony Venables who believes much economic activity is generated by businesses that rely on face-to-face communication (“Press the Flesh,” 2002).

Obviously, there is more at stake in a business relationship than simply “feelings” between individuals. Money is a driving force for any business whether it is a small nonprofit organization or a giant corporation. The implications for increased membership participation are far reaching. Concrete evidence supporting the validity of face-to-face communication between TLBAA staff and members should indicate that building and maintaining relationships through face-to-face communication, rather than simply relying on written communication, is vitally important. Moreover, the results of this study will not only be important to the field of public relations but will also be relevant to other areas of the behavioral sciences. According to Bruning and Ledingham (2000), “the primary purpose of public relations is to manage the relationship between an organization and the organization’s key publics” (p.159).

There is nothing as important to a non-profit organization as its membership. Without the individuals comprising the membership, the organization would cease to exist. Therefore, it is imperative to understand the differences between the use of mediated and face-to-face communication and how each form of communication affects the relationship between both the organization and its membership.
Mediated communication such as e-mail, Web sites or telephone conversations are all valid means of communicating with members, but there are pros and cons which should be addressed. Communicating by way of computer technology such as sending or receiving e-mail, surfing Web sites, etc., lacks some of the fundamental elements included in face-to-face communication. These elements include body language, facial expressions, and emphasis placement. Similarly, while engaging in a telephone conversation, emphasis can be placed on words, but one cannot observe body language or facial expressions during the conversation. This is especially relevant regarding instant messenger and e-mail which now have emoticons available in order to add personal expressions to e-mail and instant messages. While emoticons increase the ability for technological communication to include personal expression, they do not replace individual expressions which are specific to each person. The addition of emoticons to instant messenger indicates the program was lacking an important element.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizations rely on people for continued success; therefore, understanding how people prefer to communicate is imperative. More specifically, it is vital in establishing a basis for understanding how face-to-face communication can be critical to an organization’s success.

It has been well-documented over the years that people need communication with other people. Interpersonal communication literature offers some insight into this subject. Knapp & Vangelisti (1996) state,

“A vast body of literature consistently supports the idea that each of us needs: (1) to include others in our activities and to be included in theirs; (2) to exert control over others and have them control us; and (3) to give affection to others and receive it from them.” (p.68)

Benjamin (1986) describes how interpersonal communication is a vital part of building and maintaining relationships, and he cites Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs as proof. Abraham Maslow developed his theory of a hierarchy of needs in 1954. His five proposed levels of human needs are typically shown in pyramid form with (1) physiological needs (food, water, sleep, sex) at the base of the pyramid. From these basic needs Maslow moves up the pyramid including (2) safety needs (protection, security, etc.), (3) belongingness needs (affection, group membership, etc.), (4) esteem needs (self-esteem, prestige, fame, etc.), and finally (5) self-actualization needs (fulfillment of potential) (p.67). Deeply entrenched in his theory is the need for communication with others within each of the human need categories (See Appendix A). Hunt (1985) also cites
Maslow’s hierarchy in describing the basic human need for interpersonal communication. Additionally, Hunt (1985) lists four items that one looks for in establishing relationships:

1.) someone like yourself, 2) people who can do something for you, 3) someone who can keep you in balance, and 4) someone who is dynamic and sociable. (p 140)

Arguably, the authors aforementioned are generally referring to one-on-one personal relationships, but their ideas are certainly applicable to other types of relationships such as those relationships between a nonprofit organization and its members. For example, it is assumed a person will not join a nonprofit unless that organization holds similar beliefs and interests; has something to offer the member; offers a balanced relationship with the individual and appears to actively engage in maintaining the individual as a member of the organization.

Granted, a person may join and continue to stay involved in an organization whether or not there is any face-to-face communication involved, but nonprofit organizations rely more heavily on membership participation and fundraising for financial security than do many other types of organizations. Leeds-Hurwitz (1995) states, “[t]he choice of emphasis on interpersonal communication interaction is simple: face-to-face communication is the beginning point and the exemplar, for it is the most obvious, the most central case of what constitutes communication” (p. 4). She also points out that social interaction was here long before “formal organizations or mass media” (p. 4). In other words, organizations and mass media were formed as a direct result of human face-to-face interaction.

Since face-to-face communication is intrinsic to interpersonal communication, and since it has been well established that people communicate in order to satisfy basic human needs, it is important to understand the details of face-to-face communication. For this understanding one can turn to Poyatos’ (1985) research regarding face-to-face interactions between people. He “attempts to present a theoretical framework… for the exhaustive, holistic analysis of interaction,
by discussing: the possible personal and extrapersonal components of face-to-face interaction…” (p.111). Poyatos (1985) describes the many intricacies involved in face-to-face communication and presents an in-depth flow chart containing components that are part of different types of face-to-face interactions. Through his flow chart, the author illustrates how face-to-face interactions are not simplistic. He breaks interaction components down into internal and external components. Internal components consist of behavioral characteristics (actions), and non-behavioral characteristics (appearance). External components consist of behavior conditioned components (doors slamming/ phones ringing) and environmental components (landscape characteristics/ weather) (See Appendix B). Although Poyatos (1985) admits to limitations within the chart (it does not account for every possible interaction), it is a good illustration of the complexities involved in human interaction and face-to-face communication thus proving how methods of communication such as e-mail or telephone conversations lose many signals present during a face-to-face conversation.

It is important to understand that face-to-face communication does not only involve words. Face-to-face communication encompasses many different messages whether they are verbal or non-verbal. Bavelas and Coates (1992) argue that “even in technological societies… most of our communication is dialogue in face-to-face interaction” (p.301). They take a position that face-to-face dialogue can either be “mindless” or “mindful.” The authors pose the example of a person engaging in a conversation while thinking about something else. For instance, the topic of conversation during a face-to-face interaction between an association member and an association representative may not be as critical to the building of a relationship as the member’s impression of the representative. A pleasant experience can make a member feel important; thereby, continuing the already established professional relationship.
Moving from psychological and sociological research to more communication-based research, there are two main theoretical approaches to this study. First, the theory of relationship management is “predicated on the notion that the appropriate domain of public relations is that of relationships” (p.194), and the theory is highly relevant to the study at hand as the focus is on relationships between an organization and its membership (Ledingham 2003). Second, social exchange theory is based on the notion that relationships exist due to a cost/reward factor. Neither theory is mutually exclusive in that each is intertwined with the other. Ledingham (2003) quotes Grunig’s position that, “one can think of many theories that apply… but it is more difficult to think of a public relations theory… that has not been borrowed from another” (p.18).

**Theory of Relationship Management**

Ledingham’s (2003) theory of relationship management focuses on organization-public relationships. This theory serves as a way for practitioners and scholars to organize public relations concepts, and it highlights the notion that relationships are the ultimate basis for the field of public relations. Based upon Ledingham’s research findings, he identifies fourteen axioms of significance. The fifth, sixth and twelfth axioms are especially pertinent to social exchange theory in relation to organization-public relationships and are highlighted in bold typeface below in Table 1:

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<tr>
<td>1. Organization-public relationships are transactional.</td>
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<td>2. The relationships are dynamic; they change over time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. They are goal oriented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organization-public relationships have antecedents and consequences and can be analyzed in terms of relationship quality, maintenance strategies, relationship type, and actors in the relationship.</td>
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5. These relationships are driven by the perceived needs and wants of interacting organizations and publics.

6. **The continuation of organization-public relationships is dependent on the degree to which expectations are met.**

7. Those expectations are expressed in interactions between organizations and publics.

8. Such relationships involve communication, but communication is not the sole instrument of relationship building.

9. These relationships are impacted by relational history, the nature of the transaction, the frequency of exchange, and reciprocity.

10. Organization-public relationships can be described by type (personal, professional, community, symbolic, and behavioral) independent of the perceptions of those relationships.

11. The proper focus of the domain of public relations is relationships, not communication.

12. **Communication alone cannot sustain long-term relationships in the absence of supportive organizational behavior.**

13. Effective management of organization-public relationships supports mutual understanding and benefit.

14. The relationship perspective is applicable throughout the public relations process and with regard to all public relations techniques. (p. 195)

The following pages discuss in detail social exchange theory literature with an underlying relationship management focus.

**Social Exchange Theory**

Social exchange theories are the basis for this thesis research. Knapp and Vangelisti (1996) explain how these theories have been used over the years in order to explain changes in social behavior.

These theories contend: (1) that in social relationships we are constantly exchanging resources (e.g., love, status, information, money, goods, services); (2) that these resources are evaluated by us as rewarding or not; and (3) that people have a tendency to seek those things which will be rewarding to them. (p. 47)

The social exchange theories include: (1) the theory of equity; (2) the theory of the equality rule; (3) the theory of a reward level; and (4) the theory of the need-based rule. The theory of equity posits that people involved in any type of relationship are content in the relationship when each person feels his or her contributions are equal to the other person’s...
contributions, and inequity occurs when there is an imbalance in the relationship. For example, one person may feel “underbenefited.” Similarly, the theory of the equality rule states partners in a relationship are most satisfied when each feels there is equal contribution from both sides of the relationship. In contrast, the theory of a reward level is based upon the notion that nothing else matters to people as long as they feel they are getting the most rewards out of the relationship. The final theory of the need-based rule, unlike the previous theories mentioned, claims equity, equality and rewards have no part in people’s exchanging of resources. This theory posits “people exchange resources in response to their perceptions of their partner’s needs” (pp. 47-48). Admittedly, it can be argued that pieces of all four of these theories are probably involved in every relationship.

Relationships are complex and are not easily studied. Many theories can overlap depending upon the particular relationship in question. In an organization-public relationship, the theory of a reward level and the theory of equity are likely to be the most relevant for this study. Consequently, according to these theories, the members of the TLBAA or any other nonprofit organization want to be sure that as a member his or her rewards are sufficient enough to continue to be a part of the organization. Additionally, the member wants to feel that he or she is benefiting as much or more than the organization itself.

Building upon the theory of social exchange, Lawler (2001) proposes the affect theory of social exchange. He introduces an emotional angle into the original theory. The basis for his research is that people show and feel either positive or negative emotions, and they attribute those emotions to the “social unit” with which they are involved. Moreover, if through some type of social exchange (i.e. face-to-face communication for the purposes of this study), a person
has a pleasant or positive experience, then it is likely the experience will be attributed to the “social unit” involved (i.e. the nonprofit organization for the purposes of this study).

Ledingham and Bruning (2001) posit social exchange theory as a useful framework in the study of community relationships and one may assume other types of relationships as well. The authors extend their recognition of the value of community relationships in an article entitled “Managing Community Relationships to Maximize Mutual Benefit: Doing Well by Doing Good.” The title of the article stresses the idea that an organization’s well-being and success rely on its ability to “do good” for its community. Furthermore, according to Ledingham and Bruning (2001), it may be possible to determine when a relationship is coming to an end simply by evaluating costs vs. rewards from a member’s perspective. This is critical to a nonprofit organization and especially so when the nonprofit deals with its membership on more of a face-to-face basis because organization representatives have the opportunity to evaluate verbal as well as nonverbal cues during face-to-face interaction with a member.

With respect to organization-public relationships, Ledingham (2001) defines social exchange theory as “a way of explaining choice behavior in a social setting.” He also places relationship management in high regard. The significance of this lies in the realization that social exchange theory is firmly grounded in the understanding of how relationships play a role in the successful management of organizations. Turner (2002) lends significant insight into the cost/reward component of the social exchange theory. His interpretation of a person’s reaction to any given interpersonal interaction is that it is “automatic”. He states,

…we “automatically” feel satisfaction-happiness when payoffs are proportionate to costs and investments in light of justice standards, or we immediately experience negative emotions when payoffs are not proportionate. Humans do not cognitively ponder these matters, unless “injustice” has
been done because... the capacity is built into our neurology. (p. 123)

This revelation is especially pertinent to public relations professionals because practitioners must sometimes gauge a person’s reaction based upon his or her previous experiences. For example, a member may not necessarily vocally proclaim his or her negative feelings. A practitioner may have to be overly observant in order to pick up on subtle cues the member may display. Additionally, any attempt at public relations management is futile if a public relations manager does not realize or accept his or her role in relationship management and be observant to non-verbal cues given by a member during face-to-face interaction.

Application of Proximity Theory and Technology Issues

Proximity theory has been widely studied in business and economic literature. This work addresses geographical proximity as it relates to organizational networking and economic differences. It explains how the closeness of one organization to another can affect different areas of each business such as finance and growth potential. Still other proximity theories focus on political research relating proximity to how close a candidate’s beliefs are to the voter’s beliefs. It is thought election predictions can be made based upon this type of proximity information. Clearly, proximity theory can be used in various contexts.

For the purposes of this study, proximity theory is used in the geographical sense. Gentzoglanis (2002) posits geographical proximity as important to the building up of organizational and personal networks in the business world. On the other hand, the author admits geographical proximity can be detrimental to business progress if it causes barriers such as “inhibition of innovation” or “entry barriers” between firms. More applicable to this thesis is the notion that proximity affects the establishment of personal networks. After reviewing early organizational communication research, Monge and Contractor (2001) find “that the frequency
of face-to-face dyadic communication drops after the first 75-100 feet” (p. 479). Thus, suggesting that close physical proximity allows individuals within organizations to make contact with one another and increase the probability of forming relationships. Furthering this notion is Zahn’s (1991) more recent research showing that communication can be significantly diminished with an increase in physical distance. Geographical proximity is certainly shown to affect communication regardless of whether distance is between offices, organizations or individuals. Although this research specifically targets proximity between organizations and proximity between individuals within organizations, it stands to reason that if communication is affected by proximity then this will surely be the case between a membership and its organization.

Geographical proximity information may allow predictions to be made concerning publics of interest to an organization. For instance, if proximity is shown to affect communication between members and their organization then proximity information may need to be factored into the decision making process when targeting organization publics. For example, if members geographically closer to an organization prefer a specific type of communication, then this may be how the organization needs to target or reach that particular public. This research investigates whether there is a relationship between membership proximity to the TLBAA office and membership beliefs regarding face-to-face communication.

With the introduction of the Internet into the public’s daily life, some predicted a decrease in the need for face-to-face communication. It was thought the Internet might replace interpersonal interaction by closing the geographical proximity gap many organizations face while trying to communicate with members (Poster 1996). However, results from a study conducted in 1998 found “that use of the Internet as a communication channel is not perceived as a functional alternative to face-to-face communication” (Flaherty et. al. 1998). Moreover,
Albright (2001) notes that a major part of forming relationships is geographical closeness, and she further describes how the role of geographical proximity in establishing relationships is being changed by computer technology. For example, relationships are being formed today by individuals and organizations that may never have had contact with each other twenty years ago thanks to chat rooms, e-mail and Web sites. Carey (1995) also points out how communication has increased through cable and satellite television; yet he also admits how these advancements somewhat limit communication because newspapers and network television are not as powerful as they once were. This study investigates whether there is a relationship between geographical proximity and the importance of face-to-face communication to a membership organization.

**Relating Face-to-Face Communication to the Improvement of an Organization/Association**

The purpose of this study is to examine the role face-to-face communication plays in nurturing good relations within a membership organization. Much scholarly literature has been devoted to the value of relationship management as has been indicated throughout this paper, and clearly one of the primary purposes of learning more about relationship management is to improve the practice of public relations.

More companies and organizations are realizing the need for face-to-face communication with customers, clients and members. For example, top management at Qwest, a Denver-based telecommunications provider, believes that the face-to-face method is best. After preliminary research revealed positive outcomes with this approach, the company expanded from using face-to-face communication in just a few states to using it in every state except one where it provides phone services. Qwest’s vice president of small-business sales, Jeffrey Clark, recognizes that “customers are more willing to talk to a representative face-to-face” (Baes 2004).
Telecommunication providers are not the only ones taking notice of face-to-face advantages. Bankers are also finding out a majority of customers prefer face-to-face service.

In order to develop a multi-dimensional organization-public relationship scale useful for practitioners and scholars alike, Bruning and Ledingham (2001) explore the professional, personal and community relationships between a bank located in a “major Midwestern metropolis” and its customers. Based upon the notion that public relations is the management of relationships between an organization and its publics, these authors conduct an extensive review of relationship management literature and identify specific relationship dimensions (e.g. trust, openness, involvement, investment, commitment, reciprocity, mutual legitimacy and mutual understanding) to include in their survey. Their research concludes that three types of relationships (professional, personal and community) do exist between organizations and key publics, that public relationship programs should be designed around relationship goals and that the scale is a highly reliable tool for measuring organization-public relationships over time (pp.165-166).

In addition to Bruning and Ledingham’s (2001) research demonstrating three specific relationships between a bank and its customers, research by Datamonitor shows that a majority of people still prefer to do their banking face-to-face at a local branch office thus suggesting that banks are again a prime example of businesses in which customers value face-to-face communication (Burridge 2004). Many times online banking is advertised as cheap, fast and convenient (supposedly just what the American society wants and needs), but this research refutes that supposition. In other bank advertisements one may hear a bank described as “your hometown bank” or “your friendly bank.” These phrases cannot describe an online service. They appeal to the customer who wants a more personal connection with his or her bank.
A review of organizational communication literature reveals that the idea of making personal connections is a common theme related to the improvement of an organization or association. The cultivation of relationships between managers and employees is one area in which communication has been widely studied. Harris (2002) establishes excellent communication practices as essential to an organization’s success, and he further explains how communication between supervisors and employees can either be beneficial or detrimental to the organization as a whole. In 1984, General Electric found that job satisfaction was directly related to good communication between an employee and his or her supervisor. An organization run by satisfied employees makes for a strong organization overall. The leadership approach known as leader-member exchange (LMX) maintains a relationship focus and is, according to Tourish and Hargie (2004), the “linchpin of corporate communication…, particularly in relation to the role of first-level supervisor.” LMX is especially applicable to the study at hand due to leader-member exchanges between TLBAA staff and TLBAA members. Like many membership organizations, TLBAA members have a great amount of influence over the direction of the association because members vote for their own board of directors. However, association employees enforce rules and regulations set by the membership and are in some ways being led and directed by the TLBAA staff. Survey question 23 asks members to indicate whom they prefer to see and speak with at TLBAA events. Responses to this question should provide valuable information not previously obtained by researchers who, for example, study leader-member exchange between supervisors and employees. For instance, Tourish and Hargie (2004) found employees relate most closely to their direct supervisors, and Clampitt et. al. (2000) discovered employees prefer to receive information from their immediate supervisor.
Moving from supervisor/employee relationships to customer/organization relationships, Andrzej Gorecki (1992) challenges the western culture norm by proposing that customers should have an open line of communication with CEOs as well as lower ranking staff members. Thus, suggesting that it is not simply face-to-face communication that matters to customers. In fact, face-to-face communication with certain people within an organization may be one way of improving customer relations with the organization. Furthermore, customers who feel they have a defective product or feel they have received unsatisfactory service typically request to speak with a manager or a supervisor whom the customer believes has the necessary authority to take care of the issue. John Freeland, managing partner of Accenture’s Customer Relationship Management practice, describes the changing attitudes of many CEOs. He states, “[c]reating value is still the heart of the CEO agenda. What's changed is that CEOs now see the customers they already have as their most important lever in creating value, and they recognize that maintaining the loyalty of these customers is their greatest challenge” (p.1) (Teuke 2002).

Several sources reiterate the importance of making business personal and stress the effectiveness of customer relationship management, but none of the literature specifies with whom customers prefer to speak or interact (Sorensen 1988, Kasanoff 2001, Greenberg 2002, Bingham 2004). One might assume if a customer is given the choice of speaking with a CEO or a staff member, the customer will be more inclined to speak with the higher official simply due to his or her title. Supporting this notion is Hargie and Dickson (2004) who posit “individuals value being with powerful or famous people.” This study investigates the idea that members prefer to speak with upper management.

It is quite evident many business managers realize just how much face-to-face communication means to their customers, and they are willing to make the monetary sacrifices
needed in order to provide it. Since organizations must go to great expense to provide this type of customer service, from a public relations standpoint this is very positive. The public relations budget is typically smaller than other departments but is generally left alone in financially secure times; however, these budgets are usually the first to be cut when the economy is not doing well. The TLBAA is a perfect example of an association that believes in face-to-face communication with its membership. Because TLBAA management foresees the importance of relationship building through this type of communication, the results from this thesis should indicate that the TLBAA membership has a good overall relationship with the association.

As organization and association managers continue to see the benefits of face-to-face communication, hopefully, public relations budgets will possess greater sustainability. The following research provides evidence that a sufficient public relations’ budget is crucial.

**Hypotheses and Research Question**

The goal of this study is to empirically examine the importance of face-to-face communication between a membership-based nonprofit organization and its membership public. In order to evaluate where the TLBAA membership stands on its perceptions regarding face-to-face communication, the following hypotheses and research questions are formed:

- **H₁**: Members who believe face-to-face communication is important will participate in more TLBAA events.
- **H₂**: Members will prefer to speak with upper management.
- **H₃**: Results will show face-to-face communication is more important to the TLBAA membership than other means of communication.
- **H₄**: Since the TLBAA has a high regard for face-to-face communication and makes every effort to portray this to the membership, the membership will in turn feel it has a good overall relationship with the organization.
RQ1: Is the importance of face-to-face communication related to membership proximity to the TLBAA office?
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Survey Instrument

In an effort to test the hypotheses and answer the research question, a thirty-nine question survey instrument was developed and mailed to members of the TLBAA. The questionnaire is an adaptation of Bruning and Ledingham’s Multi-Dimensional Organization-Public Relationship Scale. Bruning and Ledingham’s purpose for the scale is for the use of “…both scholars and practitioners who wish to examine the ways in which organizations initiate, maintain, or improve their public relations” (p.161). Bruning and Ledingham (1999) base the scale on their research showing how organizations and organizations’ publics share three relationship types: community, professional and personal.

The authors suggest the use of different relationship management techniques for each type of relationship. For example, community relationships may be managed by “being open with community members, supporting events of interest to community members and engaging in activities used to improve social and economic aspects of the community…” Professional relationships may be managed by “delivering services in a businesslike manner…”, and personal relationships may be managed by “engaging in actions that build a sense of trust between the organization and the members of key publics…” (p.165) Of course, there are different communication methods for accomplishing these tasks, and this thesis suggests face-to-face communication as just one of those methods.
The current questionnaire contains six sections. Section 1 includes six professional relationship questions, section 2 includes five personal relationship questions, section 3 includes three community relationship questions, section 4 includes eleven communication questions, section 5 includes eight “new member” questions, and section 6 includes six demographic questions. There is also a section available for any additional comments members would like to share. As in Ledingham and Bruning’s (1999) study, the dimensions of trust, openness, involvement, investment, commitment, reciprocity, mutual legitimacy and mutual understanding were incorporated into the survey instrument.

In order to incorporate face-to-face communication information into the survey, the multi-dimensional scale was modified. Section 4 includes questions pertaining to member perception of face-to-face communication with the TLBAA (e.g. I believe face-to-face communication is important to the success of the TLBAA, and I feel more connected to the TLBAA as a result of engaging in face-to-face communication with its staff members).

Participants

The survey was mailed to all active members of the TLBAA. An active member constitutes any member in good standing with the Association and any member whose dues were up-to-date at the time the survey was mailed (August 13, 2004). While the TLBAA currently has a membership exceeding 5,000 persons, active members comprise approximately forty percent of the total membership. A cover letter was included and stated participants could choose to remain anonymous or could include their return address should they prefer not to receive a follow-up phone call. The survey instrument received prior approval from the Human Subjects office before being mailed. Out of 2,150 surveys mailed, 392 were returned, but only 342 of these surveys were useable yielding a 15.9% return rate. A meeting with TLBAA management
confirmed that previous surveys sent to the same population revealed similar findings, thus establishing criterion validity of this study.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Demographics: Survey respondents ranged from 7 to 85 years of age with the majority of respondents being male (72.6%) and female respondents being significantly less (26.6%). Almost half (48.2%) of respondents have only been members of the organization for less than five years. Twenty-six percent have been members between 5 and 10 years, 17.8% of respondents from 11 to 20 years, and 5% of respondents have been members for more than 20 years. The average income of respondents was between $80,000 and $99,999 per year.

Location: Texas members made up 47.7% of responses and members outside the state of Texas made up 52.3% of responses.

Reliability Measurements: All three relationship dimensions (personal, professional and community) had good to high reliabilities with both the professional and personal relationship scales indicating highly reliable Cronbach alpha coefficients of .91 and .93, respectively. The community relationship scale alpha coefficient was .80.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis 1. Members who believe face-to-face communication is important will participate in more TLBAA events. Hypothesis 1 was supported. The results indicate a weak but statistically significant correlation. Table 1 displays Pearson correlations between membership attendance and participation at shows, sales and events and the membership’s feelings regarding face-to-face communication. Members who attend and actively participate in
shows, sales and other events look upon face-to-face communication more positively than those who do not attend events or actively participate.

**Table 2. Correlations between Attendance/Participation and Face-to-Face Communication.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attended</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows</td>
<td>-.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>-.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Events</td>
<td>-.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actively Participated</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows</td>
<td>-.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>-.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Events</td>
<td>-.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.01  
** Negative numbers reflect the valence of the survey instrument. The 5 point Likert scale used indicated 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Disagree and 5=Strongly Disagree. The smaller the number, the more positive the response.

**Hypothesis 2. Members will prefer to speak face-to-face with upper management.**

A Kruskal-Wallis test reveals no statistically significant data for Chairman of the Board, Regional Director, President/CEO, Director of Finance, Director of Promotions and Events, Field Representatives, Trails Staff and Other variables (T=7.034, DF=7). Thus, the hypothesis was not supported. Since the data was approaching significance, a larger sample size could possibly provide enough statistical significance to detect a difference. Table 2 shows that means were in a direction counter to the original hypothesis.

**Table 3. Means Regarding Staff Preference.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Member</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairman of the Board</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Director</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President/ CEO</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Finance</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Promotion and Events</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Representatives</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trails Staff  |  3.60 |  2.00  
Other       |  3.84 |  2.72  

** The 5 point Likert scale used indicated 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Disagree and 5=Strongly Disagree. The smaller the number, the more positive the response.

Hypothesis 3. **Face-to-face communication is more important to the TLBAA membership than other means of communication.** Results indicate that face-to-face communication (M=2.24; SD=1.20) is more important to the membership than telephone (M=2.34; SD=1.06), e-mail (M= 2.70; SD=1.15), or handwritten letter (M=2.54; SD=1.10). Note that because of the scale valence smaller numbers mean stronger agreement to questionnaire items. Additionally, the highest percentage of respondents (40.8%) prefers face-to-face communication.

Participants were also asked if they believe face-to-face communication to be important to the success of the organization and if they feel more connected to the organization as a result of face-to-face communication. In answer to both questions the average number of participants agreed, with mean scores of 2.14 and 2.19 respectively. When these two questions (Q. 16 and Q.17) were combined as a scale, the coefficient alpha reliability was .77.

Hypothesis 4. **Since the TLBAA has a high regard for face-to-face communication and makes every effort to portray this to the membership, the membership will in turn feel it has a good overall relationship with the organization.** Professional relationship (M=2.30; SD=.834), personal relationship (M=2.36; SD=.891) and community relationship (M=2.20; SD=.794) scales show that overall, the TLBAA membership perceives itself as having a good relationship with the organization. The negative valence of the 5-point Likert scale provides counter-intuitive data. Means closer to 1 indicate more agreeable responses and means closer to 5 indicate more disagreeable responses (1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor
disagree, 4=Disagree and 5=Strongly Disagree). A one-way ANOVA was performed to determine whether any of the three relationships were more important than another. Results show no significant differences between any of the three relationship variables: community relationship (F=0.481, df=333 p=.488), personal relationship (F=1.196, df=329 p=.275) and professional relationship (F=.854, df=328 p=.356).

**Research Question 1. Is the importance of face-to-face communication related to membership proximity to the TLBAA office?** Proximity of the survey respondent to the TLBAA office was determined by the postmarked return envelope. The city most centrally located in the state from where the envelope was mailed was entered into www.mapquest.com. The mileage between that particular city and that of the TLBAA home office, located in Fort Worth, Texas, was then calculated and entered as data. Data analysis reveals there is not a significant correlation between face-to-face communication and membership proximity to the TLBAA office (r = -.053, p = .345). Surprisingly, while geographical proximity did not appear to have an effect upon membership perception of face-to-face communication, Texas members compared to non-Texas members did show a statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

Travel outside the state of Texas is a large part of TLBAA public relations efforts. Therefore, to determine if differences exist between Texas member and non-Texas member responses, a T-test was performed on the telephone, e-mail, face-to-face and handwritten letter variables. Analysis revealed significantly different perceptions about telephone interaction and handwritten letter, with perceptions about e-mail approaching significance (i.e., p=.52).
Table 4. T-test Statistics (Texas vs. Non-Texas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>TX</th>
<th>Non-TX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-statistic</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handwritten letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-statistic</td>
<td>-2.31</td>
<td>-2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-statistic</td>
<td>-1.95</td>
<td>-1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Texas members ranked the telephone as less important than non-Texas members (TX, M=2.47; Non-TX, M=2.14). Interestingly, Texas members ranked e-mail (TX, M=2.63; Non-TX, M=2.90) and handwritten letter (TX, M=2.43; Non-TX, M=2.75) as more important than non-Texas members.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

This study finds that relationship management in the form of face-to-face communication is linked to member satisfaction with the organization and accepts Bruning and Ledingham’s (2000) assertion that organization-public relationship research of different industries and key publics provides practitioners with support for the notion that management of relationships is important. Bruning and Ledingham’s (1999) “multiple measure, multi-dimensional scale” (p.441) establishes three different types of organization-public relationships: community, professional and personal. The scale also provides public relations scholars and practitioners with a valuable tool for collecting data related to the management of organization-public relationships, and Bruning and Ledingham propose that strategies be established for the management of community, professional and personal relationships within organizations’ publics. Face-to-face communication is suggested by this research as one relationship management strategy in response to Bruning and Ledingham’s (1999) proposition.

In addition, the three types of relationships within the scale may not necessarily be mutually exclusive; therefore, it may be somewhat challenging to determine strategies for managing each type of relationship individually. For instance, a personal relationship may develop into a professional relationship and may still contain elements of both types of relationships. In fact, certain instances may show professional, personal and community relationships to be juxtaposed. Nonetheless, regardless of the type of relationship in question, the value of a strong, harmonious relationship between an organization and its membership has
been well established. Bruning and Ledingham’s scale provides an exceptional way to measure critical dimensions of the organization-public relationship: trust, openness, involvement, investment, commitment, reciprocity, mutual legitimacy and mutual understanding. Face-to-face communication should be just one part (arguably a large part) of a complete public relations package utilized in the management of organization-public relationships. The following discussion further explains the results of this study.

An investigation of hypothesis 1 confirms association members who believe face-to-face communication is important appear to attend and actively participate in more TLBAA events. However, further research is necessary to determine the cause and effect relationship between face-to-face communication and membership participation. Possible reasons for the correlation could include: 1.) More active members may realize the importance of face-to-face communication by being involved and non-active members may not realize the importance of face-to-face communication due to their inactivity. Active members may see how making contacts and connections with other members of the association is beneficial to them while non-active members do not have the same interaction opportunities. 2.) Less active members may have different motivations for belonging to the organization. For example, a member whose primary purpose with the TLBAA is to simply register his or her animals assumedly would not be concerned with meeting or forming relationships with other members of the organization. This is the perfect example of an inactive public that could be targeted and shown benefits of being highly involved with the association.

Relationship management between TLBAA members and TLBAA staff is examined in hypothesis 2, which states members will prefer to speak with upper management. Though lacking in statistical significance, means indicate a direction contrary to the original hypothesis.
Perhaps a larger sample size would provide enough statistical significance to detect a difference. Regardless, it was surprising to see numbers suggesting members prefer to speak with lower ranking staff members taking into consideration the assumption that most people prefer to speak with management who they may feel have the authority to take care of problems. One possible reason for these results is that upper management may not be developing relationships among the membership like the staff who interact with members on a more personal basis. Bruning and Ledingham’s three relationship variables may factor into this notion. For instance, higher management may have a more professional relationship with the membership whereas other staff members could have a more personal relationship with individual members. Respondents may also feel a more personal connection to staff members whom they see and interact with at events over and over again such as Field Representatives or the Director of Promotions and Events. The more a member interacts with a particular staff member, the greater the opportunities for building trust, dependence and openness with that particular individual. Furthermore, a member may or may not feel comfortable speaking with someone in a management position depending upon the member’s personality.

Hypothesis 3 specifically investigates the importance of face-to-face communication to the TLBAA membership as opposed to other means of communication. Results from this study bolster Leeds-Hurwitz’ (1995) argument that when it comes to interpersonal communication, face-to-face communication is important. Not only does the highest percentage of TLBAA members prefer face-to-face communication, but members also believe it to be more important than telephone, e-mail or handwritten letters. Respondents also feel more connected to the organization as a result of face-to-face communication.
It stands to reason that a membership that feels more connected to its organization will be more likely to continue in its relationship. Key relationship management strategies should include face-to-face communication in order to maintain individual’s connectedness with the organization.

The TLBAA makes every effort to maintain a good rapport with its membership. Hypothesis 4 investigates this assertion by determining if the membership feels it has a good overall relationship with the TLBAA. Office staff and employees of the association attend shows, sales and events in order to interact with the membership as much as possible. Staff members make themselves easily accessible to the members. This way member questions and concerns are addressed in a timely manner, and any rumors can be dispelled before getting out of hand. Additionally, the association’s Trails magazine is another way interpersonal communication is used. The Trails staff attends events, and these employees are especially interactive with members. They take pictures and write stories of interest for the membership as a whole. This type of relationship management appears to be working for the TLBAA. Overall, the membership appears to have a good relationship with the association. It is the position of this study that face-to-face communication plays a role in membership satisfaction with the association.

Research question 1 asks whether the importance of face-to-face communication is related to membership proximity to the TLBAA office. Geographical proximity was not found to have any statistically significant bearing on members’ preference for face-to-face communication. However, data analysis of Texas members versus non-Texas members’ attitudes concerning method of communication did provide evidence of a difference.
The telephone appeared to be less important to Texas members than non-Texas members. In contrast, handwritten letter and e-mail appeared to be more important to Texas members than non-Texas members. One might assume the information obtained relates to membership activity level instead of where the member resides. For instance, if the largest majority of highly active members reside in Texas, then they may not need to call the TLBAA office as often as non-Texas members. Highly active members may be more likely to see staff members and may also be more likely to e-mail a short note to the office as opposed to picking up the telephone and making a long-distance phone call. Since e-mail sometimes takes the place of a handwritten letter for convenience sake, it may be assumed that handwritten letters are only used in cases where a member wants to make a more personal contact with the association. The member may feel that an e-mail does not have the same forceful effect as a handwritten letter. For example, writing a letter by hand implies that the member took his or her time to add a personal touch to the chosen method of communication.

**Study Limitations**

There were several limitations to this study. First was the low response rate (15.9%). Due to time and budget restraints, follow-up phone calls were severely limited and a “reminder card” could not be mailed. Perhaps without these limiting factors, a stronger response rate could have been obtained.

The second study limitation was personal employment with the association. Initially, it was assumed that employment would be beneficial to the study because of the possibility of members’ willingness to help a college student. On the other hand, many members may have doubted the confidentiality of the survey. Some respondents may have had concerns that their comments would somehow be seen by TLBAA management, although members were
guaranteed anonymity and surveys were never taken to the TLBAA office or viewed by any TLBAA staff other than myself. These respondents may have simply not wanted to take any chances.

The type of association researched was a third limitation to the study. All nonprofit, membership organizations differ. This particular association, a cattle breed association, is comprised mainly of an agricultural membership based largely in the state of Texas. It is likely other nonprofits have a membership more evenly dispersed across the United States. Also, some nonprofits may have more interaction with their members than other nonprofits. Members of organizations have different motivations for being involved in their chosen organizations. Thus, a study of only one type of nonprofit organization lacks the well-rounded information that a study of different types of nonprofits might present.

**Implications for Further Research**

The research contained in this thesis provides several areas for further research. First, there are many different types of nonprofit organizations; many of which have offices scattered across the country. The organization used for this study was a breed association and has only one office centrally located in Fort Worth, Texas. Future research could be done with other types of nonprofit organizations in order to determine if differences exist among various types of nonprofit organizations.

Second, this research indicates that there is definitely a relationship between face-to-face communication and membership participation in the association. Members who believe face-to-face communication is important appear to attend and actively participate in more TLBAA events than those members who do not believe face-to-face communication is important. Future
research might determine an exact cause and effect relationship between face-to-face communication and membership participation.

Third, the highest percentage of respondents prefers face-to-face communication and perceives it as more important than telephone, e-mail or handwritten letters. Future studies could investigate further whether face-to-face communication is or is not vital to a membership organization. These findings are specifically related to relationship management. Without this type of management, associations cannot exist. Relationships between association members and association employees must be cultivated in order to maintain a strong and successful organization. Perhaps further research could study in more detail if public relations efforts are lacking if face-to-face communication is not an integral part of those efforts.

Fourth, interaction between employees and association members is a daily occurrence among membership organizations. This study found that members do not necessarily prefer to speak with upper management. When it comes to relationship management, it is important for organizations to decide on the best way to interact with members. Knowing with whom members prefer to speak and interact with could prove invaluable to a membership organization.

Conclusion

Face-to-face communication plays a significant role in the relationship findings of this study. The data reveals the TLBAA does have a good relationship with the TLBAA members and that the respondents who have a good relationship with the TLBAA also tend to believe face-to-face communication is important to the success of the TLBAA.

What does all of this information mean to the field of public relations? First, this research suggests face-to-face communication is important to membership organizations.
Second, for practitioners in these organizations, it means that face-to-face communication cannot be undervalued in the business of establishing, building and maintaining relationships.

The study indicates that investing monetarily in face-to-face communication may be valuable and offers several suggestions for future research opportunities. Supervisors and managers alike need to have solid evidence in order to justify sufficient public relations’ budgets to their board of directors and/or administrators. Though this study was lacking in statistical significance and strong correlations, it does suggest a definite link between face-to-face communication and membership satisfaction with the organization studied. Ultimately, this research provides several areas for the further investigation of face-to-face communication between organizations and publics. Hopefully, it will prompt further face-to-face communication research in the field of public relations.
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Appendix A. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

Self-Actualization Needs
  Fulfillment of potential

Esteem Needs
  Self-esteem, prestige,
  fame, glory, recognition

Belongingness Needs
  Affection, group membership,
  Family, need for love

Safety Needs
  Protection, security, stability,
  Freedom from fear, need for order, law

Physiological Needs
  Bodily needs: food, water,
  sleep, sex

Appendix B. The Deeper Levels of Face-to-Face Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE DEEPER LEVELS OF FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION COMPONENTS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONAL SENSIBLE BODILY COMPONENTS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proxemics and touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other body sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical: natural odor, tears, sweat, gas, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dermal: blushing, blanching, goose flesh, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thermal: body temperature rises, falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonbehavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stillness</td>
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<td><strong>Nonactivities</strong></td>
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<td>Nonbehavioral</td>
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<td><strong>PERSONAL SENSIBLE BODY-RELATED COMPONENTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Static display and/or behavioral manifestations of</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static display</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and/or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manifestations of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE COMPONENTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body-adopters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, drink, masticatories, tobacco, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfume, cosmetics, lotions, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes, jewelry, eyeglasses, pipe, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object-adopters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pen, pipe, crumbs, lint, newspaper, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anatomical furniture, desk, car, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental elements: sand, grass, water, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONAL INTELLIGIBLE COMPONENTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real or imagined mental activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age, personality, mood, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture, status, religious &amp; moral values, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonactivities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SSENSIBLE OBJECTUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contextual or interfering activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior-conditioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door knocking/bell, door slamming, phone, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passers-by, footsteps, traffic, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other behavior-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music, radio, TV, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interfering activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games, cooking smells, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clocks, machinery, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rain, wind, water, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contextual or interfering nonactivities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective environment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture, rugs, piano, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorative items, books, photos, mementos, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural volumes, spaces, textures, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colors, lighting, temperature, music, smells, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bound</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functions: intrapersonal, interpersonal, contextual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encoding: interpersonal, environmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semantic-communicative encoding: zero, involuntary, faulty, incorrect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decoding: absent, zero, zero-sign, false</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1. The components of face-to-face interaction types, qualifiers, functions and problems.
Appendix C. Human Subjects Approval Form

Approval Form

Date Proposal Received: 2004-07-13

Project Number: 2005-10014-0

Name: Ms. Stephanie Ray
Title: PI
Dept/Phone: Advertising and Public Relations
Address: 1200 Robert Hardeman Rd. Lot #41
Email: sur2828@hotmail.com

Name: Dr. Jeffrey Springston
Title: CO
Dept/Phone: Advertising and Public Relations
Address: 223A Journalism Building, 3018
Email: jspring@uga.edu

Title of Study: A Study on the Effects of Face-to-Face Communication Between a Non-Profit Organization and Its Membership

45 CFR 46 Category: Administrative
Parameters:
Waiver of Signed Consent 46.117 (c) (3);

Change(s) Required for Approval and Date Completed: 2004-07-28


NOTE: Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end date collection date shown above is not covered by IRB approval, and cannot be retroactively approved.

Number Assigned by Sponsored Programs:

Funding Agency:

Form 310 Provided: No

Your human subjects study has been approved.

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to inform the IRB:
... of any adverse events or unanticipated risks to the subjects or others within 24 to 72 hours;
... of any significant changes or additions to your study and obtain approval of them before they are put into effect;
... that you need to extend the approval period beyond the expiration date shown above;
... that you have completed your data collection as approved, within the approval period shown above, so that your file may be closed.

For additional information regarding your responsibilities as an investigator refer to the IRB Guidelines.
Use the attached Researcher Request Form for requesting renewals, changes, or closures.
Keep this original approval form for your records.

Christina A. Joseph, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board
# Appendix D. Researcher Request Form

## RESEARCHER REQUEST FORM

**Request Date:** 2004-07-13  
**Project Number:** 2005-10014-0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Dept/Phone</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Stephanie Ray</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Advertising and Public Relations Journalism=3018</td>
<td>1200 Robert Hearnaman Rd. Lot 441 Winterville, GA 30683 (706) 282-5870</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sm2828@hotmail.com">sm2828@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Jeffrey Springfield</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Advertising and Public Relations</td>
<td>223A Journalism Building =3018 542-3509</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jspring@uga.edu">jspring@uga.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Title of Study:** A Study on the Effects of Face-to-Face Communication Between a Non-Profit Organization and Its Membership

**45 CFR 46 Category:** Administrative  
**Renew:** No  
**Change(s):**


**NOTE:** Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end date collection date shown above is not covered by IRB approval and cannot be retroactively approved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Assigned by Sponsored Programs:</th>
<th>Funding Agency:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Form 310 Provided:** No

---

**Attention, Principal Investigator!**

You must complete and return this form before the expiration date shown above. Failure to receive a notification that it is time to renew does not relieve you of your responsibility to provide our office with a request to renew in a timely manner.

1. **Changes**  
   For approval of changes you must complete and sign the back of this form. (Also attach a copy of any revised instruments or consent forms, with changes highlighted, where applicable.)

2. **Renewals**  
   For an extension of the approval period you must complete and sign the back of this form.

3. **Closure**  
   Data collection has been completed as approved by the IRB, and this file can now be closed. Federal laws & UGA policies require notification of completion of data collection.
Appendix E. TLBAA Approval Letter

June 24, 2004

To whom it may concern,

We at the Texas Longhorn Breeder’s Association of America give Stephanie Ray our permission to distribute a questionnaire to all active members in our Association and record the results of her survey in a thesis entitled “A Study on the Effects of Face-to-Face Communication between a Non-Profit Organization and Its Membership”.

Sincerely,

SuzAnn Spindor
Director of Finance
Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America
suzann@tlbbaa.org
(817)625-6241
Appendix F. Survey Instrument

OVERVIEW

Dear TLBA Member,

Thank you for taking valuable time out of your busy schedule to fill out this short survey. The survey is specifically designed to only take about 15 or 20 minutes to complete, and your participation is much appreciated. Please remember that your answers are completely confidential.

Stephanie Ray

Section 1 - Professional Relationship Questions

Q1. The TLBA is involved in activities that promote the welfare of its members.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

Q2. The TLBA acts in a socially responsible manner.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

Q3. The TLBA is aware of what I want as a member.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

Q4. The TLBA sees my interests and the organization's interests as the same.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree
Q5. I think the TLBAA is willing to devote resources to maintain its relationship with me.
   □ Strongly Agree
   □ Agree
   □ Neither Agree nor Disagree
   □ Disagree
   □ Strongly Disagree

Q6. The TLBAA is quick to resolve concerns that I bring to their attention.
   □ Strongly Agree
   □ Agree
   □ Neither Agree nor Disagree
   □ Disagree
   □ Strongly Disagree

Section 2 - Personal Relationship Questions

Q7. I feel I can trust the TLBAA to do what it says it will do.
   □ Strongly Agree
   □ Agree
   □ Neither Agree nor Disagree
   □ Disagree
   □ Strongly Disagree

Q8. The TLBAA seems to be the kind of organization that invests in its members.
   □ Strongly Agree
   □ Agree
   □ Neither Agree nor Disagree
   □ Disagree
   □ Strongly Disagree

Q9. The TLBAA demonstrates an interest in me as a person.
   □ Strongly Agree
   □ Agree
   □ Neither Agree nor Disagree
   □ Disagree
   □ Strongly Disagree

Q10. The TLBAA understands me as a member.
    □ Strongly Agree
    □ Agree
    □ Neither Agree nor Disagree
    □ Disagree
    □ Strongly Disagree

Q11. I feel I have a good relationship with the TLBAA.
    □ Strongly Agree
    □ Agree
    □ Neither Agree nor Disagree
    □ Disagree
    □ Strongly Disagree
Section 3 - Community Relationship Questions

Q12. The TLBAA provides information about its plans for the future to anyone who asks.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Q13. I feel the TLBAA supports events that are of interest to all of its members.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Q14. The TLBAA actively publicizes its plans for the future.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Section 4 - Communication Questions

Q15. Rank order your most to least preferred method of communication. (1=Most preferred; 4=Least preferred)
___ Telephone
___ Email
___ Face-to-Face
___ Handwritten Letter

Q16. I believe face-to-face communication is important to the success of the TLBAA.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Q17. I feel more connected to the TLBAA as a result of engaging in face-to-face communication with its staff members.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Have had no face-to-face communication
Q18. I feel that the TLBAA takes time to listen to my questions and concerns at all TLBAA events.

☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Not Applicable

Q19. Please indicate below how many shows, sales or other events you have ATTENDED in the past year.

☐ Shows
☐ Sales
☐ Field days or other events

Q20. Please indicate below how many sales, shows or other events you have ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED in the past year.

☐ Shows
☐ Sales
☐ Field days or other events

Q21. I look forward to visiting with the TLBAA office staff at shows, sales and events.

☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Q22. My ultimate decision to join the TLBAA was a direct result of speaking with a member of the TLBAA office staff face-to-face.

☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Have had no face-to-face communication

Q23. Please number in order from most to least preferred whom you would like to see and speak with at TLBAA events.

(1=Most preferred; 7=Least preferred.)

☐ Chairman of the Board
☐ Regional Director
☐ President/CEO
☐ Director of Finance
☐ Director of Promotions and Events
☐ Field Representatives
☐ Trail Staff
☐ Other
Q24. I feel it is difficult to initiate conversation with the TLBAA staff.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Q25. I feel the TLBAA does a good job of initiating conversations with me.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Not Applicable

Section 5 - New Member Communication: If you have been a TLBAA member for more than one year, please skip to Section 6.

Q26. The TLBAA staff seemed genuinely interested in my becoming a member of the TLBAA.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Q27. The TLBAA staff asked me about my program and shared information on how to improve my program or directed me to someone who could.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Q28. The TLBAA staff talked to me as if I were already an important member.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Q29. The TLBAA staff shared important information with me concerning the organization before I became a member.
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree
Q30. I feel the TLBAA staff engaged in an open and honest face-to-face conversation concerning my possible membership in the TLBAA.
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Have had no face-to-face communication

Q31. The TLBAA staff shared information on how I could become a member.
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Q32. After my first conversation with a staff member of the TLBAA, I felt free to speak face-to-face with a TLBAA staff member at a later date.
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Q33. After my first conversation with a staff member of the TLBAA, I felt that I had established a relationship with the TLBAA staff.
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Section 6 - Demographics

Q34. How many head of cattle do you currently own?
   ___ Head

Q35. Please rank order from most to least your primary interests concerning your Texas Longhorn cattle. (1=Most preferred; 6=Least preferred)
   ___ I raise Texas Longhorns for seedstock.
   ___ I raise Texas Longhorns for the show circuit.
   ___ I raise Texas Longhorns for their horn and/or color value.
   ___ I raise Texas Longhorns as a hobby.
   ___ I raise Texas Longhorns for beef.
   ___ I raise Texas Longhorns for roping and/or commercial purposes.

Q36. What is your age?
   ___ Years
Q37. What is your sex?
   ___ Male
   ___ Female

Q38. How long have you been a member of the TLBA?
   □ Less than five years
   □ 5-10 years
   □ 11-20 years
   □ More than 20 years

Q39. What is your total household income?
   □ Less than $25,000
   □ $25,001-39,999
   □ $40,000-59,999
   □ $60,000-79,999
   □ $80,000-99,999
   □ $100,000 or higher
   □ I do not wish to provide this information

Please feel free to supply any additional comments regarding your communication with the TLBA.

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

SUMMARY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Your response has been most helpful.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q.1 The TLBAA is involved in activities that promote the welfare of its members.</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.2 The TLBAA acts in a socially responsible manner.</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>0.87</td>
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<td>Q.3 The TLBAA is aware of what I want as a member.</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.4 The TLBAA sees my interests and the organization’s interests as the same.</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.08</td>
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<td>Q.5 I think the TLBAA is willing to devote resources to maintain its relationship with me.</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.6 The TLBAA is quick to resolve concerns that I bring to their attention.</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.7 I feel I can trust the TLBAA to do what it says it will do.</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>0.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.8 The TLBAA seems to be the kind of organization that invests in its members.</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.9 The TLBAA demonstrates an interest in me as a person.</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.10 The TLBAA understands me as a member.</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.11 I feel I have a good relationship with the TLBAA.</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>0.89</td>
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<td>Q.12 The TLBAA provides information about its plans for the future to anyone who asks.</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>0.89</td>
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<td>Q.13 I feel the TLBAA supports events that are of interest to all of its members.</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.14 The TLBAA actively publicizes its plans for the future.</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.15 Rank order your most to least preferred method of communication.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handwritten Letter</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.16 I believe face-to-face communication is important to the success of the TLBAA.</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.17 I feel more connected to the TLBAA as a result of engaging in face-to-face communication with its staff members.</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>0.95</td>
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<td>Question</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.18 I feel that the TLBAA takes time to listen to my questions and</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concerns at all TLBAA events.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.19 Please indicate how many sales, shows or other events you</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have ATTENDED in the past year.</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>3.49</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.20 Please indicate how many sales, shows or other events you</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED in the past year.</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>3.14</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.21 I look forward to visiting with the TLBAA office staff at shows,</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sales and events.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.22 My ultimate decision to join the TLBAA was a direct result of</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaking with a member of the TLBAA office staff face-to-face.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.23 Please number in order from most to least preferred whom you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would like to see and speak with at TLBAA events.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.24 I feel it is difficult to initiate conversation with the TLBAA</td>
<td>3.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.25 I feel the TLBAA does a good job of initiating conversations with</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

** 5 point Likert scale indicates 1=Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Disagree and 5=Strongly Disagree.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.34 How many head of cattle do you currently own?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45.25</td>
<td>80.07</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Q.35 Please rank in order from most to least your primary interests concerning your Texas Longhorn cattle. | Seedstock | 2.84 | 1.64 |
| Show circuit                                      | 4.19     | 1.69 |
| Horn/Color Val.                                   | 2.43     | 1.28 |
| Hobby                                            | 3.03     | 1.93 |
| Beef                                             | 3.63     | 1.61 |
| Roping/Comm.                                      | 4.17     | 1.49 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.36 What is your age?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53.54</td>
<td>11.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.37 What is your sex?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>0.45</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.38 How long have you been a member of the TLBAA?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Less than five years</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 5-10 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>3. 11-20 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. More than 20 years</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.39 What is your total household income?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Less than $25,000.00</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. $25,001-39,999</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. $40,000-59,999</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. $60,000-79,999</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. $80,000-99,999</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. $100,000 or higher</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I do not wish to provide this information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>