

LEADER DISTANCE OF EXTENSION SPECIALISTS AS EXPERIENCED DURING
THE BEEF CATTLE SHORT COURSE

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore the concept of leader distance related to extension specialists as experienced at the 2013 Texas A&M AgriLife Beef Cattle Short Course. Participants' perception of distance between themselves and extension specialists could affect their satisfaction with the instructors and the program overall. The perception of distance between participants and specialists was explored through evaluation of the Beef Cattle Short Course via quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data.

Evaluations for the Beef Cattle Short Course included two measures of perceived distance. Participants perceive low levels of distance between themselves and specialists. The measure of distance relating to the availability of the specialists was not significantly correlated to the customer satisfaction rating of the instructors and of the Beef Cattle Short Course overall. The measure of distance relating to the approachability of the specialists was significantly correlated ($p < .01$) to the customer satisfaction rating of the instructors and to overall customer satisfaction with the Beef Cattle Short Course.

Qualitative interviews with six of the beef cattle extension specialists who present at the Beef Cattle Short Course revealed a low level of distance between themselves and participants. Specialists intentionally create low levels of distance by being physically available and relating to participants with shared experience and shared language.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to every student who has tried, failed, and tried again.

You seek a great fortune... You will find a fortune, though it will not be the one you seek. But first... first you must travel a long and difficult road, a road fraught with peril. You shall see things, wonderful to tell. I cannot tell you how long this road shall be, but fear not the obstacles in your path, for fate has vouchsafed your reward. Though the road may wind, yea, your hearts grow weary, still shall ye follow them, even unto your salvation. — Blind Seer, O Brother, Where Art Thou?

If you haven't threatened to quit at least five times, you're not trying hard enough. —

Dr. Billy McKim

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Setting

Commonly regarded as the largest adult education institution in the United States, the Cooperative Extension Service (Griffith, 1991) should know what factors contribute to customer satisfaction with its programs. One factor that could be correlated with customer satisfaction of Extension programs is the accessibility of the instructors to participants. Faculty accessibility has been correlated to student evaluations and overall satisfaction with undergraduate students and adult learners alike. The notion of faculty accessibility can be aligned with the concept of leader distance, an idea that incorporates accessibility as a determinant of relationships between leaders and followers and is correlated with follower satisfaction.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension) is a statewide educational agency that is a member of the Texas A&M University System. The mission of AgriLife Extension is to “provide quality, relevant outreach and continuing educational programs and services to the people of Texas” (“Compact with Texans,” n.d., para.1). The agency is partnered with the national Cooperative Extension System and county governments in Texas and has offices in 250 of Texas’ 254 counties. Extension educators deliver research-based educational programs in the areas of agriculture, environmental stewardship, youth and adult life skills, human capital and

leadership, and community and economic development. AgriLife Extension had 25 million direct teaching contacts in fiscal year (FY) 2013 (“Who We Are,” n.d.).

According to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Strategic Plan Executive Summary for FY2016-FY2020 (n.d.), customer satisfaction with educational activities is data used as evidence of success. Customer Satisfaction data is “. . .the most universal collection of data, utilized across all programmatic areas and applied uniformly to participants. This data serves as a strong indicator of future program impacts, and serves to meet the mandated performance measures of the LBB [Legislative Budget Board]” (AgriLife Extension Strategic Plan Executive Summary, n.d., p. 13). The collection of this data is required by the State of Texas Legislative Budget Board. Participants in extension activities are asked to evaluate the program and respond to a statement regarding their overall satisfaction with the program. AgriLife Extension computes an Overall Customer Satisfaction value each year based on all evaluations received. The Overall Customer Satisfaction value for FY 2013 was 4.55 and the most recent data, FY 2015, was 4.59 (“Overall Satisfaction,” n.d.).

Beef Cattle Industry

Extension programs targeted to beef cattle producers are of particular importance given the role beef cattle production plays in U.S. agriculture. The 2012 Census of Agriculture (USDA, 2012) reports cattle sales totaling \$76.3 billion and accounting for 19.4 percent of all agricultural products sold in the United States, second only to grain and oilseeds (33.2 percent). Farms that specialize in beef cattle account for 35.2 percent of all farms and are the most common type of operation in the United States (USDA,

2012). The state of Texas leads the nation in cattle production (“Texas Ag Stats,” 2016). Cattle is the top agricultural commodity in the state of Texas with a total of \$10.5 billion in cash receipts in 2012 (“Texas Ag Stats,” 2016).

Beef Cattle Short Course

The Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course (BCSC) began in 1942 under the direction of Dr. John K. Riggs (“History of the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course,” 2013). The goal of the short course was to share beef cattle research results from the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station with beef producers in Texas. The BCSC has taken place nearly every year since its inception, with 2013 being the 59th annual event. Short courses were not held during the World War II years and several years in the 1980s when the focus was on multiple agricultural species rather than solely on beef cattle. Participation in the redesigned Animal Agricultural Conference declined until Dr. Larry Boleman was charged with reviving the BCSC in 1990.

After the revival of the traditional BCSC, participation has increased to an all-time high of 2000 participants in 1995. Since 2005, Dr. Jason Cleere has served as the Coordinator for the BCSC, typically welcoming 1400 – 1500 participants to the Texas A&M campus each year. The Texas A&M BCSC is regarded as the largest attended beef cattle educational program of its type in the world.

The BCSC takes place at the beginning of August each year, convening on Monday morning and dismissing on Wednesday at noon. The current structure of the BCSC consists of concurrent break-out sessions Monday morning, Tuesday morning, Tuesday afternoon, and Wednesday morning. Monday afternoon consists of the general

session for all attendees. Concurrent sessions are coordinated by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Beef Cattle Specialists and consist of educational presentations by the specialists themselves or industry professionals over a variety of subjects. Sessions on Monday and Tuesday are held in the Rudder Theatre Complex and are structured in a classroom type setting. Sessions on Wednesday morning are typically more ‘hands-on’ demonstration based and are held at seven different locations across the A&M campus.

Monday evening a prime rib dinner is hosted for all attendees, often welcoming many dignitaries including college deans, agency directors, the Chancellors of the Texas A&M University System, and the President of Texas A&M. The BCSC hosts a trade show throughout the day on Monday and Tuesday in the Rudder Complex Exhibit Hall. The trade show is comprised of 125 allied industry partners (“History of the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course,” 2013).

Purpose of the Study and Research Objectives

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the role of leader distance (instructor accessibility) in a state-level extension program for beef cattle producers.

Specifically, the following objectives will guide this study:

1. Explore the concept of leader distance in an educational context (instructor accessibility).
2. Describe the relationship between perceived instructor accessibility and customer satisfaction of the BCSC.
3. Explore how extension beef cattle specialists perceive, approach, and have experienced leader distance while at the BCSC.

Significance of the Study

This study will add to the body of knowledge about leader distance and faculty accessibility. Findings describe the characteristics and behaviors of faculty in extension related to distance and accessibility.

This study will add to the body of knowledge related to customer satisfaction in extension. Currently, the few studies that explore correlations to customer satisfaction in extension have focused on client and/or agent traits (Terry & Israel, 2004; Israel & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2009; Strong & Israel, 2009), communication/contact method (Galindo-Gonzalez & Israel, 2010), and components of service quality (Terry & Israel, 2004). This study investigated the participants' perceptions about extension specialists as related to customer satisfaction, both with instructors and with the program overall, which has not been explored to date. Findings from this study can inform extension personnel of attributes and behaviors that have a significant connection to customer satisfaction ratings, ratings which are critical for Texas extension. Findings could also inform practice of extension personnel.

Basic Assumptions

1. Respondents completed the evaluation honestly and objectively.
2. Interviewees responded openly and honestly to interview questions.

Limitations

1. Data was collected from participants at the BSCS and conclusions and implications are limited to BCSC participants.

2. Data was collected from extension specialists and conclusions and implications are limited to the interviewed specialists.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Literature related to the accessibility of a leader to a follower and the resulting satisfaction of the follower will be presented. The leader-follower relationship can exist between superiors and subordinates in an organizational context and between teachers and students in an educational context.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)

Within the realm of leadership there are three domains: the leader, the follower, and the relationship between them. Of the theories focused on the relationship between leaders and followers, the most often cited is Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX focuses on the dyadic relationship characterized by trust, respect, and mutual obligation and is often treated as a prescription for creating effective leadership through mature relationships (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Lower quality LMX is analogous to transactional leadership (Bass & Stogdill, 1990) in that the relationship is solely based on a material exchange, essentially goods for services (fulfilment of a contractual agreement) and is more akin to ‘managership’ or ‘supervision’ (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Higher quality LMX is analogous to Bass’ (1985) transformational leadership in that the relationship reflects a partnership characterized by mutual reciprocal influence (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). The significant difference between qualities of LMX is the amount of social exchange that takes place. Social exchange is based on interactions and results in trust, support, approval and esteem (Graen & Uhl-

Bien, 1995). Likewise, Dulebohn, Bommer, Liden, Brouer, and Ferris (2012) found that the quality of LMX relationships can be influenced by three aspects: contingent reward behavior, transformational leadership, and expectations of follower success. High quality LMX relationships are built upon social exchanges that are more apt to take place when leaders and followers are in closer physical proximity and can interact face-to-face (Sparrowe & Linden, 1997). These high quality LMX relationships result in positive benefits for leaders and followers. Graen, Novak, and Sommerkamp (1982) found that LMX is significantly correlated to subordinate satisfaction. Gerstner and Day (1997), in a meta-analytic review of LMX research, also found significant correlation between LMX relationships and attitudinal outcomes such as satisfaction with supervision and overall satisfaction in an organizational context. Additionally, there is empirical evidence of a significant correlation between LMX and follower performance (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999).

Transformational Leadership

High quality LMX is associated with transformational leadership (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership is a process focused on followers, considering their motivations, values and needs, and improving their morality, thereby transforming both followers and the leader (Northouse, 2013). There are four factors in transformational leadership: individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (Avolio, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991). Individualized consideration takes each follower's specific needs into account and works to develop their confidence and performance. Intellectual stimulation encourages

followers to challenge the way they think about a variety of situations, from technical problems to personal values. This process can be two-way, where leaders are open to being stimulated by followers and their thinking. Inspirational motivation is often characterized by leaders who serve as role models, remain optimistic when facing challenges, give pep talks, and encourage a shared vision. Individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation couple to strengthen inspirational motivation as followers feel more known, valued, and confident as a result of the leader's actions. Idealized influence is often thought of as charisma and refers to the development of trust and respect for a leader based on the strong example they set forth. Followers have a strong emotional connection to the leader and want to emulate them (Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino, 1991).

Although LMX and transformational leadership are linked from a relationship standpoint, not all components are related. The individualized consideration and idealized influence characteristics of transformational leadership are related to LMX; however, since not all components are related, transformational leadership cannot be compared to LMX as a composite (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

Leader Distance

The concept of leader distance, although first discussed over 100 years ago, has only developed as a distinct area of study within the past 35 years (Lewandowski & Lisk, 2013). Leader distance is not a result of the leadership context, rather it is (at least partially) created by those in the leadership relationship (Shamir, 2013) and "... appears to be a defining element of the leadership influencing process" (Antonakis & Atwater,

2002, p. 699). Leader distance has been conceptualized in a variety of ways, most often including variations of the dimensions of physical, social, relational, and organizational distance.

Napier and Ferris (1993) proposed a framework of leader distance that includes three dimensions: psychological distance, structural distance, and functional distance. Psychological distance refers to the degree of similarity between the leader and follower (dyad). This includes demographic, cultural, power, and value differences, both actual and perceived, in the dyad and the psychological effects of these differences. Structural distance refers to the “propinquity, or opportunity for, frequency of, and type of interaction in the dyad” (Napier & Ferris, 1993, p. 327). This includes physical structure, organizational structure, and supervision structure that influence interaction. Functional distance refers to the quality and closeness of the working relationship in the dyad. This includes behavioral manifestations that are developed partially as a result of psychological and structural distance. “Logically, one can think of these psychological and structural constructs as underlying conditions that affect the nature and closeness of the working relationship between the supervisor and subordinate” (Napier & Ferris, 1993, p. 344). Functional distance can be thought of as LMX.

Antonakis and Atwater (2002) built upon the work of Napier and Ferris (1993) and conceptualized leader distance in three dimensions: leader-follower physical distance, perceived social distance, and perceived leader-follower interaction frequency. Followers perceive leaders as either ‘close’ or ‘distant’ based on the manifestations of these three dimensions in the leader’s behavior. Physical distance is simply how far or

close a leader is to their followers and is equated to the structural distance dimension of Napier and Ferris (1993). Perceived social distance is equated to Napier and Ferris' (1993) dimension of psychological distance and includes differences in power, rank, authority, social standing, and status. Perceived frequency of leader-follower interaction is how often followers perceive that they interact with their leader. This dimension is independent from physical distance and social distance in that leaders could have frequent contact with followers even if physical distance is far (the use of technology) or be proximally located but never interact with followers. Antonakis and Atwater's (2002) interaction frequency dimension is a component of structural distance as conceptualized by Napier and Ferris (1993).

Within Napier and Ferris' (1993) dimension of structural distance is the 'opportunity to interact' indicator. This aspect of distance includes the notion of leader accessibility. Followers must feel that leaders are accessible and interaction is possible, even if they choose not to interact, to decrease perceptions of distance (Napier & Ferris, 1993). Accessibility also emerged as a dimension of leadership and is a construct in the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2005) and the (Engaging) Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (Alban-Metcalfe & Alimo-Metcalfe, 2007). The accessibility construct refers not only to being physically accessible "...but also the adoption of an interpersonal style that is neither threatening, nor too formal" (Alban-Metcalfe & Alimo-Metcalfe, 2007, p. 112).

Teachers as Leaders

Leadership is applicable in nearly all contexts, including organizational, military, political, and educational. Northouse's (2013) definition of leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 5) fits the educational context in that teachers are leaders in the classroom. Quinn, as quoted in Anding (2005) states "I believe that teaching and leadership are the same process. Great teachers and great leaders use human influence to impact other people" (p. 489). Similarly, Boyd (2009) suggests that leadership educators bring theory to life in the classroom by using transformational leadership as a pedagogical approach and teaching philosophy. Boyd (2009) makes the case for transformational teaching, a term not often used in pedagogical discussions but typically referred to as transformative learning in adult education literature. Boyd (2009) also relates transformational teaching to transformational leadership, highlighting the overlap between the Four I's (individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence) (Avolio, Waldman, & Yammerino, 1991) and teaching practices. Of particular interest is the individual consideration factor whereby teachers establish relationships with their students. As suggested by Boyd (2009), teachers should arrive early to class and stay after class in an effort to visit with students. This suggestion refers to the previously discussed notion of accessibility.

Faculty Accessibility

Accessibility is listed as one of Chickering & Gamson's (1987) Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education. Frequent contact between students and

faculty is considered “the most important factor in student motivation and involvement” (Chickering & Gamson, 1987, p. 3). Instructor accessibility is a combination of the availability of the instructor and their approachability (Gall, Knight, Carlson, & Sullivan, 2003). A component of instructor accessibility, frequent informal contact between students and faculty, has been associated with student satisfaction as well as intellectual, personal, and social outcomes (Endo & Harpel, 1982). In student evaluations, Gall et al. (2003) found strong correlations between instructors’ accessibility rating and their overall rating. The predictability of the instructor’s overall rating was quite high when the accessibility rating was also high, but as the accessibility rating approached average, the instructor’s overall rating was less predictable (Gall et al., 2003). Cotten and Wilson (2006) conducted qualitative research via focus groups to explore students’ perceptions and experience with student-faculty interactions. Keeping with the quantitative research literature on the relationship between student-faculty interactions and student satisfaction, Cotten and Wilson (2006) found that interactions with faculty increased their level of satisfaction with their college experience. Additionally, increased informal faculty contact has been related to increased faculty rapport (Granitz, Koernig, & Harich, 2008), students’ increased value placed on courses and academic efforts (Thompson, 2001), increased self-concept (Kuh, 1995), commitment to the institution (Strauss & Volkwein, 2004), and first year persistence (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980).

Accessibility in Adult Education

The importance of faculty accessibility does not solely exist in undergraduate education. Adult education also places an emphasis on faculty accessibility, although

the case has been made that undergraduates should be treated as adult learners due to their age, experience, ability to think abstractly, responsibility for their own life decisions, and volunteer status as learners (Halx, 2010). Lam and Wong (1974) found that adult learners' satisfaction with the instructor and course overall was associated with increased informal interaction and the perceived approachability of the instructor.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a gauge used by businesses and agencies as one measure of success. Researchers, typically in the marketing realm, have investigated customer satisfaction in an effort to determine the contributing factors. Szymanski and Henard (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of 50 studies investigating the antecedents to and outcomes of customer satisfaction. Included in the meta-analysis were 44 published studies and 6 dissertations, yielding 517 correlations in relation to satisfaction. Research on the antecedents of customer satisfaction has primarily focused on the following factors: expectations, disconfirmation of expectations, performance, affect, and equity. This does not indicate that these five factors are the factors most correlated to customer satisfaction; rather, they are the factors most often studied (Szymanski & Henard, 2001).

Customer satisfaction in for-profit business cannot be assumed to be the same in the nonprofit sphere. Lee and Nowell (2015) performed an integrated analysis of the performance measurement frameworks of nonprofit organizations. They analyzed 18 distinct nonprofit evaluation frameworks and identified seven focus areas. Customer satisfaction was identified as one of the seven foci and an important issue, particularly given the service orientation of many nonprofits. It was suggested that whereas financial

gain is the primary indicator of performance in the public sector, creating value and customer satisfaction is the primary goal of nonprofit organizations (Lee & Nowell, 2015).

Customer Satisfaction in Extension

Learner satisfaction is an important component of not only undergraduate and adult education, but of Cooperative Extension programs as well. Customer satisfaction has become a central focus of Extension's evaluation efforts, often in conjunction with other measures of meeting performance objectives. Florida (Warnock, 1992, Israel & Fugate, 2001), Kentucky (Rennekamp, Warner, Nall, Jacobs, & Maurer, 2001) and South Carolina (Radhakrishna, 2002) reported state-wide customer satisfaction results in an effort to establish benchmarks and share practices. Florida's reported customer satisfaction rate was 98% (Terry & Israel, 2004) and "other studies of customer satisfaction with Cooperative Extension have produced similarly high satisfaction rates" (Rennekamp & Engle, 2008, p.19).

Customer satisfaction has been explored in relation to agent performance (Terry & Israel, 2004), agent/client homophily regarding race, education level, and age (Strong & Israel, 2009), gender and race (Israel & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2009), and type of contact with Extension (Galindo-Gonzalez & Israel, 2010), each finding a statistical relationship. Studies investigating homophily of demographic factors relate to Napier & Ferris' (1993) psychological distance (demographic similarity). Other factors that are related to customer satisfaction have been found, including components of service quality, client age and client education level (Terry & Israel, 2004). The connection between Extension

customer satisfaction and other factors related to programming have gone untested or unreported (Strong & Israel, 2009).

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Napier and Ferris' (1993) conceptualization of leader distance was the theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. Of the two existing theories related to leader distance (Napier & Ferris, 1993, Antonakis & Atwater, 2002) the framework by Napier and Ferris is most applicable to investigating the distance between instructors and learners and the associated outcome of customer satisfaction. The conceptualization of types of distance and associated indicators is noted in Table 1 and the model of distance is noted in Figure 1.

Table 1.

Dimensions of Dyadic Distance in the Supervisor-Subordinate Relationship

Distance Construct	General Indicators	Specific Indicators
Psychological Distance	Demographic Similarity	Age, Sex, Education, Experience, and Race distance
	Power Distance	
	Perceived Similarity	
	Values Similarity	Work related value, Sex role orientation, and Cultural value distance
Structural Distance	Design Distance	Office design distance, Physical distance
	Opportunity to Interact	Social contact at work, Social contact outside work, Accessibility
	Spatial Distance	
	Span of Management	
Functional Distance	Affect	Liking, Support, Trust
	Perceptual Congruence	Sex role perceptions
	Latitude	Role discretion (Autonomy), Influence in decision making
	Relationship Quality	Supervisor satisfaction, Relationship satisfaction

Note: Table from Napier and Ferris (1993, p.327)

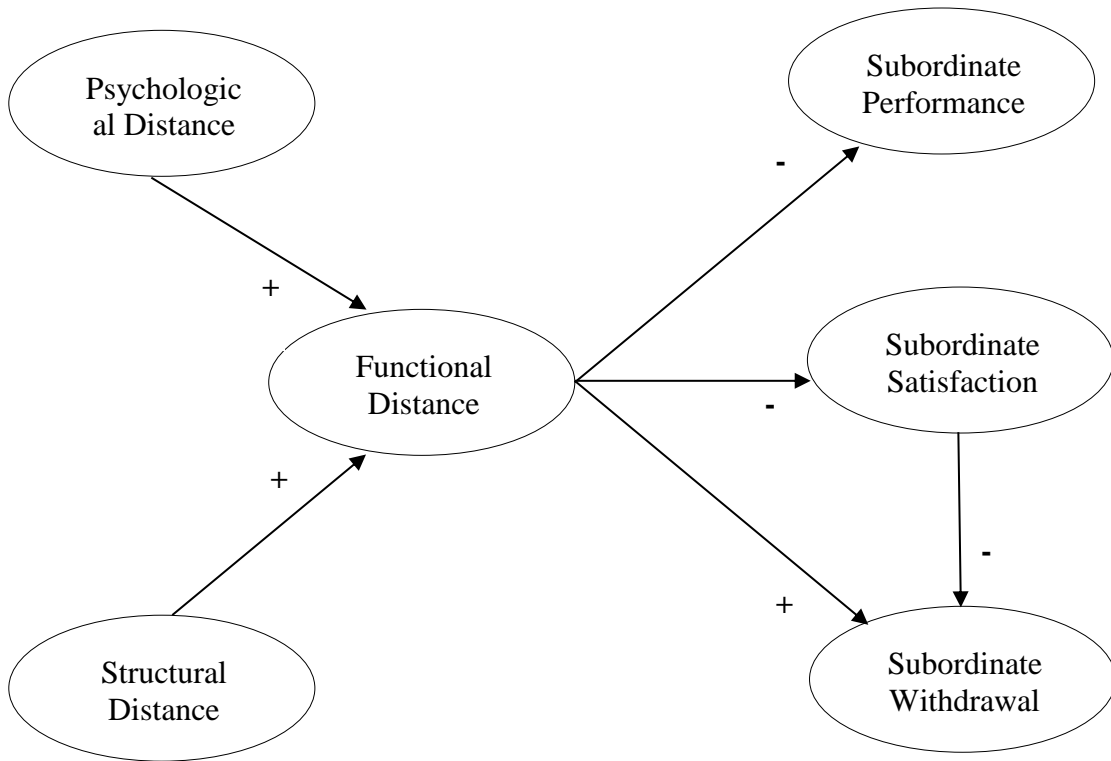


Figure 1. A Conceptual Model of Dyadic Distance in the Supervisor-Subordinate Relationship (Napier & Ferris, 1993, p. 329)

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This study was divided into three phases, each having independent research methods and data collection, analysis, and reporting. Data was collected via integrative inquiry and from existing evaluation data resulting from a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews. The research design is non-experimental and descriptive in nature.

Objective One

To address research objective one, literature in leadership, human resources, adult education, extension, and higher education was reviewed via integrative inquiry. Comparative analysis was used to evaluate components of leader distance and faculty accessibility and determine any plausible parallels and interconnected concepts that may exist.

Objective Two

To address research objective two, existing data from a quantitative evaluation was used. To determine the items included to assess leader distance at the BCSC, a pilot instrument was developed, tested and revised. The process associated with the pilot test will be presented first, followed by the processes associated with the evaluation.

Pilot Test Instrument

An instrument measuring faculty accessibility/leader distance was not available for use based on web searches and review of scholarly literature. Therefore, an instrument assessing a variety of components of leader distance was created based on a

review of relevant literature. Statements related to the structural distance (availability) and functional distance (approachability) components of leader distance were of interest given their contribution to concept of accessibility (Gall et al., 2003). This instrument contained 30 statements related to accessibility with a level of agreement Likert-type scale comprised of six anchors: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3= Somewhat Disagree; 4 = Somewhat Agree; 5 = Agree; 6 = Strongly Agree. Content and face validity was determined by two faculty members of the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications at Texas A&M University. Both faculty members expressed the need to include reverse phrased items to help reduce response bias and identify responses that are not valid. Four items were edited to be reverse phrased.

The instrument was pilot tested with undergraduate students enrolled in ALED 424 *Ethics in Leadership* at Texas A&M University in the summer of 2013 via an online questionnaire. Students were asked to rate their agreement with the statements regarding their instructor. Thirty-one responses were received from the pilot instrument; however, three were removed for non-differentiation of responses. A total of 28 valid responses were imported into IBM SPSS 19.0. The four reverse phrased items were reverse coded and all items were analyzed for internal consistency. Questions were grouped based on their reference to structural distance (availability) and functional distance (approachability). Each set of questions was then analyzed to determine the four items with the highest internal consistency. Two sets of four questions with Cronbach's alpha

greater than .70 were selected as structural distance and functional distance constructs, including one reverse phrased item in each construct.

BCSC Evaluation

A two-section instrument was developed based on the results of the previously described pilot test. One section of the instrument was comprised of four statements related to structural distance (availability) and one section of the instrument was comprised of four statements related to functional distance (approachability). Phrasing of the statements was adjusted to reflect the change in population and number of people being evaluated. Original statements included pronouns such as 'she' and 'her' and referred to 'students.' Revised statements included pronouns such as 'they' and 'them' and referred to 'participants.' The Likert-type scale was adjusted to five anchors to reflect the level of agreement scale used on the BCSC evaluation: 1 = Not at All; 2 = Slightly; 3 = Somewhat; 4 = Mostly; 5 = Completely.

Space constraints of the existing BCSC evaluation prohibited the inclusion of the entire eight item instrument; however, space allowed for one four item construct. Therefore, half of the evaluations were edited to include the structural distance scale and half of the evaluations were edited to include the functional distance scale. The evaluation with the structural scale is included in Appendix A and the evaluation with the functional scale is included in Appendix B. Statements comprising each scale are presented in Table 2.

The existing BCSC evaluation contains a customer satisfaction rating for instructors overall and a customer satisfaction rating for the BCSC overall.

Table 2.

Statements Included in Evaluation by Scale

Scale	Statement
Structural	I had access to them.
	They encouraged interaction.
	They were available if I had questions.
	There was not an opportunity to interact with them.
Functional	They were helpful.
	They were easy to approach if I had a question.
	They did not show concern for participants.
	They were friendly.

Population

All registered participants ($N = 1200$) of the 2013 BCSC were invited to evaluate the program to ensure a more accurate description of participant perceptions and eliminate potential errors with subject selection and sampling. Evaluations were distributed to all participants of the BCSC in the conference materials they received upon check-in. Different versions of the evaluation were randomly distributed in participant materials.

Data Collection

Data collection took place at the conclusion of the BCSC. Instructors of each session on Wednesday morning invited participants to evaluate the program at the

conclusion of their session. Participants were instructed to use the paper evaluation included in their conference materials, although additional paper evaluations were available if needed. Participants completed the evaluation immediately and turned them in before they left each of the premises. BCSC staff at each location collected the evaluations and submitted them to Dr. Jason Cleere, BCSC Director. Participants were able to submit an evaluation prior to the end of the Wednesday morning session by turning them in to the information table on Monday or Tuesday. It is unknown how many evaluations were completed prior to the end of the BCSC. Dr. Cleere, after collecting all evaluations, submitted them to the Extension Organizational Development Unit for analysis.

Data Analysis

Evaluations were scanned with TeleForm (2013) and data was automatically entered into an electronic format. Data from the evaluations was entered into SPSS 19.0 and analyzed for the purposes of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Organizational Development Unit. The data set was then analyzed for the purposes of the current study via IBM SPSS 24.0. A total of 194 evaluations were received with a response rate of 16.2%. Data was evaluated for missing values and non-differentiated responses. Responses that did not include values for all items included in analysis totaled 24 and were excluded from analysis. Responses that were non-differentiated totaled 37 and were excluded from analysis. A total of 133 evaluations were deemed valid for analysis. Reverse phrased questions were reverse coded and frequencies of variables of interest were evaluated for accuracy.

Distance scales were analyzed for internal consistencies using Cronbach's alpha.

The results for each scale are noted in Table 3.

Table 3.

Reliability Estimates of Leader Distance Evaluation by Scale

Scale	α	n
Structural	.74	74
Functional	.73	59

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for the two distance scales— structural and functional— yielding coefficient estimates of reliability of .74 and .73 respectively. According to Field (2009), alpha coefficients of .80 or greater are considered acceptable, although several factors can affect the resulting alpha coefficient of a scale, including the number of items in the scale and reverse phrased items. Given the lower coefficients of the scales and the inclusion of reverse phrased items in each scale, inter-item correlations and the alpha if an item was deleted was calculated. The inter-item correlation results for each scale are noted in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4.

Inter-item Correlations Between Items in Structural Distance Scale

Item	1	2	3	4
1. I had access to them.	—			
2. They encouraged interaction.	.559**	—		
3. They were available if I had questions.	.570**	.584**	—	
4. There was not an opportunity to interact with them.	.472**	.279*	.339**	—

Note. *Significant at $p < .05$. **Significant at $p < .01$.

Table 5.

Inter-item Correlations Between Items in Functional Distance Scale

Item	1	2	3	4
1. They were helpful.	—			
2. They were easy to approach if I had a question.	.592**	—		
3. They did not show concern for participants.	.459**	.406**	—	
4. They were friendly.	.464**	.706**	.241	—

Note. **Significant at $p < .01$.

Inter-item correlations between the reverse phrased items in each scale resulted in lower correlation values than almost all other inter-item correlations. The reverse phrased items on both scales have a negative impact on the average correlation between items. With all items included, the average correlation between items on the structural scale is .467, but without the reverse phrased item the average correlation between items is .571. With all items included, the average correlation between items on the functional

scale is .478, but without the reverse phrased item the average correlation between items is .587.

The resulting Cronbach's alpha for each scale if an item was deleted are noted in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6.

Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted From Structural Distance Scale

Item	α
I had access to them.	.61
They encouraged interaction.	.68
They were available if I had questions.	.66
There was not an opportunity to interact with them.	.80

Table 7.

Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted From Functional Distance Scale

Item	α
They were helpful.	.63
They were easy to approach if I had a question.	.58
They did not show concern for participants.	.80
They were friendly.	.68

The Cronbach's alpha value for each scale would decrease with the deletion of any standard phrased items. If the reverse phrased items were deleted from each scale the Cronbach's alpha would increase to .80 for both scales. According to Field (2009),

the reverse phrased items should be excluded from each scale based on the relatively low inter-item correlations and increase in alpha coefficient if deleted. Consequently, the revised Cronbach's alpha for each scale is .80, which indicates good reliability (Field, 2009). The structural distance and functional distance scales were adjusted to three item scales with the elimination of the reverse phrased item from each.

Summated scale scores for each scale were calculated. The means of the scale scores were then analyzed in relation to the satisfaction rating with the instructors and of the BCSC overall. Data analysis via correlation coefficients "...is used most often in the literature to report satisfaction relationships..." (Szymanski & Henard, 2001, p.21). Frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients were used to describe the data. Tests for statistical significance were set *a priori* at the .05 level.

Objective Three

To address research objective three, existing data from qualitative interviews were used.

Population

The population of the study is beef cattle extension specialists who teach and/or coordinate sessions at the BCSC. A list of study participants was generated from the BCSC agenda. Seven specialists were identified as the population for the study. Six specialists were invited to participate in the evaluation by the researcher during the 2013 BCSC. The researcher was unable to make contact with one specialist during the BCSC so the invitation to participate was made via the telephone after the BCSC. The

researcher followed up with participants via telephone to determine a mutually agreed upon time to conduct the interview. One specialist was unavailable during the mutually agreed upon time and efforts to reschedule were unanswered. The total population for the study is six of the seven identified beef cattle extension specialists.

The years of experience in extension for each specialist ranged from 8 to 29 at the time of the interview, with four of the specialists having 20+ years of experience. All specialists are male and attended Texas A&M University for at least one degree. One specialist is originally from New Mexico while the other five are from Texas. Two of the six specialists are based on the campus of Texas A&M while the remaining four are located around the state of Texas. One specialist serves in an administrative role within Texas extension and one specialist serves as the coordinator of the BCSC.

Data Collection

A semi-structured interview protocol was developed, tested, and modified. Interview questions pertained to the perception, approach and experience of extension specialists while teaching at the BCSC. Guiding interview questions are included in Appendix C.

Four interviews were conducted via the telephone and two interviews were conducted face-to-face in the interviewee's office. Interviews took place over a one week period in August 2013 and were recorded with interviewee consent. Interviews were guided by the interview protocol but were casual and conversational in nature. Interviews lasted from 58 to 87 minutes. Audio files of the interviews were transcribed into Microsoft Word documents by a professional transcription service following the

interview. Field notes from the researcher were also transcribed following the interview. Transcript documents were labeled with page numbers and were assigned a code, ranging from SP1 to SP6. Transcripts were reviewed for accuracy and clarity. The researcher verified inaudible or unintelligible pieces of the transcript with the audio recording and made edits as necessary.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using a deductive content analysis approach as described by Elo and Kyngäs (2007). Qualitative content analysis is "...a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Deductive qualitative content analysis uses an existing framework and predetermined categories with which to analyze data (Patton, 2002). This method is appropriate when the objective of the study is to apply existing data in a new context (Cho & Lee, 2014). The framework used to analyze data was Napier and Ferris' (1993) conceptualization of leader distance.

To become familiar in the data, the researcher read all transcripts once without making notes or highlighting. Transcripts were then reread and analyzed with the concept of leader distance in mind. Any text related to leader distance was identified and highlighted as a potential area of note. Each highlighted item was copied and pasted into a table in Microsoft Word with the corresponding transcript code and page number. A total of 114 items were identified as related to leader distance from the six transcripts. In general, items were responses to a question which varied from one word to 426 words.

The table containing items of interest was then analyzed and items were parsed out to new tables based on the subject being addressed. Many items, particularly long passages, were applied to several different subject areas. A total of 172 entries were categorized into 20 subject areas: Approachable; Asking Questions; Audience; Availability; Being Swarmed; Bull Pen; Change; Familiarity; Groupies; Humor; Interaction; Language; Personality; Relate to Audience; Role; Strength; Taking a Break; Trade Show; Trust/Comfort; VIP. Item passages were initially maintained in their entirety to provide context to the text. Each of the 172 entries were then reduced to contain only the content of each passage that pertained to the selected subject category. Upon second analysis of the items, 28 were removed due to a weak association with the category. Two subject areas, Taking a Break and Approachable, only had two items associated with each and were combined with the Being Swarmed and Personality subject areas respectively. The Strength subject area, comprised of four items, was determined to be outside the scope of the research and was removed. The Role subject area was determined to be a subcategory of the Availability subject area and was thus combined within. The resulting data contained 16 subject categories and 137 items. Subject categories were then analyzed to determine themes present within.

The resulting subject areas were then grouped based on Napier and Ferris' (1993) leader distance framework. Three subject areas did not fit within the framework and were thus labeled as 'Other.' Grouped subject areas are noted in Table 8.

Table 8.

Subject Areas Grouped by Leader Distance Construct

Distance Construct	Identified Subject Area
Psychological Distance	Language
	Relate to Audience
	VIP
Structural Distance	Asking Questions
	Availability
	Being Swarmed
	Bull Pen
	Change
	Interaction
	Functional
Other	Groupies
	Trade Show
	Trust/Comfort
	Audience
Other	Humor
	Personality

Trustworthiness of the data was determined by peer debriefing and member checking. Two faculty members familiar with the BCSC and qualitative data collection reviewed portions of categorization of interview transcripts for accuracy and agreement. Members of the sample group received a copy of the interview transcripts to verify accuracy and a copy of the resulting data to ensure correct interpretation and accuracy.

Institutional Approval

A proposed plan for conducting the study was submitted to the Texas A&M University Office of Research Compliance, Human Subjects Protection Program. The proposal was approved by the Institutional Review Board (Protocol Number: 2016-0323).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Objective One

The purpose of research objective one was to explore the concept of leader distance in an educational context. Napier and Ferris' (1993) framework can be aligned with the notion of faculty accessibility. Throughout the literature, faculty accessibility is addressed, although the terms and components used may differ. The most applicable research is Granitz, Koernig, and Harich's (2008) study "Now It's Personal: Antecedents and Outcomes of Rapport Between Business Faculty and Their Students." Granitz et al. (2008) investigate faculty rapport with students, noting the similarities to rapport in the marketing domain where customer satisfaction and sales are positive outcomes. The breadth of literature supporting rapport, including the dimensions included and outcomes, was reported from the following disciplines: sales, business, marketing, education, psychology healthcare, communication, human relations, public opinion, advertising, service industry, and information management (Granitz et al., 2008).

Granitz et al.'s (2008) findings of rapport antecedents "...fall into three main categories: approach, personality, and homophily" (p.53). Approach refers to conditions that are enacted when parties encounter each other. Dimensions within the Approach category include: approachability (physical availability and psychological comfort), mutual openness (talk freely about personal lives), trust, accessibility, respect (not talking down to students). Dimensions within the Personality category include: caring (concern), positive (humor and demeanor), and empathy. Homophily refers to

similarities between the parties. Dimensions within the Homophily category include: status homophily (similarity based on race, ethnicity, sex, age, education, occupation, etc.) and value homophily (similarity based on values, attitudes, and beliefs) (Granitz et al., 2008).

Based on these findings, a connection to Napier and Ferris’ (1993) framework of distance can be drawn. Granitz et al.’s categorization of the dimensions of rapport does not parallel Napier and Ferris’ (1993), although many of the same words and ideas exist. Within the Approach category, the physical availability of faculty relates to the structural distance construct (opportunity to interact) and trust relates to the functional distance construct (affect). Within the Homophily category, status homophily relates to the psychological distance construct (demographic similarity) and value homophily relates to the psychological distance construct (values similarity). The notion of homophily in general relates to the psychological distance construct (perceived similarity). These similarities are noted in Table 9.

Table 9.

Similarities Between Rapport Antecedents and Leader Distance Dimensions

Rapport Categories	Distance Dimensions
Approach: Approachability (physical availability)	Structural Distance: Opportunity to Interact
Approach: Trust	Functional Distance: Affect
Homophily: Status Homophily	Psychological Distance: Demographic Similarity
Homophily: Value Homophily	Psychological Distance: Values Similarity

Other categories and dimensions within the two frameworks do not align, although they both address aspects that can affect a relationship. Although distance is not specifically mentioned in Granitz et al.'s (2008) model of rapport, the overall intent is that 'closeness' leads to rapport. Napier and Ferris' (1993) framework mentions the quality of the relationship in terms of functional distance, although this could be considered a form of rapport, as well. Both studies theorize that an outcome of good rapport/close distance is increased satisfaction by the student/follower.

Objective Two

The purpose of research objective two was to describe the relationship between perceived instructor accessibility and customer satisfaction of the BCSC.

To determine perceived instructor accessibility, evaluations contained two scales to measure dimensions of accessibility. To determine customer satisfaction participants rate their satisfaction with the instructors overall and with the BCSC overall. Data related to individual items within the accessibility scales will be presented first, followed by scale level data and satisfaction data.

The frequency and percentage of responses to the structural distance and functional distance scales are noted in Tables 10 and 11.

Table 10.

Frequencies and Percentages of Items of the Structural Distance Scale

Item	1		2		3		4		5	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I had access to them.	--	--	1	1.4	6	8.1	28	37.8	39	52.7
They encouraged interaction.	--	--	1	1.4	4	5.4	20	27.0	49	66.2
They were available if I had questions.	--	--	1	1.4	3	4.1	24	32.4	46	62.2
Total	--	--	3	1.4	13	5.9	72	32.4	134	60.4

Note. 1 = Not at all; 2 = Slightly; 3 = Somewhat; 4 = Mostly; 5 = Completely

Table 11.

Frequencies and Percentages of Items of the Functional Distance Scale

Item	1		2		3		4		5	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
They were helpful.	--	--	--	--	1	1.7	23	39.0	35	59.3
They were easy to approach if I had a question.	--	--	1	1.7	2	3.4	11	18.6	45	76.3
They were friendly.	--	--	--	--	2	3.4	8	13.6	49	83.1
Total	--	--	1	0.6	5	2.8	42	23.7	129	72.9

Note. Scale: 1 = Not at all; 2 = Slightly; 3 = Somewhat; 4 = Mostly; 5 = Completely

The distribution of responses to each scale are heavily skewed toward a higher level of agreement with the statements. The highest percentage of responses was 83.1% completely agreeing with the statement ‘They were friendly.’ Conversely, there were zero responses that completely disagreed (level of agreement ‘not at all’) with any statement on either scale.

Descriptive statistics for the items included in the structural and functional scales is noted in Table 12.

Table 12.

Minimums, Maximums, Means, Standard Deviations of Items

Item	<i>min</i>	<i>max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
I had access to them.	2	5	4.42	.70
They encouraged interaction.	2	5	4.58	.66
They were available if I had questions.	2	5	4.55	.64
They were helpful.	3	5	4.58	.53
They were easy to approach if I had a question.	2	5	4.69	.62
They were friendly.	3	5	4.80	.48

The statement ‘They were friendly’ had the highest level of agreement, the reported mean was $M = 4.80$ and $SD = .48$. The statement ‘I had access to them’ had the lowest level of agreement, the reported mean was $M = 4.42$ and $SD = .70$.

A mean for each scale was calculated based on the revised, three item constructs. Descriptive statistics for the structural distance and functional distance scales are noted in Table 13.

Table 13.

Minimums, Maximums, Means, Standard Deviations and n of Scales

Scale	<i>min</i>	<i>max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Structural	2.33	5.00	4.52	.57	74
Functional	2.67	5.00	4.69	.47	59

The functional distance scale had the highest minimum and reported mean, $M = 4.69$ and $SD = .47$. The structural distance scale had the lowest minimum and reported mean, $M = 4.52$ and $SD = .57$.

The frequency and percentage of responses to the overall satisfaction with instructors rating by distance scale is noted in Table 14.

Table 14.

Frequencies and Percentages of Overall Satisfaction with Instructors by Distance Scale

Scale	1		2		3		4		5	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Structural	--	--	--	--	--	--	21	28.4	53	71.6
Functional	--	--	--	--	2	3.4	13	22.0	44	74.5
Total	--	--	--	--	2	1.5	34	25.6	97	72.9

Note. Scale: 1 = Not at all; 2 = Slightly; 3 = Somewhat; 4 = Mostly; 5 = Completely

The distribution of responses to overall satisfaction with instructors is heavily skewed toward high levels of satisfaction. An overwhelming majority of respondents (98.5%) were ‘mostly’ or ‘completely’ satisfied with the instructors.

Descriptive statistics for overall satisfaction with the instructors by distance scale are noted in Table 15.

Table 15.

Minimums, Maximums, Means, Standard Deviations and n of Overall Satisfaction with Instructors by Distance Scale

Scale	<i>min</i>	<i>max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Structural	4.00	5.00	4.72	.45	74
Functional	3.00	5.00	4.71	.53	59

The structural and functional distance scales had nearly identical means. The functional scale respondents include the two ratings of ‘somewhat’ satisfied and thus the standard deviation is slightly higher. The reported means for the structural distance scale was $M = 4.72$ and $SD = .45$ and for the functional distance scale was $M = 4.71$ and $SD = .53$.

To determine the relationship between perceived instructor accessibility and overall satisfaction with instructors, correlations between summated scale scores and the overall satisfaction with instructors rating were calculated. Pearson’s r bivariate correlations are noted in Table 16.

Table 16.

Bivariate Correlation Between Overall Satisfaction with Instructors and Distance Scales

Scale	<i>r</i>	<i>n</i>
Structural Scale	.154	74
Functional Scale	.564*	59

Note. *Significant at $p < .01$.

Due to the non-normal distribution of the data, an assumption of the test statistic has been violated; however, Norman (2010) states “Parametric statistics can be used with Likert data... and with non-normal distributions, with no fear of ‘coming to the wrong conclusion’” due to the robustness of the test (p. 631). The structural distance scale was not significantly correlated to the overall satisfaction with instructors. The reported correlation coefficient was $r = .154$. The functional distance scale was significantly correlated to the overall satisfaction with instructors at the $p < .01$ level. The reported correlation coefficient was $r = .564$. According to Field (2009), r values equal to and above .50 represent a large effect based on the strength of the relationship between variables.

Correlations between individual scale items and the overall satisfaction with instructors rating are noted in Tables 17 and 18.

Table 17.

Bivariate Correlation Between Overall Satisfaction with Instructors and Items in Structural Scale

Measure	<i>r</i>
I had access to them.	.120
They encouraged interaction.	.192
They were available if I had questions.	.077

No items in the structural scale were significantly correlated to the overall satisfaction with instructors.

Table 18.

Bivariate Correlation Between Overall Satisfaction with Instructors and Items in Functional Scale

Measure	<i>r</i>
They were helpful.	.480*
They were easy to approach if I had a question.	.463*
They were friendly.	.510*

Note. *Significant at $p < .01$.

All items in the functional scale were significantly correlated to the overall satisfaction with instructors at the $p < .01$ level. The item with the highest correlation coefficient was ‘They were friendly’ ($r = .510$). The item with the lowest correlation coefficient was ‘They were easy to approach if I had a question’ ($r = .463$). According to Field (2009), r values between .30 and .49 represent a medium effect and r values equal

to or above .50 represent a large effect based on the strength of the relationship between variables.

The frequency and percentage of responses to the overall customer satisfaction with the BCSC rating by distance scale is noted in Table 19.

Table 19.

Frequencies and Percentages of Overall Customer Satisfaction by Distance Scale

Scale	1		2		3		4		5	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Structural	--	--	--	--	--	--	33	44.6	41	55.4
Functional	--	--	--	--	1	1.7	22	37.3	36	61.0
Total	--	--	--	--	1	0.8	55	41.4	77	57.9

Note. Scale: 1 = Not at all; 2 = Slightly; 3 = Somewhat; 4 = Mostly; 5 = Completely

The distribution of responses to the overall customer satisfaction rating are non-normal and skew toward high levels of satisfaction. Nearly every participant (99.3%) was ‘Mostly’ or ‘Completely’ satisfied with the BCSC.

Descriptive statistics for the overall customer satisfaction with the BCSC rating by distance scale are noted in Table 20.

Table 20.

Minimums, Maximums, Means, Standard Deviations and n of Overall Customer Satisfaction by Distance Scale

Scale	<i>min</i>	<i>max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Structural	4.00	5.00	4.55	.50	74
Functional	3.00	5.00	4.60	.53	59

The mean of the overall customer satisfaction rating for respondents with the structural scale was $M = 4.55$ and $SD = .50$. The mean of the overall satisfaction rating for respondents with the functional scale was $M = 4.60$ and $SD = .53$.

To determine the relationship between perceived instructor accessibility and customer satisfaction with the BCSC, correlations between summated scale scores and the overall satisfaction rating were calculated. Pearson's r bivariate correlations are noted in Table 21.

Table 21.

Bivariate Correlation Between Overall Satisfaction and Distance Scales

Scale	<i>r</i>	<i>n</i>
Structural Scale	.037	74
Functional Scale	.457*	60

Note. *Significant at $p < .01$.

The structural distance scale is not significantly correlated to the overall customer satisfaction rating of the BCSC. The reported correlation coefficient was $r =$

.037. The functional scale is significantly correlated to the overall customer satisfaction rating of the BCSC at the $p < .01$ level. The reported correlation coefficient was $r = .454$. According to Field (2009), r values between .30 and .49 represent a medium effect based on the strength of the relationship between variables.

Correlations between individual scale items and the overall customer satisfaction rating of the BCSC are noted in Tables 22 and 23.

Table 22.

Bivariate Correlations Between Overall Satisfaction and Items in Structural Scale

Measure	r
I had access to them.	.071
They encouraged interaction.	-.034
They were available if I had questions.	.055

No items in the structural scale were significantly correlated to the overall customer satisfaction rating of the BCSC.

Table 23.

Bivariate Correlations Between Overall Satisfaction and Items in Functional Scale

Measure	r
They were helpful.	.480*
They were easy to approach if I had a question.	.402*
They were friendly.	.278*

Note. *Significant at $p < .01$.

All items in the functional scale were significantly correlated to the overall customer satisfaction rating of the BCSC at $p < .01$ level. The item with the highest correlation coefficient was ‘They were helpful’ ($r = .480$). The item with the lowest correlation coefficient was ‘They were friendly’ ($r = .278$). According to Field (2009), r values between .10 and .29 represent a small effect and r values between .30 and .49 represent a medium effect based on the strength of the relationship between variables.

Objective Three

The purpose of research objective three was to explore how Beef Cattle Specialists perceive, approach, and experience leader distance while at the BCSC. Qualitative interviews were analyzed via deductive content analysis and categorized based on Napier and Ferris’ (1993) dimensions of leader distance. Sixteen categories related to leader distance were identified and grouped according the Napier and Ferris’ (1993) dimensions. The 16 categories are presented by leader distance dimension followed by categories that did not fit into the framework.

Psychological Distance

Psychological distance relates to the “psychological effects of actual and perceived demographic, cultural, and value differences” between a leader and follower (Napier & Ferris, 1993, p. 328). The domains within psychological distance include: demographic similarity; power distance; perceived similarity; value similarity. The following categories were identified as relating to psychological distance.

Language

The language specialists use when at the BCSC was mentioned by five specialists. There was a significant emphasis on the importance of and ability to speak to the audience at their level. Participants at the BCSC have very diverse experience levels and consequently, specialists have to be cognizant of using language that is not too technical or widely known. The importance of speaking to the audience's level was mentioned as a selection criteria for speakers because educators can 'lose' an audience with the wrong language. "So we can speak the language that they speak. That's where we have trouble with some of the new people in the business, we take terminology for granted, and it's right over their head" (SP4P11). Two specialists mentioned an example of using terminology that was not at the audience's level at the 2013 BCSC, despite both having years of experience.

For example, when [specialist] was talking about injections, administering injectable products, he talked about SubQ and IM, SubQ and IM. There was a lady sitting next to my wife and she said to the person next to her, 'What is SubQ?' so we take for granted that people know IM is in the muscle, SubQ is under the skin, but they don't, so that's a real challenge. (SP3P9)

Three specialists referred to developing the skill of being able to speak at the level of the audience, particularly after coming out of graduate school where technical terms and complex concepts are the norm. They felt that the learning curve was pretty steep in making the adjustment from the academic community to the producer education community and even expressed a bit of pity for new specialists.

The type of language specialists use at the BCSC was referred to in an effort to keep and maintain a connection with participants. Specialists were intentional with the type of information and terminology they use to relate to the audience. The emphasis placed on this connection is an example of the perceived similarity dimension of psychological distance and indicates the desire for a low level of distance.

Relate to Audience

Being able to relate to the BCSC audience was mentioned 12 times and stood out as a significant theme among the five specialists referenced it. Three specialists spontaneously and specifically mentioned the way in which they can and do relate to participants: being involved in the cattle business outside of their extension position. The three specialists also mentioned that all specialists have an outside connection to the cattle business which enables all of them to relate to the audience. The benefit of having this connection is that each specialist brings a level of passion to their job that those without ‘skin in the game’ might not have. Having a real passion for and personal experience with the subject was suggested as contributing to a ‘good’ presentation. Additionally, being involved in the cattle business

...allows us to bring practical, real-life stories to the presentation. ... [and] it lends a lot of credibility to us, because... it’s not just somebody up there grinding through it. They read it out of a text book, or read it off the internet and they’re talking about it. Most of us have been there, and done that, and we’re currently involved in it. (SP3P12-13)

The specialist serving in an administrative position with extension expressed concern about the inevitability of replacing the specialists stating “I don’t know where you find people with the experience that relates to other people so easy” (P27).

Relating to BCSC participants was deemed important by five specialists for the passion and credibility that it brings to their presentations. The intent to relate to others in such a way is in the perceived similarity dimension of psychological distance and indicates a desire for a low level of distance.

VIP

One aspect of the BCSC that was not mentioned often but is worth noting, is the existence and use of a VIP line for serving meals. Two specialists referred to this line from the standpoint of preferring not to use it. Both noted that they would use the VIP line if they were escorting a speaker or guest to eat, but they did not particularly enjoy going around everyone else. “I’ll get out there with the great, unwashed masses and stand with the other 1200 people. I don’t go to the VIP” (SP2P23). Another specialist commented “...most of us feel uncomfortable going around the line” (SP4P17).

Although the notion of using the VIP line was only mentioned by two specialists, it is an excellent example of psychological distance. Both specialists expressed their preference for waiting in the general line like the other participants. This is related to the perceived similarity dimension of psychological distance and indicates a low level of distance.

Psychological Distance Summary

Three themes related to psychological distance emerged from the interviews. Each of the three themes relate to the ‘perceived similarity’ dimension of psychological distance. “Perceived similarity is the degree to which an individual believes that (s)he is similar to a target individual” (Napier & Ferris, 1993, p. 331). Specialists are careful to use language that is not too technical or complex. They intentionally speak the language that the participants speak so they can connect with them. Specialists also connect with participants by being able to relate to their situation. All specialists are involved in the cattle business outside of their extension job, which brings credibility to the information and advice they share. Specialists think of themselves as the same as BCSC participants and prefer to stand in line for meals with everyone else. The use of similar language, being in similar situations, and thinking of themselves and participants similarly are all related to perceived similarity and indicate a low level of distance between specialists and participants.

Structural Distance

Structural distances relates to distance determined by physical structure and organizational structure (Napier & Ferris, 1993). The domains within structural distance include: physical design; opportunity to interact; spatial distance; span of management. The following categories were identified as relating to structural distance.

Asking Questions

A common theme among all interviews was related to participants asking the specialists questions. Specialists mentioned being asked questions after their session,

during a session, session breaks, trade show, lunch, prime rib dinner, and even in the bathroom. Specialists report being asked a variety of questions, including those regarding the logistics of the BCSC ('Where is lunch served?'), seeking advice on a situation ('What would you do in this case?'), general knowledge ('What do I spray on broom weed?'), adding to the story ('Did you know this?'), and to project or speculate ('What do you think cattle prices will do?').

Four specialists mentioned the tendency of participants to wait until after a session to ask their question one-on-one. Several reasons for why this happens were offered, including "Some folks don't want to ask a question, because either they're not comfortable asking a question in public, or they're not comfortable with the question they're going to ask, because they feel like it may not be smart enough" (SP2P18). The idea that participants think their questions might be thought of as 'dumb' or 'stupid' was echoed by three other specialists. It was suggested that many people are afraid of being embarrassed by their question, thus they would prefer to ask it in a one-on-one situation. Other reasons for waiting until after a session to ask a question include: participant is too shy, thinks their question only applies to their situation, does not want to interrupt, thinks they will get a better answer one-on-one, and the presenter did not allow for questions during their session.

One specialist mentioned that when he has several people waiting to ask questions "... I generally ask them to come on up all at once, or come together, then we just handle a question at a time" (SP2P19). Another specialist commented "It never fails, as soon as you walk out the room, all the good questions follow you out the door and

they're asked outside" (SP4P6). He also mentioned his preference for bringing up the questions he was asked individually when he is back in the group setting so everyone can hear the answer. The idea that the entire group/session needs to hear the questions and their answer was mentioned by three specialists. They each expressed their preference for questions being asked in the group setting so that other participants can benefit, even if they did not have the same question. Additionally, it is more efficient to answer one question once, rather than answering the same question multiple times one-on-one.

Specialist Three addressed the benefit of answering questions, both in a session and one-on-one, stating that he welcomed questions. "...Because not only does it satisfy their desire to learn, but if I'm paying attention, it helps me as a presenter be better prepared for next time" (SP3P13-14). Paying attention to the questions that presenters are asked can inform their future presentations in terms of material included or clarifying concepts. The structure of the BCSC in relation to answering questions was mentioned by Specialist Four, noting "... we don't give speakers enough time to where they can have answers. We probably ought to have one less speaker, and more question and answer time" (P8); however, this suggestion results in less topics being presented and is thus a Catch 22 situation.

The tendency of participants to ask questions of the specialists was a significant theme among five specialists. Considerations related to answering questions refer to the availability of the specialists and is within the opportunity to interact dimension of

structural distance. Answering questions and interacting with participants indicates decreased structural distance.

Availability

While many examples of being available to participants were given, the specialists also provided many comments related to the idea of being available. This category was the most mentioned with 20 items. Each of the six specialists interviewed referred to their conscious decision to make themselves available to participants. “We don’t ever want to go give a presentation and come back to the office. We’re there from [the] start until the end every day” (SP4P6). One specialist mentioned that he intentionally does not schedule commitments after the BCSC so he does not have to be in a hurry to get away. Another specialist noted that during session breaks he purposely makes himself available in an uncrowded area.

Three specialists specifically mentioned their thoughts on being available in terms of a philosophy for extension work:

But I try to always be available if I really think that something needs—I try to make time to go someplace if I really think it’s going to be helpful. (SP1P15)

Yeah, I think it’s a very important part of my job to stay, to be seen, to be around in case somebody wants to ask questions, or has a comment, or needs information. That’s part of my job. That’s probably more important than actually giving a talk. (SP2P19)

But like on a county program, or a day-long program, I always try to stay at least through the break, or if there's a meal, through the meal, after my presentation to give whomever might have a question, an opportunity to visit with me. (SP3P19)

When asked how specialists view their role at the BCSC, three specifically mentioned being available as a resource person for participants. The previously mentioned philosophy of being available in extension work does not solely apply to sessions and breaks, but rather extends to their larger role while at the BCSC.

The specialists' focus on intentionally making themselves available, either while at the BCSC or at other extension programs, is directly related to the opportunity to interact dimension of structural distance. Their emphasis on being available indicates decreased structural distance.

Being Swarmed

The idea that specialists were essentially swarmed by participants when they were not teaching was mentioned frequently throughout the interviews. Specialists mentioned being stopped by participants for the purpose of answering questions, saying hello, catching up, and providing feedback on the BCSC. "So there's never a dull moment, whether you're involved in a session or not, there's always somebody wanting to talk about something" (SP3P14). Specialists are likely to be approached at the end of their own session, as they sit in on another session, in the breaks between sessions, during lunch and during the prime rib dinner. One specialist mentioned "I've been accosted in the bathroom. There is no place that's off limits to ask questions if they see you" (SP6P7).

The number of people interested in speaking with the specialists causes long lines at the end of every session. “I mean, there’s been times some of the guys who were speaking right before lunch might not make it to lunch that day” (SP6P9). The large number of participants wishing to speak with the specialists also affects their ability to move throughout the halls. One specialist noted “My wife will not walk with me anywhere. ... You really can’t go more than 10 feet without somebody stopping you and wanting to talk, or visit, or share something” (SP4P12). Due to this, three specialists mentioned intentionally visiting the trade show during a session when participants are occupied so they have the opportunity to talk with the exhibitors.

The constant demand for the specialists’ attention can result in feeling the need to take a break and step away from participants. Two specialists mentioned this feeling, one noted “...some point in time you need to take five or 10 minutes and just duck in somewhere you can hide a few minutes just to get your thoughts back” (SP63).

Consistently being approached by participants was a significant theme throughout the interviews. The Being Swarmed category contained the second-most items (19) and was mentioned by five of the six specialists. The frequency of interaction between the specialists and participants relates to the opportunity to interact dimension of structural distance and indicates very low structural distance.

Bull Pen

One concept that four specialists mentioned was the idea of having a bull pen. According to one specialist, the bull pen would be

...a designated area in the trade show that's just with tables and chairs and it's just us there at their convenience. ... Just an informal, come in, sit down, I've got these questions that are burning a hole in my pocket, I want to ask somebody.

(SP3P15)

The bull pen idea resulted from the realization that the specialists are asked questions more often in the hall between sessions. The intent was to provide producers one central location to find specialists rather than trying to catch them in the hall. All four specialists mentioned their support for the idea, although a few were unsure why the bull pen did not happen at the 2013 BCSC. Other specialists mentioned the logistical difficulty of staffing the bull pen and thus the idea did not come to fruition.

The bull pen idea was a direct result of the observation that specialists are in high demand for answering questions. The concept would provide direct and focused access to the specialists for the BCSC participants, and was thus an effort to increase availability. Increasing the availability of specialists refers to the opportunity to interact dimension of structural distance and indicates a desire to decrease structural distance.

Change

Specialists were asked what they might change about the BCSC, barring reality. Two specialists, both with 20+ years of experience, mentioned increasing the one-on-one interaction between specialists and participants. One specialist suggested increasing this interaction by having "...about three or four more of us, that have the same skill sets, talents, passions that we do. It would allow some of us, like me, it would allow us more

time to interact with trade show people and people that just have questions” (SP3P21).

Another specialist commented

I think we’ve probably gotten ourselves too busy with the short course, because the value people have in their one-on-one interaction – to do that, then you have to cut out some programs. So we decide what’s most important every year there’s at least two or three topic areas you just have to abandon every year, kind of for the core components. So if I was going to do anything, it would be to try to find more free time for that one-on-on interaction. (SP4P24)

Increasing the amount of one-on-one interaction between specialists and participants was listed as the single thing that two specialists would change about the BCSC. Increasing interaction refers to the opportunity to interact dimension of structural distance and indicates the desire to decrease structural distance.

Interaction

The importance of interacting with participants and trade show exhibitors was mentioned by two specialists. One specialist commented “To me, that’s the fun part is getting those questions and interacting with people” (SP4P8). Another specialist referred to the second day of BCSC saying “To me, that’s the most enjoyable day is that day, because of that opportunity to kind of relax and visit and talk with people” (SP5P13).

Interaction in the teaching environment was also mentioned. Regarding the Wednesday morning demonstrations, one specialist noted

The biggest problem is that you’re detached from the audience when you’re doing those. You can’t get immediate feedback or questions. That venue over

there, in particular, you're so far away from them they couldn't even holler at you, a lot of times, and get your attention. So the big venue has allowed us to do some other things, but it has limited that interaction with the group... You don't have enough interaction, or I haven't staged it right to where I can go and take questions and get interaction part of the way through. (SP4P20)

Both specialists mention interaction with participants in a favorable way, both while at the BCSC and specifically while teaching a session. An interest in, and positive regard for, interaction relates to the opportunity to interact dimension of structural distance and indicates a desire for decreased structural distance.

Structural Distance Summary

Six themes related to structural distance emerged from the interviews. Each of the six themes relate to the 'opportunity to interact' dimension of structural distance. The opportunity of followers to interact with their leaders can be related to social, non-task related contact or physical accessibility (Napier & Ferris, 1993). Specialists mentioned topics all related to their physical accessibility. The frequency of participants asking questions was mentioned by five specialists, including how they perceive and handle so many questions. Specialists also mentioned their conscious effort to be available to participants, often including their physical presence as one of their roles while at the BCSC. The availability of specialists and their high demand among participants results in being unable to freely move throughout the halls and thus the feeling that they are constantly being swarmed. To alleviate this demand, specialists had discussed creating a dedicated space for people to be able to find them for questions called the bull pen.

Being more available to participants was also mentioned as the single thing that two specialists would change about the BCSC. They placed an emphasis on interacting with participants, both during sessions as a presenter and in the halls during breaks. Being physically available to participants and interacting with them relates to the opportunity to interact and indicates a low level of distance between specialists and participants.

Functional Distance

Functional distance relates to the “degree of closeness and quality of the functional working relationship...” between a leader and follower (Napier & Ferris, 1993, p. 337). The dimensions within functional distance include: affect; perceptual congruence; latitude; relationship quality. The following categories were identified as relating to functional distance.

Familiarity

The perceived relationship between specialists and participants was mentioned by three specialists. Each referred to a sense of familiarity that some participants feel with the specialists, despite not having an established relationship. One specialist attributed this to being so recognizable, whether it is from the identification of their speaker or host badges or from the fact that most have been around for 10+ years. An instance of purposely not wearing a badge was mentioned by one specialist in an effort to see if people knew who he was. He mentioned that most people approached him and called him by his first name, even without his badge.

The perceived relationship that some participants have with the specialists was mentioned in terms of being addressed in a familiar way and the semblance of having

known them for years. Additionally, some participants will ask questions that indicate a more familiar connection than actually exists, such as questions about a specialist's family. The expectation that specialists remember most people they see or meet was also mentioned as a potential reason for the unbalanced relationship.

Many of them will come up and call you by name, and you have no idea who they are. They've been in the audience, multiple times, and get to consider you somebody they know. ... But it's amazing how many of them will call you by name and act like they've known you for 15 years. (SP4P12)

The relationship that some participants perceive to have with specialists is an example of functional distance. Although the relationship is not reciprocal, the increased level of familiarity exists nonetheless, and refers to the relationship quality dimension of functional distance. This perceived familiarity indicates a high degree of closeness in the working relationship and thus low functional distance.

Groupies

An indicator of the relationship between specialists and participants is illustrated in a theme that emerged from four of the six specialists: groupies. Groupies are participants that will attend a session because of the specialist presenting rather than the topic being discussed. "My wife accuses me of a cult following—there are some groupies, to be honest. Nearly all of us have some, it doesn't matter what you're talking about, they're going to be in the audience" (SP4P11). A variety of reasons for developing a following were suggested, including: being a good speaker; giving good

information; being entertaining; personality; being more blunt in discussions, regional affiliation, participants like listening to you or enjoy visiting with you.

In addition to attending sessions, sometimes participants will show a preference for a certain specialist when asking questions. Several other specialists would have been able to answer the question, but some participants will only ask their favored specialist. The existence of groupies is known to program coordinators and some specialists will be invited to present at programs because they will attract attendees.

The existence of groupies and their prevalence relates to the affect dimension of structural distance. Some participants favor certain specialists because they like them, indicating a low level of functional distance.

Trade Show

An aspect of the BCSC that is not directly related to participants is the trade show. Four specialists mentioned the importance of going through the trade show to visit with exhibitors. Doing so "...helps me continue those relations with those companies I already had. And to add new ones" (SP6P3). The relationship between the specialists and the industry professionals was mentioned both in relation to the BCSC itself and for specialists personally. Two specialists mentioned they were unable to make it around to all of the trade show exhibitors which they did not like.

The relationship between the specialists and the industry professionals in the trade show was identified as important to maintain. This relates to the relationship quality dimension of structural distance. The degree of distance cannot be determined;

however, given the level of importance attributed to these relationships, it can be assumed to be a lower level of distance.

Trust/Comfort

The level of trust and comfort that participants have with the specialists was mentioned by three specialists. Each gave a different reason for why this level of trust and comfort exists. One specialist felt that participants were comfortable asking questions because "...they don't feel belittled by asking for information or questions. ... because we don't start laughing when we hear it, we give them an answer" (SP2P24). Specialist Four commented that participants perceive the specialists to have 'been there, done that' which establishes a level of trust with them (P11). Additionally, Specialist Three attributed this trust and comfort to the background and knowledge level of the specialists. (P7-8).

Three specialists mentioned trust and comfort level as an aspect of the relationship between themselves and participants. Established trust is within the affect dimension of functional distance and indicates a high degree of closeness in the working relationship and a low level of function distance.

Functional Distance Summary

Four themes related to functional distance emerged from the interviews. Two themes relate to the 'affect' dimension of functional distance. Affect in a relationship indicates good feelings including liking, support, and trust (Napier and Ferris, 1993). Specialists mentioned a group of participants who will attend their sessions because they are the ones presenting rather than based on the content. These participants choose their

sessions based on the specialists that they like. Specialists also feel that participants have a higher level of trust and comfort with them. The higher levels of liking, trust, and comfort are related to affect and indicate a low level of distance between specialists and participants.

Two themes relate to the ‘relationship quality’ dimension of functional distance. Relationship quality refers to the perception of the quality of the working relationship (closeness and effectiveness) (Napier & Ferris, 1993). Specialists mentioned that some participants consider themselves very familiar or having a certain relationship with them that is not reciprocal. Specialists also mentioned the desire to maintain and develop the relationship that they have with trade show exhibitors. The relationships that specialists have relates to relationship quality and indicates a perceived low level of distance between specialists and participants and an actual low level of distance between specialists and trade show exhibitors.

Other Findings

Several categories emerged that did not fit into the framework of leader distance by Napier and Ferris (1993) yet related to distance and the relationship between leader and follower. Categories that relate to leader distance but did not align with the framework are included below.

Audience

Specialists are aware of the audience of the BCSC and intentionally make decisions with the audience in mind. Five specialists mentioned the audience as a whole and the things they keep in mind when presenting at a session. The diversity of the

audience was mentioned by three specialists, in terms of the experience level of participants and in terms of the scale of their cattle operations. Given this diversity, specialists are conscious of the language they use and the depth of the material they present.

Three specialists also mentioned the audience from the standpoint of a presenter. They each commented on 'reading' the audience in their sessions to check for engagement and understanding. Signals from participants that specialists look for include: taking notes; looking at their cell phones; paying attention; having a confused expression; body language. Specialists use these cues to determine if they should make adjustments to their presentations or to gauge if the session was successful. Two specialists use questions to bring an audience back together, both answering questions from participants and asking questions of the participants. "...I've learned to kind of ask some questions to them just to see how they're answering those questions and based on how they're answering them you can gauge where you need to go with the rest of the presentation" (SP6P2).

Maintaining engagement with the audience was mentioned as a conscious effort by the specialists. Consideration of the audience and intentionally working to keep participants engaged relates to the interaction between the two groups. While the opportunity to interact and the quality of the working relationship are addressed in Napier and Ferris' (1993) framework, the quality of the interaction itself is not mentioned.

Humor

An aspect of giving presentations at the BCSC that was mentioned by four specialists is the use of humor. All commenters felt the inclusion of humor in a presentation was beneficial. Half of the specialists report intentionally adding humor to their presentations in an effort to relax the audience and keep them engaged. One specialist expressed his desire to "...be a little bit more entertaining and throw a joke or two in there..." (SP6P13). The overall feeling was that presentations that include humor are better received by participants.

The experience of four specialists indicate that humor is a positive strategy for engaging an audience. Engaging participants relates to the quality of interaction during a presentation. The quality of interaction is not a part of Napier and Ferris' (1993) framework of leader distance.

Personality

The personality of the specialists was mentioned by three specialists. Components of personality were mentioned, including humor, patience, and approachability. The diversity of personalities within the group of specialists was also mentioned, specifically as one of their strengths. Additionally, the personalities of the specialists was suggested as a determinant of whom 'groupies' will choose to follow. Personality was also mentioned in terms of being successful in extension work, although only certain personality types will go into extension work makes it a self-selecting process.

The personalities of the specialists was mentioned as a strength of the BCSC as well as a factor in being successful in extension work. A leader's personality could have a significant impact on the level and type of distance that they employ, affecting all three distance dimensions of Napier and Ferris' (1993) framework; however, personality is not addressed.

Other Findings Summary

Three themes emerged as being related to leader distance but did not fit in Napier and Ferris' (1993) framework. Two themes related to the quality of the interaction between specialists and participants. Specialists make a concerted effort to keep their audiences engaged and will sometimes use humor in an effort to do so. Additionally, the personality of the specialists can affect each dimension of the distance framework. Each theme was mentioned in the context of lowering the level of distance between specialists and participants.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the role of leader distance (instructor accessibility) in a state-level extension program for beef cattle producers. Using a leader distance framework by Napier and Ferris (1993) distance was investigated in terms of the applicability to concept of faculty accessibility, relationship to customer satisfaction ratings, and the experience of extensions specialists. Looking at distance in these contexts can help extension educators as they participate in programs by describing attributes and behaviors that affect engagement with participants and the resulting customer satisfaction. This study was guided by the following objectives:

1. Explore the concept of leader distance in an educational context (instructor accessibility).
2. Describe the relationship between perceived instructor accessibility and customer satisfaction of the BCSC.
3. Explore how extension beef cattle specialists perceive, approach, and have experienced leader distance while at the BCSC.

These objectives were accomplished by integrative inquiry and analysis of existing evaluation data comprised of quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data.

Summary of Findings

Objective One

The purpose of research objective one was to explore the concept of leader distance in an educational context. The concept of leader distance can and has been

applied in an education context. Granitz et al. (2008) developed a model of rapport between faculty and students that includes several of the same dimensions presented in Napier and Ferris' (1993) framework. Specifically, similarity between the leader and follower (or faculty and student) are direct parallels, as well as physical availability and trust. Other aspects of both frameworks do not align, although they both relate to the quality of relationship between the leader and follower. Granitz et al. (2008) and Napier and Ferris (1993) both support two positions: more rapport/less distance leads to a higher quality relationship and more rapport/less distance leads to increased satisfaction.

Objective Two

The purpose of research objective two was to describe the relationship between perceived instructor accessibility and customer satisfaction of the BCSC. Quantitative evaluation data was analyzed for a relationship between participants' perceptions of the extension specialists' accessibility and their satisfaction rating with the instructors and the BCSC overall. Scales measuring accessibility in terms of availability and approachability were developed and included on the program evaluation. Means for each scale were calculated and tested for correlation to the satisfaction ratings for instructors and the BCSC overall.

Frequency distributions for both distance scales were non-normal. An overwhelming percent of participants (90.5 – 98.3%) either Mostly or Completely agreed with the statements regarding the instructors. The means for the structural and functional distance scales were $M = 4.52$ and $M = 4.69$ respectively.

Frequency distribution for the overall customer satisfaction with instructors was non-normal. Nearly every participant was Mostly or Completely satisfied with the instructors (98.5%). The mean satisfaction with instructors was $M = 4.71$ across all participants, while customer satisfaction with instructors ratings by structural and functional distance scales were $M = 4.71$ and $M = 4.72$ respectively.

Distance scale scores were tested for correlations with the overall customer satisfaction with instructors rating. The structural distance scale is not significantly correlated to the overall customer satisfaction with instructors rating with an r value of .154. The functional distance scale was significantly correlated to the overall customer satisfaction with instructors rating at the $p < .01$ level with an r value of .564.

Correlations between individual scale items and the overall customer satisfaction with instructors rating were calculated. No items on the structural distance scale were significantly correlated while all three items on the functional scale were significantly correlated at the $p < .01$ level. The statement ‘They were friendly’ was most correlated to the overall customer satisfaction with instructors rating with a correlation coefficient of $r = .510$.

Frequency distribution for the overall customer satisfaction rating of the BCSC was non-normal. Nearly every participant was Mostly or Completely satisfied with the BCSC (99.3%). The mean customer satisfaction score was $M = 4.57$ across all participants, while customer satisfaction ratings by structural and functional distance scales were $M = 4.55$ and $M = 4.60$ respectively.

Distance scale scores were tested for correlations with the overall customer satisfaction of the BCSC rating. The structural distance scale is not significantly correlated to the overall customer satisfaction rating with an r value of .037. The functional distance scale was statistically correlated to the overall customer satisfaction rating at the $p < .01$ level with an r value of .454.

Correlations between individual scale items and the overall customer satisfaction rating of the BCSC were calculated. No items on the structural distance scale were significantly correlated while all three items on the functional scale were significantly correlated at the $p < .01$ level. The statement ‘They were helpful’ was most correlated to the overall customer satisfaction rating with a correlation coefficient of $r = .459$.

Objective Three

The purpose of research objective three was to explore how extension beef cattle specialists perceive, approach, and have experienced leader distance while at the BCSC. Qualitative interviews were analyzed based on the distance framework by Napier and Ferris (1993). Themes related to distance were identified and classified within the framework. Themes that did not fit in the framework but were related to distance nonetheless were categorized as ‘other.’

Psychological Distance Summary

Three themes related to psychological distance emerged from the interviews. Each of the three themes relate to the ‘perceived similarity’ dimension of psychological distance. Specialists are careful to use language that is not too technical or complex in an effort to connect with participants. Specialists also connect with participants by being

able to relate to their situation as a result of being involved in the cattle business outside of their extension job. This brings credibility to the information and advice they share. Specialists prefer to stand in line for meals with everyone else, indicating a sense of similarity. The use of similar language, being in similar situations, and thinking of themselves and participants similarly indicate a low level of distance between specialists and participants.

Structural Distance Summary

Six themes related to structural distance emerged from the interviews. Each of the six themes relate to the ‘opportunity to interact’ dimension of structural distance, specifically their physical accessibility. The high frequency of participants asking questions was mentioned by five specialists, including how they perceive and handle so many questions. Specialists also mentioned their conscious effort to be available to participants and often think of this availability as one of their overarching roles while at the BCSC. The availability of specialists and their high demand among participants results in being unable to freely move throughout the halls. To alleviate this demand, specialists had discussed creating a dedicated space for people to be able to find them for questions called the bull pen. Being more available to participants was also mentioned as the single thing that two specialists would change about the BCSC. They placed an emphasis on interacting with participants, both during sessions as a presenter and in the halls during breaks. Being physically available to participants and interacting with them indicates a low level of distance between specialists and participants.

Functional Distance Summary

Four themes related to functional distance emerged from the interviews. Two themes relate to the ‘affect’ dimension of functional distance. Specialists mentioned a group of participants who will attend their sessions not for content, but because they are the ones presenting. These participants choose their sessions based on the specialists that they like. Specialists also feel that participants have a higher level of trust and comfort with them. Liking, trust, and comfort are related to affect and higher levels of each indicate a low level of distance between specialists and participants.

Two themes relate to the ‘relationship quality’ dimension of functional distance. Specialists mentioned that some participants consider themselves very familiar or having a certain relationship with them that is not reciprocal. Specialists also mentioned the desire to maintain and develop the relationship that they have with trade show exhibitors. The relationships that specialists have relates to relationship quality and indicates a perceived low level of distance between specialists and participants and an actual low level of distance between specialists and trade show exhibitors.

Other Findings Summary

Three themes emerged as being related to leader distance but did not fit in Napier and Ferris’ (1993) framework. Two themes related to the quality of the interaction between specialists and participants. Specialists make a concerted effort to keep their audiences engaged and will sometimes use humor in an effort to do so. The personality of the specialists can affect each dimension of the distance framework. Each theme was

mentioned in the context of lowering the level of distance between specialists and participants.

Conclusions

Objective One

It can be concluded that the concept of leader distance aligns with the ideas of faculty accessibility and rapport. Scholars in a variety of fields are investigating notions of leader distance but are using different terms to describe it. Less distance in relationships results in a better quality relationship and increased satisfaction, as previously noted in LMX theory (Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982) and is related to the individualized consideration and idealized influence components of Transformational Leadership (Avolio, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991).

Objective Two

It can be concluded that participants at the BCSC are satisfied with the instructors and the program overall. The overall satisfaction rating among all participants in this study was $M = 4.57$, slightly above the overall customer satisfaction score for all Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in the 2013 fiscal year of $M = 4.55$ (“Overall Satisfaction,” n.d.) and other 2013 Texas beef cattle extension programs (Cow Calf Clinic $M = 4.46$, Southeast Texas Beef Symposium $M = 4.44$) (P.Pope, personal communication, June 24, 2016). Participants also overwhelmingly agreed with statements regarding the accessibility of instructors, indicating a perceived low level of distance on both measures.

It can be concluded that while participants perceive a low level of structural distance between themselves and specialists, this perception had no effect on their satisfaction with the BCSC overall. Specialists have a high level of perceived availability yet it is not correlated with customer satisfaction. This conclusion does not support the argument put forth by Culp (1997) in his integration of Sanders' (1995) 12 'Major Customer Turnoffs' with extension. One customer turn off, 'help is unavailable when it is needed,' is presented as a barrier to customer satisfaction.

It can also be concluded that participants perceive a low level of functional distance between themselves and specialists. They perceive specialists as approachable and this perception has a significant effect on their satisfaction with the BCSC overall.

Objective Three

It can be concluded that the beef cattle extension specialists interviewed perceive, approach, and experience low levels of distance while at the BCSC.

Interviews yielded examples of distance in each of the dimensions conceptualized by Napier and Ferris (1993). Specialists intentionally create lower levels of psychological distance by the conveyance of the idea that they are similar to participants. This is expressed through the use of similar language, relating to participants' situations and experiences, and not using the VIP line for meals. This conclusion is supported by Granitz et al.'s (2008) model of rapport which includes respect (not talking down to students and thinking of them at the same level). Specialists also intentionally create lower levels of structural distance by purposely making themselves available for participants. As a result, they have experienced a large demand

on their time; however, they see this availability as one of their roles at the BCSC and a function of their job in extension. Specialists have experienced low levels of functional distance from the standpoint of participants. Some participants express a familiarity with specialists that is not reciprocal suggesting a perceived 'close' relationship with them. Specialists intentionally cultivate and maintain good relationships with the trade show exhibitors. Some participants express low levels of functional distance by going to a specialist's session because of their affect for them. This finding supports Szymanski and Henard's (2001) finding that affect is related to customer satisfaction.

Interviews also yielded three themes that did not fit into Napier and Ferris' (1993) framework, yet convey the intentionality of decreasing distance between specialists and participants. Specialists are aware of engaging their audiences and will use humor as an approach. The personality of specialists also affects experienced distance. This conclusion is supported by Napier and Ferris's suggestion that personality characteristics could have a moderating or mediating effect on their conceptualization of distance (1993). This conclusion is also supported by Granitz et al.'s (2008) model of rapport which includes personality and humor as antecedents of rapport.

Recommendations for Practice

Maintain Culture of Availability

Extension administration should continue to promote the culture of availability that is predominant with the specialists interviewed for this study. As new specialists and personnel join extension's ranks, they should learn from experienced professionals about the need for low distance in their relationships with customers. This should be discussed

explicitly as well as through observation. Extension administration can formally support these efforts through policies and procedures that allow specialists and personnel to have ample time to support programs with their presence.

Maintain Low Levels of Distance

Based on the results of this study, extension personnel should continue to employ low levels of distance as they engage with participants. The nature of extension work in general selects for those predisposed for working in close distance with others, whether it be mentally through being able to relate and speak to audiences, physically available, or having the personality and approachability that foster such closeness. Although the results of this study do not indicate causation, a low level of functional distance is correlated to participants' satisfaction with instructors and an extension program. As customer satisfaction is an indicator of success in Texas extension, this correlation should not go unnoticed.

Implement the Bull Pen

The idea of a bull pen, as suggested by several specialists, should be implemented at the BCSC. Participants would have a definitive way to access specialists rather than trying to catch them in the halls or during meals. Being available in a central location could alleviate some of the congestion during session breaks and possibly allow specialists to feel less swarmed at other times. Logistical constraints prohibited implementation of the bull pen previously; however, if the bull pen was made a priority, solutions to logistical issues can be found.

Implement Q&A Time in Each Session

Each session of the BCSC should allow time at the end for a question and answer session. Specialists mentioned the need for the group to hear the answers to questions rather than in a one-on-one situation. Allowing time at the end of each session could benefit the entire audience and potentially decrease demand for the specialists' time after the session ends. Technology (text messages, Twitter, etc.) could be used to gather questions from participants and answers provided in sessions or as a response.

Recommendations for Further Research

Future research should explore the relationship between other ratings on the BCSC evaluation and overall customer satisfaction to determine other factors that might be related. Participants rate their satisfaction with the content (expected, accuracy, ease of understanding, relevance, quality of materials, and range of topics), instructors' knowledge level, and physical setting, which could be correlated to overall satisfaction.

The baseline of customer satisfaction in Texas extension should be determined. To date, Kentucky, Florida, and South Carolina are the only states to report customer satisfaction data. Scholarly literature related to extension and evaluation would be enhanced by the addition of Texas data, in addition to telling the story of extension in Texas.

The current culture of availability in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension should also be explored. Results from interviews with specialists indicate an existing culture which could be explored and described further. Is this culture explicitly dictated from training

and supervisors? If not, how do personnel learn to value being available for participants and customers?

Future research should replicate objective three of the current study with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension county agents. County agents have different duties than subject matter specialists and could perceive, approach, and experience leader distance in a different manner.

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APPENDIX A



Beef Cattle Short Course - 2013

Your views on the quality and effectiveness of Extension programs are extremely important. Please take a few minutes to tell us about your experience with this activity. Your answers to the following questions will help us better meet your needs. Thank you!

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ✗ ☒ ☑ ☒ ☑

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course (BCSC)?

- Not at all
 Slightly
 Somewhat
 Mostly
 Completely

2. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the BCSC?

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Slightly</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Completely</u>
Content					
a. Information being what you expected to receive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Accuracy of information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Information being easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Relevance of the examples used	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Quality of course materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Range of topics covered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instructors					
g. Instructors' knowledge level of subject matter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Overall satisfaction with instructors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilities					
i. Physical setting's contribution to ease of listening and participation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Please rate your agreement with the following statements regarding the instructors.

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Slightly</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Completely</u>
a. I had access to them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. They encouraged interaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. They were available if I had questions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. There was not an opportunity to interact with them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please continue on the other side.

3302



MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ☒ ☓ ☞ ☛

4. Please indicate your intentions to adopt a practice from each session listed below. If you have already adopted the practices presented or if you did not attend that session, please mark "Already Adopted" or "Did not attend."

Already Adopted	Did Not Attend	Session name:	Definitely Will Not	Probably Will Not	Un-decided	Probably Will	Definitely Will
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A. Introduction to Cattle Production	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	B. Forage Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	C. Nutritional Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	D. Rebuilding the Beef Herd	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	E. Applied Breeding and Genetics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	F. Reproductive Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	G. Beef Cattle Health Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	H. Purebred Cattle I - Advanced Genetics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I. Issues Affecting Landowners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	J. Retiring to Ranching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	K. Beef Cattle Research in Texas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	L. Range Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	M. Flies, Gnats, Ticks - Pester Your Cattle, Cost You Money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	N. Purebred Cattle II - Marketing Your Genetics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	O. Pesticide Applicator Re-certification	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	P. Fence Building Demonstration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Q. Brush Busters Demonstration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	R. Beef Cattle Business Management Workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	S. Beef Carcass Value Determination Workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	T. Live Cattle Handling Demonstration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	U. Beef Cattle Chute Side Working Workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	V. Private Pesticide Applicator CEU	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. How likely are you to use information presented by the following speakers to make decisions about your ranch?

Did Not Attend	General Session Speaker:	Definitely Will Not	Probably Will Not	Un-decided	Probably Will	Definitely Will
<input type="radio"/>	W. Weather Outlook, Mr. Brian Bledsoe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	X. Beef Cattle Market and Industry Outlook, Mr. Don Close	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	Y. With Vision, There is Hope for Ranchers, Mr. Bruce Vincent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6a. Do you anticipate benefiting economically as a direct result of what you learned from BCSC?

- Yes
 No

6b. If "Yes", which sessions listed above will be the most economically beneficial? Please list up to three by writing in the letter in front of the session (A,B,C, etc.).

Most Economically Beneficial

2nd Most Economically Beneficial

3rd Most Economically Beneficial

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Please continue on the next page.



MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ✖ ☒ 🗑️ 🗑️

7. Based on the information provided at this course, what is the likelihood that you would recommend the Beef Cattle Short Course to your family and friends as a source for information on beef cattle production? Mark one number below with 0 = not likely and 10 = likely.

- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Likely Likely

8. You are primarily a Cow-calf producer Stocker cattle operator
 Feed lot operator N/A

9. Your operation is primarily Purebred Commercial N/A

10. How many years have you been ranching? years

(For the following questions, please provide a specific number even if its only an estimate or best guess)

11. What percentage of your time is devoted to ranching? %

12. How many acres do you have for ranching? acres

13. How many head of mature beef cows do you have? cows

14. What percentage of your income is generated from cattle? %

15. You are Female Male

16. In what year were you born? 19

17. Do you live . . . On the ranch Away from the ranch

18. Racial / Ethnic background?

- African American (non-Hispanic) Native American
 Asian American White (non-Hispanic)
 Hispanic Other

Please continue on the next page.

3302



MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ✖ ☒ ☐ ☑

19. How did you hear about the Beef Cattle Short Course this year?

- Association of Former Students (AggieNews)
- Email
- Mailed brochure
- Newspaper
- Radio
- Trade publication
- Web Site
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Word of mouth
- Other

20. How many years have you attended the Beef Cattle Short Course (including this year)? (enter "1" if first time)

21. What things did you like most about the Beef Cattle Short Course?

22. What things did you like least about the Beef Cattle Short Course?

23. What information would be useful to you for next year's BCSC?

Thank you!



APPENDIX B



Beef Cattle Short Course - 2013

Your views on the quality and effectiveness of Extension programs are extremely important. Please take a few minutes to tell us about your experience with this activity. Your answers to the following questions will help us better meet your needs. Thank you!

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ✘ ☒ ☑ ☐

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Texas A&M Beef Cattle Short Course (BCSC)?
- Not at all
 Slightly
 Somewhat
 Mostly
 Completely

2. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the BCSC?

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Slightly</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Completely</u>
Content					
a. Information being what you expected to receive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Accuracy of information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Information being easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Relevance of the examples used	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Quality of course materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Range of topics covered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instructors					
g. Instructors' knowledge level of subject matter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Overall satisfaction with instructors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilities					
i. Physical setting's contribution to ease of listening and participation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Please rate your agreement with the following statements regarding the instructors.

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Slightly</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Completely</u>
a. They were helpful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. They were easy to approach if I had a question	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. They did not show concern for participants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. They were friendly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please continue on the other side.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ☒ ☓ ☹

4. Please indicate your intentions to adopt a practice from each session listed below. If you have already adopted the practices presented or if you did not attend that session, please mark "Already Adopted" or "Did not attend."

Already Adopted	Did Not Attend	Session name:	Definitely Will Not	Probably Will Not	Un-decided	Probably Will	Definitely Will
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A. Introduction to Cattle Production	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	B. Forage Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	C. Nutritional Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	D. Rebuilding the Beef Herd	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	E. Applied Breeding and Genetics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	F. Reproductive Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	G. Beef Cattle Health Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	H. Purebred Cattle I - Advanced Genetics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I. Issues Affecting Landowners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	J. Retiring to Ranching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	K. Beef Cattle Research in Texas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	L. Range Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	M. Flies, Gnats, Ticks - Pester Your Cattle, Cost You Money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	N. Purebred Cattle II - Marketing Your Genetics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	O. Pesticide Applicator Re-certification	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	P. Fence Building Demonstration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Q. Brush Busters Demonstration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	R. Beef Cattle Business Management Workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	S. Beef Carcass Value Determination Workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	T. Live Cattle Handling Demonstration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	U. Beef Cattle Chute Side Working Workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	V. Private Pesticide Applicator CEU	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. How likely are you to use information presented by the following speakers to make decisions about your ranch?

Did Not Attend	General Session Speaker:	Definitely Will Not	Probably Will Not	Un-decided	Probably Will	Definitely Will
<input type="radio"/>	W. Weather Outlook, Mr. Brian Bledsoe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	X. Beef Cattle Market and Industry Outlook, Mr. Don Close	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	Y. With Vision, There is Hope for Ranchers, Mr. Bruce Vincent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6a. Do you anticipate benefiting economically as a direct result of what you learned from BCSC?

- Yes
 No

6b. If "Yes", which sessions listed above will be the most economically beneficial? Please list up to three by writing in the letter in front of the session (A,B,C, etc.).

Most Economically Beneficial

2nd Most Economically Beneficial

3rd Most Economically Beneficial

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Please continue on the next page.

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ✖ ☒ 🗑️ 🔄

7. Based on the information provided at this course, what is the likelihood that you would recommend the Beef Cattle Short Course to your family and friends as a source for information on beef cattle production? Mark one number below with 0 = not likely and 10 = likely.

- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Likely Likely

8. You are primarily a Cow-calf producer Stocker cattle operator
 Feed lot operator N/A

9. Your operation is primarily Purebred Commercial N/A

10. How many years have you been ranching? years

(For the following questions, please provide a specific number even if its only an estimate or best guess)

11. What percentage of your time is devoted to ranching? %

12. How many acres do you have for ranching? acres

13. How many head of mature beef cows do you have? cows

14. What percentage of your income is generated from cattle? %

15. You are Female Male

16. In what year were you born? 19

17. Do you live On the ranch Away from the ranch

18. Racial / Ethnic background?

- African American (non-Hispanic) Native American
 Asian American White (non-Hispanic)
 Hispanic Other

Please continue on the next page.

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

CORRECT: ● INCORRECT: ☒ ☓ ☐ ☑

19. How did you hear about the Beef Cattle Short Course this year?

- Association of Former Students (AggieNews)
- Email
- Mailed brochure
- Newspaper
- Radio
- Trade publication
- Web Site
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Word of mouth
- Other

20. How many years have you attended the Beef Cattle Short Course (including this year)? (enter "1" if first time)

21. What things did you like most about the Beef Cattle Short Course?

22. What things did you like least about the Beef Cattle Short Course?

23. What information would be useful to you for next year's BCSC?

Thank you!



APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol

How long have you been involved with the BCSC?

In what capacity? (Has it changed?)

How do you see your role during the short course?

What do you do to ensure that you fulfill that role?

How many presentations have you made at the BCSC?

How do you prepare for your presentation?

Tell me about a BCSC presentation that went really well and one that did not go so well.

How do you introduce yourself?

How do you introduce your topic?

As you think about your presentation (and time at the BCSC) what are some things that you make sure to do?

If you could change something about your presentations (or you as a presenter) what would it be?

Describe a 'good' BCSC participant.

What kinds of interactions do you enjoy?

What kinds of interactions drive you crazy?

How much interaction do you have with participants outside of your presentation?

When do most participants ask questions (during session, breaks, Prime Rib, etc.)?

Why do you think that is?

If you could change the BCSC, how would you?

What do you think is the greatest strength of the BCSC?