

Abstract

Active listening is an often mentioned concept nowadays. However, there is no consensus in the available literature as to its definition, nor is there a unified view of its role in long-term partner relationships. This paper presents in its first part a review of different approaches to the concept of active listening. It is evident here that there is not always an exact consensus across the literature and some authors often define the concept in their own way. However, most definitions contain several common elements, namely, firstly, communication of non-verbal engagement and immediacy, secondly, paraphrasing of the speaker's speech and thirdly, asking questions or sentences that encourage the speaker to elaborate further on their message or express their feelings. Emphasis is also placed on showing empathy and acceptance not only of the speaker's verbal but also of his/her non-verbal expressions. In the next sections, through the specification of long-term partner relationships, the paper gets to compare studies aimed at assessing the impact of active listening on long-term partner relationships. When it comes to partner conflict, the authors of the articles disagree in their conclusions and it would be necessary to replicate the original research or conduct new research. The use of active listening outside of partner conflict is rated mostly positive. The authors suggest that active listening may be positively related to relationship satisfaction. Individuals who have difficulty using active listening correctly may tend to give advice, may not be able to respond appropriately, and may negatively influence the speaker in his or her formulation of ideas or expression of emotions. The last section of this paper presents a proposed correlational study focusing on the relationship between the use of active listening elements and partner satisfaction. The essence of this research is the use of the RAS questionnaire and the analysis of video recordings using a modified coding mechanism. The assumption is the participation of 120 couples who will both complete the aforementioned questionnaire and discuss the burdening topic in two eight-minute sessions. The limitations of the proposed research are mainly the lack of theoretical background and the couples' behaviour in unfamiliar environment and in front of cameras.

Keywords Psychology, active listening, relationships