

Faculty Views of Advising Styles When Interacting With Advisees

Earl E. McDowell

This study focused on faculty members' perceptions of their advising style when interacting with undergraduate and graduate advisees. The results indicated that the highest rated styles were communicator image, impression leaving, friendly, relaxed, and attentive for both undergraduate and graduate students. The lowest rated variables were contentious, dramatic, and dominant. Male faculty members rated friendly and attentive significantly higher for undergraduate advisees than female faculty members. Members who attended the National Association of College and Teachers of Agriculture meeting, 1987, rated all advising style variables significantly higher than a random sample of faculty members from a midwestern university for undergraduate students. Faculty members from the midwestern university rated all style variables significantly higher for graduate students. These and other results are reported and discussed in this paper.

The importance of the dynamic communication process between faculty members and students has been discussed by a number of researchers. Chickering (1979), for example, concluded that interaction between faculty and students helps students to develop intellectual competence and academic achievement, and helps students to advance education and career goals. In addition, a series of studies by Pascarella and his associates (1976, 1977, 1978, 1978) have been conducted. These studies suggested that an informal nonclassroom setting is particularly suited for faculty influence on students' attitudes, values, and behaviors and helps to develop higher levels of academic and social integration.

Other research by Andersen (1979) defined a good teacher as one who produces positive outcomes in the affective, behavioral, and cognitive domain which are termed teaching effectiveness variables. She concluded that significant positive relationships exist between immediacy variables (nonverbal cues) and affect and behavioral variables, but no relationships exist between these variables and cognitive learning. Other research by Tomita and McDowell (1981) revealed that teaching associates have positive perceptions of their willingness-to-communicate with students and their ability to develop clear content and presentation. Female teaching associates were more confident in their communication with students than male teaching associates. In another study Andersen, Norton, and Nussbaum (1981) suggested that teachers who are more immediate have more

Earl E. McDowell is a professor in the Department of Rhetoric, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota 55108.

positive perceptions of their communicator styles and have more interpersonal solidarity with students. Students perceived that five styles (e.g., dramatic, open, relaxed, impression leaving, and friendly) separate good teachers from better teachers. McDowell (1984) discovered that faculty members use impression leaving, precise, friendly, attentive, animated, and communicator image most frequently in interacting with students in informal communication situations.

With the exception of McDowell's 1984 study, no research has focussed on faculty members' communication styles in interacting with students. These results indicated that female teachers use a more open style, while male teachers use a dominant style. This study will focus on faculty members' advising styles when interacting with advisees. The Communication Style Instrument appears to be an appropriate one as it relates well to other communication instruments and is a reliable and valid instrument to assess communication behaviors. Specifically, Norton (1978), author of the Communication Style Instrument, defined style "as the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered and understood." Prior to the development of the instrument, he reviewed studies dealing with self-disclosure, interpersonal interaction, nonverbal communication, personality, and social sex roles. The results of the review led to the development of the instrument, and after appropriate factor analyses, the style construct was categorized into eleven subconstructs. These include: impression leaving, contentious, open, dramatic, dominant, precise, relaxed, friendly, attentive, animated, and communicator image.

Montgomery and Norton (1981) developed a review of literature on communication style focusing on differences between biological sex groups. The review indicated that males have a more dominant communication style, are more contentious, use more hostile verbs, and are more assertive than females (Eakins and Eakins, 1978). Other results, reported by Cashell (1978), revealed that males are more precise as they focus on instrumental, objective, analytical, and problematic aspects of situations, whereas females focus on the socio-emotional aspects. Aires (1978) concluded that males engage in dramatizing, storytelling, jumping from one anecdote to another and receive comradeship through the sharing of closeness and laughter.

Females, on the other hand, utilized open, friendly, animated, and attentive styles. For example, Henley (1977) asserted that females are more attentive, show greater social

sensitivity, and utilize more nonverbal cues such as smiling, nodding, posture, and eye gaze. In short, females are more animated than males, using a wider range of nonverbal expressions of emotions.

Overall, the results of the review indicated that males have a greater potential to employ dominant, contentious, precise, relaxed, and dramatic styles than females, while females have a greater potential to employ open, friendly, attentive, and animated styles than males. While the above findings might be true in terms of everyday communication with significant others, friends and co-workers, the results might not be true in other communication situations. In this study the researcher focuses on faculty members' perceptions of their advising style in interacting with students. This is an exploratory study as there is no evidence that a male advisor's communication behaviors would be different than a female advisor's communication behaviors.

In addition to gender as an independent measure, organization type, academic rank, and teaching experience are independent variables. These variables might be important to ascertain the advising style of faculty members. For example, do teachers who participate in a national education association meeting rate style variables differently than a general population of teachers? Do teachers with different academic ranks rate the style variables differently? Do teachers of various teaching experiences rate the style variables differently?

Research Questions

- What are the highest rated and lowest rated advising style variables for undergraduate and graduate advisees?
- Do faculty members of different organizations (National Association of College and Teachers of Agriculture) rate advising variables differently for undergraduate and graduate advisees?
- Do male and female advisers differ significantly in their self-reporting of their advising of undergraduate and graduate advisees?
- Do professors of different academic ranks (assistant, associate, and full) rate advising variables differently for undergraduate and graduate advisees?
- Do professors with different levels of teaching experience (1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21-25, 25+) rate advising variables differently for undergraduate and graduate advisees?
- What are the relationships among advising style variables for undergraduate advisees?
- What are the relationships among advising style variables for graduate advisees?

Procedures

A random sample of 250 faculty members at a midwestern university and all 130 members who attended a NACTA conference in 1987 were selected as subjects for this study. All subjects were sent a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research and a copy of the Advisor Communication Style Instrument. Respondents were asked to rate them-

selves on each item in terms of their communication with advisees. Approximately 56% (73 members of the NACTA-Conference and 38% (85 faculty members of a midwestern university) completed and returned the questionnaire. The breakdown by independent variable is as follows: gender groups (141 males and 27 females), academic rank (36 assistant professors, 50 associate professors, and 82 full professors), and teaching experience (13 from the 1-5 group, 33 from the 6 to 10 group, 32 from 11 to 15 group, 27 from the 16 to 20 group, 20 from the 21 to 25 group, and 43 from the 25+ group).

Instruments

The revised form of the Communication Style Instrument, developed by Norton (1978) was used in this study. The Advisor Style Instrument consists of eleven subconstructs: impression leaving, contentious, open, dramatic, dominant, precise, relaxed, friendly, attentive, animated, and communicator image. Each subconstruct consists of four items which subjects rated from 1 to 5 using the Likert Scale from strongly agree through strongly disagree. Participants also compared themselves with other undergraduate and graduate advisors.

Statistical Analysis

Several types of statistical analyses were completed on the data. Initially, the means for each item and each style type were computed. Next a discriminant function analysis was completed (Wimmer, 1972). Stepwise discriminant analyses were completed for each of the independent variables: organization type, gender, academic rank and teaching experience. If significant differences occurred among academic rank groups and teaching experience groups, the Scheffe was completed to determine between which groups significance occurred.

Pearson product-moment correlations were completed to determine the relationships among variables for both the undergraduate and graduate data (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrener, and Bent, 1975).

Results

The results of the study indicated that the highest rated advising style variables are communicator image, impres-

TABLE 1: Means for Sex and Type of Organization for Undergraduate Students.

Style Type	Sex		Type of Organization	
	M	F	NACTA	Univ.
Impression Leaving	13.3	11.9	15.0	11.6
Contentious	7.3	6.8	7.9	6.7
Open	10.6	9.1	11.6	9.4
Dramatic	9.2	9.1	10.0	8.7
Dominant	8.2	8.5	9.1	7.6
Precise	10.9	10.2	12.1	9.9
Relaxed	12.6	10.6	13.9	11.2
Friendly	13.4	11.1	14.8	11.8
Attentive	12.8	11.1	14.2	11.1
Animated	11.2	10.4	12.6	9.9
Communicator Image	13.8	12.6	15.6	12.1

TABLE 2 Means for Sex and Type of Organization for Graduate Students

Style Type	Sex		Type of Organization	
	M	F	NACTA	Univ.
Impression Leaving	9.5	11.2	6.4	12.3
Contentious	5.5	5.8	3.7	6.9
Open	7.1	8.2	4.8	9.1
Dramatic	6.6	8.0	4.4	8.8
Dominant	6.0	7.4	4.1	7.9
Precise	7.7	9.5	5.2	10.2
Relaxed	8.7	10.7	6.1	11.2
Friendly	9.2	10.7	6.4	11.7
Attentive	8.8	10.3	6.1	11.3
Animated	7.5	9.4	5.5	9.6
Communicator Image	9.2	10.9	6.4	11.8

TABLE 3: Scheffe Procedures for Advising Style Variables for Undergraduate Students

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	df	F	P
Biological Sex	Friendly	1	3.39	.05
	Attentive	1	4.39	.03
Type of Organization	Impression Leaving	1	17.99	.0001
	Contentious	1	4.77	.03
	Open	1	8.74	.003
	Dramatic	1	3.48	.05
	Dominant	1	4.97	.02
	Precise	1	9.98	.001
	Relaxed	1	11.58	.0008
	Friendly	1	15.58	.0001
	Attentive	1	15.97	.0001
	Animated	1	14.21	.0002
	Communicator Image	1	16.97	.0001

sion leaving, friendly, relaxed and attentive for both undergraduate and graduate advisees. The lowest rated style variables for both undergraduate and graduate advisees were contentious, dramatic and dominant (see Tables 1-2). The results, reported in Table 3, indicated that significant differences occurred between gender groups in rating friendly and attentive. In both cases males rated the items higher than females. The discriminant function classified 60% correctly into male and female groups. In addition, significant differences occurred on all dependent measures between organization groups. The NACTA group rated the variables higher than the midwestern university group. The discriminant analysis results for organizational groups indicated significant differences ($X^2=31.65$; $df=4$; $p<.001$; $R=.41$), with approximately 77% of the cases correctly classified. No significant differences occurred among academic rank groups and teacher experience groups in rating the advising style variables for undergraduate students.

No significant differences existed between gender groups, among academic rank groups, and among teacher experience groups in rating advising style variables when interacting with graduate advisees. Large within group variances occurred between levels of these independent variables in rating the eleven advising styles of graduate advisees. Significant differences occurred between organization groups in rating all advising style variables (see Table 4). The discriminant analysis results indicated that significant dif-

ferences ($x^2=17.83$; $df=4$; $p<.001$; $R=.47$) with approximately 82% of the subjects correctly classified. Unlike the undergraduate results, faculty members from the midwestern university rated all style variables for graduate students higher than the NACTA group.

The correlational analyses indicated that significant differences ($p<.05$) occurred between all variables in rating undergraduate and graduate advisees. Correlations of more than .80 occurred among impression leaving, relaxed, friendly, attentive, animated and communicator image.

Post hoc analyses were completed to determine if faculty members who advise both undergraduate and graduate students rated the advising style variables differently for the two groups. Initially, a stepwise discriminant analysis was completed for the composite group ($N=98$). The results indicated significant differences ($p<.05$) occurred between groups in rating impression leaving, friendly, and communicator image between undergraduate and graduate students, but the discriminant function classified only 40% of the group correctly.

Next, a stepwise discriminant function analysis was completed to determine within organizational differences in rating undergraduate and graduate advisees. The results indicated that significant differences ($p<.001$) occurred for the NACTA group in rating all style variables. Over 73% of the subjects were correctly classified. In contrast no significant differences occurred between faculty members from a midwestern university in rating advising style variables of undergraduate and graduate advisees.

TABLE 4: Scheffe Procedures for Advising Style Variables for Graduate Students

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	df	F	P
Type of Organization	Impression Leaving	1	28.51	.0001
	Contentious	1	20.88	.0001
	Open	1	23.62	.0001
	Dramatic	1	28.40	.0001
	Dominant	1	28.25	.0001
	Precise	1	23.25	.0001
	Relaxed	1	27.92	.0001
	Friendly	1	24.72	.0001
	Attentive	1	24.31	.0001
	Animated	1	20.39	.0001
	Communicator Image	1	23.13	.0001

TABLE 5: Comparison Among Other Advisors for Undergraduate Students

Dependent Variables	All or 4 of them %	3 or 2 of them %	1 or none of them %
Impression Leaving	43	46	1
Contentious	17	60	23
Open	68	32	0
Dramatic	45	50	5
Dominant	21	70	9
Precise	37	55	8
Relaxed	47	52	1
Friendly	61	36	3
Attentive	64	35	1
Animated	2	65	8
Communication Image	4	55	1

TABLE 6: Comparison Among Other Advisors for Graduate Students

Dependent Variables	All or 4 of them %	3 or 2 of them %	1 or none of them %
Impression Leaving	37	59	4
Contentious	16	59	25
Open	66	34	10
Dramatic	42	52	6
Dominant	24	69	7
Precise	40	55	5
Relaxed	55	43	2
Friendly	62	36	2
Attentive	59	40	1
Animated	25	67	8
Communication Image	46	54	0

Discussion

An interpretation of the results of this exploratory study indicates that faculty members perceive that they utilize most frequently impression leaving, friendly, animated, attentive, and communicator style, while they are less likely to use contentious, dominant, open, and dramatic when advising undergraduate and graduate students. In examining the raw scores, 34% of undergraduate advisors and 23% of graduate advisors rated the style types "agree" or "strongly agree" for response areas. These results are similar to those reported in McDowell's study (1984) which focused on faculty members' informal communication with students.

The results also indicate that gender is not a good discriminating variable. Only marginal differences occurred between groups in rating advising style variables. Unlike previous research that focused on the style construct, male advisors perceive they are more friendly and attentive than female advisors. That is, previous research by Montgomery and Norton (1979) and by McDowell and McDowell (1983) concluded male students perceive that they are more precise than female students, and female students are more animated and friendly in their interpersonal communication than male students. The fact that only 14% of the sample was female advisors, seems to indicate that the results may not be representative of the female advisor group.

The most surprising results occurred between the two organizations. That is, the NACTA respondents rated all the advising style variables higher for undergraduate advisees, while faculty members from a midwestern university rated all the advising style variables higher for graduate advisees. Interviews might be completed with a sample of the members of NACTA to discover why there is such a difference between the rating of their advising style of undergraduate and graduate advisees. Additional research is needed to help explain these results.

The academic rank results reveal that no significant differences occurred between groups in rating advising style variables. Assistant professors rated all eleven style variables higher for undergraduate advisees, while full professors rated all the style variables higher for graduate advisees. All groups rated impression leaving, friendly, attentive, animated and communicator image higher than other style variables. The results are difficult to explain, but assistant

TABLE 7: Correlation Coefficients for Advising Style Variables For Undergraduate Advisees

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Impression Leaving	.68	.75	.66	.69	.81	.82	.85	.84	.78	.88	
Contentious		.63	.62	.67	.67	.53	.64	.61	.68	.67	
Open			.74	.57	.68	.71	.74	.73	.76	.77	
Dramatic				.66	.67	.65	.72	.68	.78	.72	
Dominant					.70	.57	.74	.69	.73	.67	
Precise						.74	.81	.80	.78	.79	
Relaxed							.85	.86	.78	.86	
Friendly								.91	.85	.91	
Attentive									.83	.89	
Animated										.82	
Communicator Image											

professors might feel more comfortable in advising undergraduate students than graduate students as they might teach mostly undergraduate classes. Thus, they might feel more comfortable and competent in this role.

The results for teaching experience groups reveal that no significant differences occurred between groups in rating the style variables. The teaching experience results show that the "20-25" year group rated impression leaving and communicator image variables higher than other groups. The "6 to 10" experience group rated the styles higher, for the most part, for undergraduate advisees. The "11-15" experience groups rated the styles higher for graduate students. The overall results seem to indicate that faculty members with six to fifteen years experience rated style variables higher than the other experience groups.

The correlational analyses revealed that significant positive relationships exist between all variables. The magnitude of the relationships is quite high with a majority of them over .60. Multiple correlational analyses were performed with both impression leaving and communicator image as criterion variables. The results for the impression leaving variable indicated that communicator image, attentive, friendly, animated, and open accounted for 91% of the common variance. With communicator image as the criterion variable, impression leaving, relaxed, friendly, animated, and attentive account for 93% of the common variance. Similar relationship occurred in rating advising styles for graduate students.

Overall, the results of this exploratory study indicate that advisors perceive they use a variety of styles in advising

TABLE 8: Correlation Coefficients for Advising Style Variables For Graduate Advisees.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Impression Leaving	.61	.74	.62	.67	.61	.56	.77	.79	.78	.82	
Contentious		.46	.65	.58	.72	.76	.61	.57	.53	.61	
Open			.69	.56	.63	.69	.73	.82	.77	.79	
Dramatic				.64	.62	.75	.76	.63	.67	.68	
Dominant					.67	.54	.61	.57	.64	.53	
Precise						.74	.71	.76	.73	.78	
Relaxed							.82	.85	.76	.85	
Friendly								.92	.83	.89	
Attentive									.82	.87	
Animated										.76	
Communicator Image											

undergraduate and graduate students. With a possible raw score of 20 for each style type faculty members need a mean of 15 to rate the style in the "agree" or "strongly agree" categories. The composite means for the various levels of independent variables show that only the NACTA level rated impression leaving and communicator image above 15 for undergraduate advisees. In short, the results reveal that more than 70% do not rate the styles in the positive categories for nine of the eleven style types. More research is needed to determine the advisors' perceptions of advising style of undergraduate and graduate students.

Research also is needed to determine if advisors from different colleges within a university have similar perceptions of their advising styles. It might be, for example, that faculty members from communication and psychology departments perceive that they utilize more relaxed, animated, friendly, and communicator image styles than faculty members from other disciplines. Other research might compare faculty members from public and private universities to determine their perceptions of their advising styles.

Finally, the results of this study indicate that advisors use impression leaving, friendly, attentive, and animated, and communicator image styles most frequently in interacting with advisees. This research might be replicated and extended to better understand the advisors' communication styles when interacting with advisees.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Wayne L. Banwart, Book Review Editor
University of Illinois, W-203 Turner Hall
1102 S. Goodwin, Urbana, IL 61801

The NACTA Journal Book Review policy encourages the academic freedom of peers in the constructive criticism of unsolicited books submitted by publishers for review. The peer reviewers are persons who teach and/or conduct research in the subject matter area in which the book is written. A given review reflects the opinion of only the reviewer, and such opinions is not necessarily the opinion of NACTA and/or NACTA Journal.

Evans, J. Warren. *Horse, A Guide to Selection, Care and Enjoyment*, W.H. Freeman Co., 1989. Hardbound. 717 pages, \$35.95.

This text is an easily read book that fills the longstanding void for an introductory equine science text. This book contains basic introductory information for beginning students who are interested in buying their first horse, while covering a very broad range of topics involving the care and recreational use of the animal. The chapters, written in non-scientific language, range from selecting and buying a horse, to ownership responsibilities, and the management of breeding stock.

Although not as scientifically in-depth as the original text, *The Horse*, by Evans, Borton, Hintz and Van Vleck, *Horse, A Guide to Selection, Care and Enjoyment* includes numerous illustrations and photo sequences that aptly demonstrate management techniques, equipment, facilities. After reading these chapters, the student is able to see how to perform such tasks as hoof cleaning and saddling.

The chapter on facilities is particularly helpful and thorough, enumerating many easily overlooked aspects of facility construction and planning. In addition, the coverage of horse breeds is equally thorough in its discussion and is greatly enhanced by excellent photographic examples. However, the chapters concerning physiology and nutrition are not as complete as desired, and these limitations keep the book from being a suitable text to upper level equine courses.

In all, Evans has done a commendable job of combining information from various sources into an easily understood format. This text is recommended for introductory classes, but instructors of more in-depth courses may be better advised to utilize the second edition of *The Horse* or supplement their lectures with hand-outs.

Jane A. Pruitt
Assistant Professor of Agriculture
Southwest Missouri State University

James A. Christenson and Jerry W. Robinson, Jr. *Community Development in Perspective*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1989. 398 pp. Paperbound \$22.95, Clothbound \$38.95.

Many mark the beginning of community development, as a profession, with the founding of the Community Development Society twenty years ago. *Community Development in Perspective* follows by nearly ten years *Community Development in America*, also under the editorial direction of Christenson and Robinson and published following the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Community Development Society. As in the earlier work, they have invited a wide variety of scholars to present perspectives on the practice of community development. While thirteen of the twenty-one authors were also involved in writing the first book, this book is not just a