DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 203 413 CS 503 416

AUTHOR Snavely, William B.; Clatterbuck, Glen W.
TITLE The Impact of Social Style on Person Perception and Attraction across Three Relationship Contexts.
PUB DATE Nov 80
NOTE 27p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association (66th, New York, NY, November 13-16, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Assertiveness; *Attitude Measures; Behavioral Science Research; College Students; *Communication Research; Individual Characteristics; *Interpersonal Attraction; *Interpersonal Competence; Interpersonal Relationship; Measures (Individuals); *Personality Traits; Predictor Variables

ABSTRACT

A study investigated the relationship between social style and a number of dimensions of person perception and interpersonal attraction. Social style was defined as a two-dimensional construct of assertiveness and responsiveness, which combined to reflect four social styles. Five hypotheses predicted that differences in social style would result in different perceptions of versatility, trust, power, credibility, and attraction. Two scales were used and factor analyzed to determine the best factors, which turned out to be supportiveness, sociability, task, and physical attraction. Based on this information, 400 college students were asked to fill out scales tapping the five factors while making references to a friend, an acquaintance, or a coworker. Factor analyses of the resultant data supported the use of all scales except the sociability dimension of credibility, and all resulting factors achieved acceptable reliability. With type of relationship and social style as independent variables and person perceptions as dependent variables, analyses of variance indicated that social style had a significant impact on all dimensions of person perception and attraction except physical attraction (which was anticipated). (Author/RL)

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL STYLE ON PERSON PERCEPTION AND ATTRACTION ACROSS THREE RELATIONSHIP CONTEXTS

William B. Snavely, Miami University
Glen W. Clatterbuck, Auburn University

A number of recent research efforts have been concerned with the notion of social style. Social style is a two-dimensional construct which seeks to parsimoniously explain interpersonal communication behavior. The goal of social style theory and research has been to discover a simple but effective mechanism for individuals in a relationship to describe their partner's behavior, allowing for the individual to react appropriately (with versatility) in subsequent communication. Preliminary research and organizational practice suggests that identification of the two social style dimensions (assertiveness and responsiveness), when coupled with adaptive training, leads to increased understanding and interpersonal versatility.

One recent investigation (Snavely, 1978) attempted to initiate a theoretical view of social style. That study found that relationships could be drawn between perceptions of style and certain person perceptions in three separate contexts of primary relationships (friends, acquaintances, and co-workers). The goal of the present investigation was to extend this line of research, examining many of the same perceptions in a more appropriate conceptual manner.

Social Style

Social style can conceptually be viewed as distinct from some other style systems in the communication literature, most notably "communicator style." One commonality among stylistic approaches is that style usually refers to some pattern of interpersonal communication behavior. Communicator style (Norton, 1974) is a unique (rather than competing) construct which identifies a complex of behavioral indices which are self-referenced by individuals. Certain combinations of these behavioral traits are posited to lead to a level of competency referred to as the "good communicator." Social style, however, is concerned with observable (other-perceived) communication behavior. Conceptually, style in this sense represents an observational tool for improved communication. Social style identifies four distinct styles as a function of two behavioral dimensions which attempt to be descriptive rather than evaluative in nature.

Paper presented at the annual convention of the Speech Communication Association, New York City, November 15, 1980

Justification for a two-dimensional view of social style can be found in a number of independent investigations over the past twenty years (c.f. Borgatta, 1960; Borgatta, Cottrell & Mann, 1958; Buchholz, Lashbrook & Wenburg, 1976; Merrill, 1973; Mehrabian, 1971). Buchholz, et al. (1976) have suggested that while a number of labels have been applied to these two underlying factors, the conceptual base is the same. Knapp (1978) and others have used terms which were thought to be less evaluative in connotation than some labels previously used. The two dimensions of social style are assertiveness and responsiveness.

Knapp (1978) defines assertiveness as "the observable and measureable effort one makes to control and influence others" (p. 285). Snavely (1978) describes assertive behavior as stating opinions and beliefs with assurance, confidence or force. The low end of the assertiveness continuum is referred to as non-assertive, although it implies a relative degree of assertiveness as compared to the rest of the population rather than absolute or total degrees of assertiveness. The same implication applies to the responsiveness continuum. Responsiveness can be defined as "the observable and measureable effort one makes to control and influence him or herself" (Knapp, 1978, p. 285). Snavely (1978) defines the responsive indivdual as someone who appears to express emotional states through verbal and nonverbal behavior. Thus a person who controls the expression of emotions would be termed non-responsive. Assertiveness has been likened to aggressiveness, extroversion, or control while responsiveness represents the emotional tone of communication behavior in an interpersonal relationship.

The combination of these two dimensions in a matrix yields four distinct social styles: analyticals (low assertive and low responsive); amiables (high responsive and low assertive); expressives (high assertive and high responsive); and drivers (high assertive and low responsive). Knapp (1978) reports a number of "specialties" for each style. Conceptually, drivers behave in a task-oriented manner. They are highly assertive but tend to control emotional responses. Expressives are seen as impulsive. More relationship-oriented than the driver, they are perceived as social specialists. The amiable is seen as soft, personal, and supportive, reflecting high responsiveness and low assertiveness. Amiables are relationship-oriented and are seen as the support specialist. Finally, analyticals are perceived to be controlled and reserved. They are task-oriented, but not in an assertive manner. Conceptually, it is assumed that the dimensional continuums are based upon population comparisons, and thus

styles would be equally distributed in the population.

Context

A number of contextual schemes have been offered in the literature (c.f. Wish, 1976; Garrison, Sullivan & Pate, 1976). Context is defined as the unique type of relationship within which interpersonal communication takes place. The importance of context when defined in terms of types of relationships is that interpersonal behavior and person perceptions may vary across such contextual boundaries. For example, Snavely (1978) found that the predictive models of social style (obtained through regression techniques) varied somewhat across three types of primary relationships: acquaintances, co-workers, and friends. Unfortunately, little theory is available to explain what contexts ought to be studied or what ought to be specifically expected in each context. For heuristic reasons, the three contexts used by Snavely (1978) were included in this investigation.

Person Perception

It has long been established that person perceptions are an integral part of the interpersonal relationship. Research concerning a number of such perceptions are widespread in the communication literature (e.g. credibility, attraction, power, trust). Person perceptions are based upon observations of human behavior in a relationship. Tagiuri and Petrullo (1958) have argued that as such, person perceptions will influence interpersonal behavior in a relationship. If social style is representative of the primary dimensions of communication behavior, then person perceptions should, at least in part, be a function of social style such that significant differences in dimensions of person perception would be observed across the four social styles. The following review of literature supports the conceptual links between some of these perceptions and social style.

Versatility. Knowledge of style is important to the extent that an individual can exercise behavioral flexibility (or versatility) in interpersonal communication by utilizing stylistic information. Recent research has suggested that differences in styles should result in differences in versatility. That is, some styles may be more easily able to adapt to the behavior of others. Lashbrook, Lashbrook, Parsley and Wenburg (1976) found that the more respon-

sive styles (amiables and expressives) were perceived as more versatile than the other styles. This occurs because the emotional tone of the relationship, as expressed through responsiveness, is what lets a person know if the other person in a relationship is adapting to them. Snavely (1978) found that, while versatility was related to both assertiveness and responsiveness, the tie to the latter dimension was much stronger. Sullivan (1977) also found that responsive styles were perceived as more versatile, with expressives being perceived the most versatile of the four styles.

Hypothesis 1: Expressives and amiables will be perceived as more versatile than drivers or analyticals.

Trust. Interpersonal trust is also related to perceptions of social style. A survey of 949 adult subjects (Lashbrook, et al., 1976) was examined in a regression model. While both versatility and trust were predictive of social style, the researchers found that the influences of versatility and trust were independently significant. Snavely (1978) found that trust was related to both social style dimensions, although the tie to responsiveness was somewhat stronger. Sullivan (1977) found similar results with 211 business professionals. The two high-responsive styles (expressive and amiable) were perceived higher in interpersonal trust than were the other two styles.

Hypothesis 2: Expressives and amiables will be perceived as higher in interpersonal trust than drivers or analyticals.

Power. Another person perception found significant by Sullivan (1977) was that of interpersonal power. Specifically, the more assertive styles (driver and expressive) were perceived as more powerful. Clary and Luke (1977) identified specific "power behaviors" which included the assertive behaviors of a direct, assertive, competitive style of behavior. Snavely (1978) found that while power was highly related to assertiveness, it did not achieve significance with regard to responsiveness.

Hypothesis 3: Drivers and expressives will be perceived as more powerful than amiables or analyticals.

Credibility. One of the most researched person perceptions in the communication literature is that of credibility. Research has indicated that individuals who are perceived as more credible are also more persuasive, influential, and are listened to with greater comprehension and recall. Sullivan (1977) found that two dimensions of credibility (extroversion and sociability) were related to social style; while Snavely (1978) found five credibility dimensions to be related to social style. The latter study found that extroversion and character were related to assertiveness, while sociability, competence, and composure were highly related to responsiveness. Extroversion was also related to responsiveness. The more assertive styles would conceptually be more extroverted and competent, while the responsive styles would likely be perceived a having higher character ratings, higher sociability, and higher composure. It is responsiveness which communicates information about the emotional aspect of the individual to the perceiver, while assertiveness communicates forcefulness, strength, and power.

Hypothesis 4: Differences in social style will result in differences in perceptions of credibility.

A. Drivers and expressives will be perceived as more competent than amiables or analyticals.

B. Drivers and expressives will be perceived as more extroverted than amiables or analyticals.

C. Amiables and expressives will be perceived as higher in character than drivers or analyticals.

D. Amiables and expressives will be perceived as more composed than drivers or analyticals.

E. Amiables and expressives will be perceived as more sociable than drivers or analyticals.

Attraction. Interpersonal attraction represents a complex interaction of values and orientations toward an individual in an interpersonal relationship. That is, the affective and behavioral responses to an individual are a function of a number of inputs, many of which are only dimly understood. Nevertheless, because humans are discrete individuals, affective responses tend to merge (whatever their original sources) into overall impressions.

In the same fashion, behavioral approach or avoidance reactions tend to be a function of all operative forces related to attraction. This merging process has been referred to as a "halo" or "horn" effect, meaning that affective or behavioral impressions in one domain will tend to spill over to the entire individual in impression formation and relationship development. Therefore, the literature of interpersonal attraction research has reflected a basically unidimensional approach to the measurement of attraction in the past (e.g. Byrne's Interpersonal Judgement Scale, 1971).

Dissatisfaction with the assumption that a unidimensional scale adequately reflected the differential contribution of differing sources of attraction led to increased research into multidimensional measures of attraction. McCroskey and McCain (1974) combined a theoretical review with factor analytic techniques to identify three types of attraction: social, physical, and task attraction. Although the three scales have tended to be somewhat correlated, the factor structure has been replicated.

Berger, Weber, Munley and Dixon (1977) approached the problem of multidimensionality in a different fashion. Berger, et al. assumed that differing causes of attraction would be reflected in different relationship levels (i.e. degrees of primacy or intimacy) rather than in different relationship types. Their work identified three factors in the perception of the other: supportiveness, character, and sociability. These three dimensions vary in salience across differing relationship levels, but provide common criteria, on the basis of which individuals become attracted to one another.

The relationship of social style to interpersonal attraction is not a simple one. Context of the relationship determines whether responsiveness or assertiveness would be the more salient characteristic. Context may also influence whether one pole of either dimension is attractive. For a hypothetical example, the attractiveness of an infantry platoon leader and of a spouse may be based on very different combinations of stylistic behaviors necessary for a successful, rewarding, or reinforcing interaction. In the former example, assertiveness might clearly be more desirable than its opposite, while level of responsiveness is relatively unimportant. In the latter example, responsiveness might very well be preferable to non-responsiveness, but neither assertiveness nor non-assertiveness would necessarily be functional or

dysfunctional. Previous research does, however, support the position that interpersonal attraction is related to social style (Parsley & Lashbrook, 1976; Sullivan, 1977). Research offers no clear guidance, however, either for directional hypotheses or for overall predictions of the exact relationship between style and context in relation to attraction. Therefore, a general hypothesis was offerred:

Hypothesis 5: Differences in social style will result in different perceptions of interpersonal attraction.

The state of the research with respect to specification of the dimensions of interpersonal attraction remains confused. While McCroskey and McCain (1974) argue that there are three dimensions (social, physical, and task), Berger and his associates have argued that there are others (supportiveness, character, and sociability). The conceptual or operational overlap among these six dimensions in unclear. Conceptually, it is reasonable to expect differences in style to be reflected in all dimensions of attraction, except perhaps physical attraction. That perceptions of communication behavior would result in variance of physical attraction would be difficult to explain. Beauty may not be skin deep, but physical attributes must play a part in physical attractiveness, regardless of communication behavior. For heuristic reasons, however, it was decided that a factor analysis determine that best dimensionality of interpersonal attraction and that all resulting factors be tested as dependent variables.

While it seems likely from an examination of the literature that some main effects and interactions may emerge with respect to the context variable, it was felt that insufficient rationale existed to posit specific hypotheses in this regard. Clearly, we choose people to become friends (and acquaintances) because of certain attributes which we perceive them to possess. Therefore, we might expect that friends might be more trustworthy, attractive, etc.

Method

Subjects

Participants in the study were 405 college students enrolled in basic speech communication courses at a large midwestern U.S. university. Due to failure to follow basic testing instructions, five subjects were excluded from

data analysis, leaving a useable subject pool of 400. Questionnaires were administered by classroom instructors, who also debriefed subjects after the testing was completed.

Instrumentation

Social style was measured through the use of an instrument developed by Buchholz, et al. (1976). Additionally, the variables of trust and versatility were measured by the Buchholz, et al. scales. Subjects rated their perceptions of a target individual (to be described below) in terms of the appropriateness of specific adjectives to describe the person on a seven-point scale from "low" to "high". Previous research with this measure has indicated high internal reliability and validity. However, it was decided that before these dimensions were entered into data analysis the factor structure and reliability of the factors must be replicated.

The credibility dimensions of competence, character, composure, extroversion, and sociability were measured via scales developed by McCroskey, Jensen, and Valencia (1973). The power scales were developed by Lashbrook (1975). Each of these measures has been shown to achieve high reliability, but it was again decided to replicate the factor structure and reliability of each dimension prior to data analysis.

Interpersonal attraction was measured by means of two instruments, one developed by McCroskey and McCain (1974) and the other developed by Berger, et al. (1977). As noted above, each instrument measures attraction as a three-factor construct, although the factors isolated by each scale differ. In order to discover the best factors of attraction, a factor analysis was performed on the six factors, each of which were in a Likert-type format. Reliability analyses were also performed on the resulting factors.

Procedures

Subjects received a test booklet on which they were asked not to write their names. The cover of each booklet described one of three possible relationships: co-worker, acquaintance, or friend. Descriptions were obtained from Snavely (1977). After defining the relationship, subjects were asked to think of a person fitting the definition and to answer questions in the booklet with this target in mind. In addition to the scales noted above, basic demographic information about the subject and target was requested.

Manipulation check items completed the experimental booklet. The three forms of the booklet (according to context) were randomly distributed to subjects in each section of the basic course.

Data Analysis

The hypotheses in this study were initially tested by means of several analyses of variance. An independent variable was social style. Standardized cut-off values as determined by Buchholz, et al. (1976) were utilized to separate the subjects into the four classifications of social style. The other independent variable in the analysis was context (with three levels as noted above). The dependent variables were the various dimensions of person perception and interpersonal attraction. It was determined that if significant main effects were observed, cell mean comparisons would be computed by means of Tukey B.

Results

Factor Analyses

The first step in the data analysis for this study was verification of the measurement for each of the variables. Factor analyses were run on each set of scales, using varimax rotation. Since the factor structure had an a priori expectation, it was determined that items must load highly on the principle factor with no significant secondary loadings. In addition it was assumed that a factor must have at least three primary-loaded items to be a meaningful factor or subscale for this investigation. The dimensions of assertiveness, responsiveness, versatility, trust, power, and four factors of credibility were supported by the factor analysis. The sociability dimension of credibility did not emerge satisfactorily and was therefore dropped from further analysis in this study.

Since there were a number of potentially overlapping dimensions of attraction, factor analysis was used to reduce these scales. Table 1 contains the results of the principle components factor analysis with varimax rotation. The first factor, the supportiveness dimension, exactly replicated Berger, et al.'s first factor. The second factor was a task dimension, containing all of McCroskey and McCain's task items plus one item from Berger, et al.'s character dimension ("How dependable is this person?"). The third

factor exactly replicated McCroskey and McCain's physical dimension. The final factor contained each of the items from Berger, et al.'s sociability dimension. The other two conceptual dimensions (social attraction and character) did not emerge as separate factors and split across the other four factors with relatively low factor loadings. Thus, these factors were dropped from further analysis in this study.

Insert Table 1 About Here

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analyses were performed on all resulting factors in this study via Cronbach's Alpha with SPSS subprogram RELIABILITY. As indicated by table 2, all factors achieved acceptable reliability (.62 - .92). Additionally, the analysis indicated that reliability could not be improved through the elimination of any of the items for any of the factors.

Insert Table 2 About Here

Tests of Hypotheses

In order to test the hypotheses in this study, analyses of variance were run with social style and relationship context as independent variables and each of the dimensions of person perception and attraction as dependent variables. The results indicated that social style was significant at the .05 level of confidence for each of the dependent variables in the study except physical attraction ($F = 2.17$; p ,09). Table 3 summarizes these results.

Insert Table 3 About Here

The multiple comparisons for differences among the four styles with respect to each of the dependent variables are summarized in table 4. These results will be discussed in more detail in the discussion section of this paper. As indicated by table 3, context was also significant for each of the dependent variables except versatility and extroversion. Multiple

comparisons were thus performed across the three contexts for each of the significant dependent variables. Table 5 summarizes these results.

Insert Table 4 About Here

Insert Table 5 About Here

Discussion

The original goal of this investigation was to examine the impact of social style upon a number of dimensions of person perception and interpersonal attraction. The review of literature was suggestive of six main hypotheses. This section will consider each of those hypothese in light of the results of the present investigation. Additionally, some extensions and reservations with regard to the social style model will be offerred.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that expressives and amiables would be perceived as more versatile than either drivers or analyticals. The results were supportive of this hypothesis, as expressives were perceived as the most versatile style, followed by amiables, drivers, and analyticals. No main effects for context were observed, nor were any interactions found significant. The extent of the separation of the four styles was not anticipated. While the responsive styles were more versatile than the non-responsive ones, within those categories the assertive styles were also more versatile than the non-assertive ones. It would appear that the more one knows about the other, the more it is felt that the other is adapting, or being versatile. The suggestion that responsiveness has more of a contribution than assertiveness would also be supported, but assertiveness also provides important information in this regard. It may be that both dimensions aid in the reduction of uncertainty across relationships and that reduction of uncertainty leads to greater perceptions of versatility.

The second hypothesis predicted that high-responsive styles (expressive and amiable) would be perceived higher in interpersonal trust than either of the low-responsive styles. Multiple comparisons revealed that, across contexts,

the hypothesis was confirmed. No differences were observed within the high-responsive styles or within the low-responsive styles. Interpretation was made more difficult, however, by a significant main effect for context and a significant style x context interaction. When the interaction cells are broken down, analyticals and drivers in the acquaintance context are lower than all other cells. These two styles in the co-worker context are lower than amiables and expressives in the friend context (the highest groups). Finally, table 5 reveals that friends are higher in perceived trust than co-workers, who are higher than acquaintances. It would seem that we tend to trust people we know better and have less uncertainty about. Because of their social style, we find it easier to trust the responsive expressives and amiables, especially if they happen to be our friends. We are most distrustful of non-responsive styles in more distant contexts.

The third hypothesis predicted that the high-assertive styles would be perceived as more powerful than the other two styles. The eta statistic suggested that the main effect for style accounted for approximately 31% of the variance in power. Specifically, mean comparisons showed that expressives were higher than drivers and that the low-assertive styles were perceives less powerful than either expressives or drivers. These findings are supportive of hypothesis 3. In addition, a main effect for context was observed. Cell comparisons indicated that friends were perceived as more powerful than the other contexts. Thus it appears that we are influenced most by our friends (which should come as no surprise) and by people who behave in a more assertive manner. Further, it is interesting that expressive would be higher than drivers. While the earlier review of literature was not suggestive of this finding, Mowday (1976) found that the giving of rewards could be an effective (responsive) power behavior. Expressives would tend to give more "emotional" feedback, both verbally and nonverbally, than would drivers. Assertiveness appears to be a necessary precondition for this effect to become significant, however, as amiables and analyticals were not different.

Hypothesis 4 was concerned with the relationship of social style and credibility. One of the dimensions of credibility (sociability) was not examined due to factorial instability. However, sociability might conceptually be more properly considered a dimension of attraction than of credibility. Berger, et al. (1977) have labeled one of their attraction dimensions sociability.

Sub-hypothesis A suggested that drivers and expressives would be perceived more competent than amiables or analyticals due to the influence of assertiveness. Analysis of variance results pointed to a significant main effect for both style and context with no interaction effect. The only significant cell comparison among the four styles suggested that expressives were perceived as more competent than any of the other styles. It would appear that competence is not a simple result of assertiveness, but rather a function of both high assertiveness and high responsiveness. The fact that in almost every case where an evaluative dependent variable is tested expressives rate highest supports this notion, since competence is probably affected by other evaluations. These results are not directly supportive of this sub-hypothesis, but do provide important information. Contextual comparisons indicated that acquaintances were lower in competence than other contexts. This seems reasonable since we like to think we have competent friends and co-workers, while acquaintances are less of a known quantity.

The second sub-hypothesis predicted that drivers and expressives would be higher in perceived extroversion than the other styles. This sub-hypothesis was also not directly supported because expressives were more extroverted than all other styles, while analyticals were less extroverted than the other styles. This suggests that it is the combination of dimensions which influence our estimation of extroversion. That is, as suggested by Snavely (1978), extroversion is a matter both of force and of emotional tone. No other main effects were observed.

Sub-hypothesis C predicted that expressives and amiables would be higher in character than the other, less responsive styles. While the strongest main effect was that for style, context was also significant. The cell comparisons were supportive of the hypothesis. Additionally, analyticals were seen as higher in character than drivers. Because drivers are highly assertive, task-oriented, and operate without communicating as many emotions, they may be perceived as more cold and calculating than analyticals, who would not be as threatening. Drivers may be perceived as manipulative, leading to lower ratings of character. As might be expected, friends were perceived higher in character than other contexts. Character may well be a major reason for an individual to be perceived a friend rather than an acquaintance.

The last dimension of credibility examined in this study was composure. While the review of literature provided no strong rationale for directional predictions, it was thought that responsive styles would be perceived as more composed than the less responsive ones. The impact of style upon composure in this study was quite small, accounting for only 2% of the variance. Explanation was further complicated by a main effect for context and a significant interaction. When the style x context cells were broken down into a 4 x 3 matrix, cell comparisons indicated that the most composed group was amiable acquaintances, who were higher than driving co-workers (the lowest group). In sum, no clear picture emerged with respect to the composure variable in this study. The fact that such little variance was accounted for suggests that composure may not be an important result of style differences.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that differences in social style would result in different perceptions of attraction. No significant differences were observed with respect to the physical dimension of attraction. As noted in the rationale section, this was not unexpected. Physical attraction involves external perceptions (e.g. "this person is ugly") whereas the other dimensions involve more internal perceptions (e.g. "this person likes me"). There were, however, differences in physical attraction observed across contexts. Friends were more attractive than acquaintances, who were more attractive than co-workers. These findings support the notion that we select social co-interactants at least in part based upon physical attraction.

Social style differences resulted in different perceptions of the supportiveness dimension of attraction. Additionally, supportiveness varied across contexts. Specifically, expressives and amiables were perceived higher in supportiveness than either drivers or analyticals. This suggests an important influence of responsiveness in perceptions of attraction. That is, people who express emotions in their communication behavior are perceived as more supportive than those who do not, regardless of assertiveness. Because supportiveness is an emotional perception, this result is understandable. Contextually, friends were more attractive than other contexts (as expected).

For Berger, et al.'s second attraction dimension, sociability, similar results were obtained. However, in addition to the two main effects, a significant interaction was found. A comparison of the interaction means re-

vealed that analyticals and drivers were perceived lower in sociability than expressives or amiables, across contexts. Generally, co-workers were perceived lower in sociability than the other, more socially-oriented types. Remembering that drivers and analyticals were described as being task-oriented rather than people-oriented, the style effects are understandable as well.

Finally, differences were observed with respect to task attraction. The results indicated that expressives were most task attractive, followed by amiables, drivers, and analyticals (in that order). The differences between adjacent groups was not significant. Thus, it would appear that both style dimensions are important to task attraction, with responsiveness somewhat more important. Comparisons across contexts revealed that friends were more task attractive than either acquaintances or co-workers. Thus hypothesis 5 can be supported.

When taken together, these results suggest a number of things. First, the importance of reduction of uncertainty (Berger and Calabrese, 1975) is emphasized by these findings. The more we are able to reduce uncertainty about another, the more favorably we are likely to perceive them. Thus, expressives (who tell us the most about what they think and feel) reduce the most uncertainty and tend to be viewed most favorably across perceptual dimensions. Additionally, the contextual results are supportive of this notion. As we become more certain about another and view them more favorably, we move our definition of that relationship into the friend category. Friends in this study were perceived as more trustworthy, powerful, of higher character, more task and physically attractive, and more supportive. In only one dimension of perception where comparison were made did friends turn out to be lower than other categories and that was composure. It may be that we see friends in a greater variety of situations, thus we are able to see them in situations where composure is not high. More distant relationships restrict our informational base to what is intentionally portrayed (for the most part). Thus, acquaintances would seem to be more composed than friends because of reduction of uncertainty.

The impact of social style upon a number of dimensions of person perception has again been demonstrated. Examination of the eta^2 for style effects suggests that style accounts for meaningful amounts of variance in person perception (up to 31% for power). This suggests that social style may be an important factor, not only in the development of person perceptions, but also in the development of and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.

It was noted in the review of literature that the state of relationship development (or contextual) research was such that specific hypotheses regarding them could not be reasonably drawn. Whether friends, co-worker, and acquaintance are the best contexts to study, or whether others would be more appropriate, is still unclear. However, we would recommend that researchers in the areas of social style and person perception remain sensitive to relationship contexts since differences have been observed in this study. The fact that the co-worker context did not emerge as different from the other contexts except for trust, sociability, and physical attraction highlights the ambiguous nature of this context. In many cases, our co-workers are also friends or acquaintances, and thus they may not be totally unique classifications.

The state of the conceptualization and measurement of interpersonal attraction is somewhat confused. In this study, McCroskey and McCain's social dimension fell apart in the factor analysis when considered with Berger, et al.'s three socially-oriented dimensions. The best estimation to be offered as a result of this investigation is that attraction is indeed multidimensional, and that four of these dimensions are probably called supportiveness, sociability, task, and physical. It should be noted, however, that a recent study (Snavely and Collier, 1979) has suggested alternative measurement for social attraction (defined as the liking dimension of attraction). They criticized previous measurement of social attraction for validity problems. Thus, social attraction may or may not be a unique factor from supportiveness and sociability. More work in this area seems warranted.

Some limitations to the conclusions of this study are in order. First, generalizability must be limited to college students. Future research should investigate these relationships in other populations. It should be noted, however, that much of the review of literature (c.f. Buchholz, et al., 1976; Sullivan, 1977) has been based upon adult, non-student samples. Additionally, measurement of social style has been conducted by means of questionnaires. Future research need to move toward nonverbal measurement of social style through observations of actual communication behavior. Only when style identification is reliably tied to specific nonverbal behaviors can utilization of the style construct be made totally functional.

In summary, social style is a two-dimensional construct reflective of communication behavior in an interpersonal relationship. Different styles appear to result in varying person perceptions which are important to the development and maintenance of the relationship. Social style is not to be confused with communicator style (a multidimensional array of factors which contribute to the formation of a "good communicator"). At this point, to say that one style is to be preferred over others would be premature. The best style is most likely the one with which the individual feels most comfortable. Clearly, however, some styles will find it easier to develop positive attributes (e.g. expressives) than will others (e.g. analyticals).

REFERENCES

BERGER, C.R., & CALABRESE, R.J. Some explorations in initial interaction and beyond: toward a developmental theory of interpersonal communication. Human Communication Research, 1975, 1, 99-112.

BERGER, C.R., WEBER, M.D., MUNLEY, M.E., & DIXON, J.T. Interpersonal relationship levels and interpersonal attraction. In B.D. Ruben (Ed.), Communication Yearbook I. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1977, 245-261.

BORGATTA, E.F. Rankings and self-assessments: some behavioral characteristics replication studies. Journal of Social Psychology, 1960, 297-307.

BORGATTA, E.F., COTTRELL, L.S., & MANN, J.M. The spectrum of individual interaction characteristics: an inter-dimensional analysis. Psychological Reports, 1958, 4, 279-319.

BUCHHOLZ, S., LASHBROOK, W.B., & WENBURG, J.R. Toward the measurement and processing of social style. Paper presented at ICA, Portland, 1976.

BYRNE, D. The Attraction Paradigm. New York: Academic Press, 1971.

CLARY, T.C., & LUKE, R.A. JR. Organizational and individual power. In F. Luthans (Ed.), Contemporary readings in Organizational Behavior (2d ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977, 310-324.

GARRISON, J.P., SULLIVAN, D.L., & PATE, L.E. Interpersonal valence dimensions as discriminators of communication contexts. Paper presented at SCA, San Francisco, 1976.

KNAPP, M.L. Social Intercourse: From Greeting to Goodby. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1978.

LASHBROOK, V.J. Leadership emergence and source valence: concepts in support of interaction theory and measurement. Human Communication Research, 1975, 1, 308-315.

LASHBROOK, W.B., LASHBROOK, V.J., PARSLEY, M.L., & WENBURG, J.R. A study of the relationship between social style and measures of perceived versatility and interpersonal trust. Paper presented at ICA, Portland, 1976.

MCCROSKEY, J.C., JENSEN, T., & VALENCIA, C. Measurement of the credibility of peers and spouses. Paper presented at ICA, Montreal, 1973.

MCCROSKEY, J.C., & MCCAIN, T.A. The measurement of interpersonal attraction. Speech Monographs, 1974, 41, 261-266.

MEHRABIAN, A. Silent Messages. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1971.

MERRILL, D. Behavior--data. Unpublished manuscript, Personal Predictions and Research, Denver 1973.

MOWDAY, R.T. The exercise of influence in educational organizations. Office of Naval Research, Technical Report No. 4, June, 1976.

NORTON, R.W. Communicator style: theory and applications. Paper presented at SCA, Chicago, 1974.

PARSLEY, M.L., & LASHBROOK, W.B. The relationship between social style, interaction and interpersonal attraction. Paper presented at WSCA, San Francisco, 1976.

SNAVELY, W.B. A Contextual Theory of Social Style in Primary Relationships: Exploratory Research. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1977.

SNAVELY, W.B. A contextual theory of social style in primary relationships: exploratory research. Paper presented at ICA, Chicago, 1978.

SNAVELY, W.B., & COLLIER, M.P. Preliminary development of a social attraction measure. Paper presented at ECA, Philadelphia, 1979.

SULLIVAN, D.L. JR Explorations in stylistic interpersonal communication: a conceptual framework and an empirical strategy. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1977.

TAGIURI, R., & PETRULLO, L. (Eds.) Person Perception and Interpersonal Behavior. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1958.

WISH, M. Comparisons among multidimensional structures of interpersonal relations. Multivariate Behavioral Research, 1976, 11, 297-324.

Table 1
Final Attraction Factor Structure

Item	Support	Task	Physical	Sociable
This person understands me as an individual.	.756*	.163	.155	.150
This Person likes me.	.669*	.154	.195	.171
This person is interested in my welfare or concerned about me.	.781*	.208	.163	.122
This person is loyal to me.	.791*	.194	.079	.145
This person reinforces me, or makes me feel good about myself.	.679*	.271	.229	.166
This person is a typical goof-off when assigned a job to do.**	.084	.566*	.143	-.027
I have confidence in this person's ability to get the job done.	.171	.712*	.105	.087
If I wanted to get things done, I could probably depend on this person.	.234	.769*	.091	.062
I couldn't get anything accomplished with this person.**	.329	.533*	.110	.037
This person wouldn't be a poor problem solver.	.058	.468*	.076	.089
I think this person is quite handsome (pretty).	.181	.106	.822*	.185
This person is very sexy looking.	.122	021	.781*	.132
I find this person very attractive physically.	.133	.052	.758*	.135
I don't like the way this person looks.**	.254	.143	.686*	.194
This person is somewhat ugly.**	.192	.145	.660*	.157
This person is outgoing.	.058	.008	.082	.550*
This person is popular with others.	.084	.092	.280	.660*
This person handles him/herself well in social situations.	.109	.148	.260	.646*
This person's personality is friendly and pleasant.	.224	.141	.199	.718*
This person is approachable or accessible to others.	.158	.095	.080	.726*
This person is dependable.	.327	.706*	.008	.161

**Negative-worded items were reversed prior to factor analysis.

Table 2

Reliability Analysis

Factor	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Responsiveness	5	.84
Assertiveness	8	.83
Versatility	4	.75
Trust	5	.92
Power	3	.77
Composure	3	.62
Competence	3	.75
Character	5	.84
Extroversion	3	.70
Supportiveness	5	.90
Task	6	.83
Physical	5	.89
Sociability	5	.82

Table 3

Brief Analysis of Variance Summary

ependent ariable	N	CONTEXT F	CONTEXT sig.	CONTEXT eta	STYLE F	STYLE sig.	STYLE eta	CONTEXT X STYLE F	CONTEXT X STYLE sig.	R^2
ersatility	363	1.08	.341	.14	26.38	.000	.44	0.64	.702	.20
rust	363	18.01	.000	.32	16.61	.000	.36	4.46	.000	.21
ower	363	9.58	.000	.22	55.00	.000	.56	1.18	.318	.35
ompetence	363	8.95	.000	.23	7.53	.000	.25	1.34	.239	.11
haracter	373	9.91	.000	.26	36.02	.000	.49	1.74	.110	.28
omposure	373	4.24	.015	.13	3.19	.024	.14	2.59	.018	.04
xtroversion	373	0.66	.518	.03	17.15	.000	.35	0.73	.625	.12
upportiveness	378	39.37	.000	.44	11.10	.000	.33	0.70	.648	.26
ociability	378	5.57	.004	.21	34.13	.000	.47	3.20	.005	.25
ask	378	4.32	.014	.18	8.26	.000	.27	1.57	.155	.09
hysical	363	16.38	.000	.31	2.17	.091	.17	0.94	.469	.11

Table 4

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable	Expressive	Amiable	Driver	Analytical	Oneway F Ratio	F Prob.
Versatility	21.91	20.68	19.05	17.96	29.34	.0000
Trust	30.23a	29.37a	25.86b	26.09b	17.08	.0000
Power	16.07	12.60a	14.75	11.81a	59.45	.0000
Competence	21.55	19.96a	19.61a	19.11a	8.80	.0000
Character	29.90a	31.26a	25.09	27.67	40.19	.0000
Composure	16.25ab	17.14a	15.36b	16.44ab	3.40	.0180
Extroversion	17.53	15.84a	15.45a	14.17	17.92	.0000
Supportiveness	20.70a	19.65a	17.66b	17.63b	14.81	.0000
Task	21.73a	20.85ab	20.02bc	19.59c	9.33	.0000
Sociability	22.38a	21.88a	19.34b	18.87b	37.58	.0000

Same letter denotes no difference at .05 level of confidence via Tukey B.

Table 5

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable	Co-worker	Acquain-tance	Friend	ONEWAY F Ratio	F Prob.
Trust	27.11	25.30	29.37	21.71	.0000
Power	12.90a	13.01a	14.28	9.87	.0001
Competence	19.86a	18.82	20.64a	9.74	.0001
Character	27.68a	26.93a	29.57	14.20	.0000
Composure	16.43ab	17.02b	15.82a	3.60	.0284
Supportiveness	17.09a	16.99a	20.60	47.01	.0000
Task	24.10a	23.50a	25.28	9.10	.0001
Physical	16.80	18.46	19.98	20.64	.0000

[a] Same letter denotes no difference at .05 level of confidence via Tukey B