12-1982

An Investigation of the Instructional Communicator Style Expectations of Nontraditional and Traditional Male and Female Undergraduate Students

Chryl Irvine Snyder
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses

Part of the Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Ethnicity in Communication Commons

Recommended Citation
Snyder, Chryl Irvine, "An Investigation of the Instructional Communicator Style Expectations of Nontraditional and Traditional Male and Female Undergraduate Students" (1982). Master's Theses. 1723.
http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses/1723
AN INVESTIGATION
OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATOR STYLE EXPECTATIONS
OF NONTRADITIONAL AND TRADITIONAL
MALE AND FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

by
Chryl Irvine Snyder

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
Department of Communication

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
December 1982
AN INVESTIGATION
OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATOR STYLE EXPECTATIONS
OF NONTRADITIONAL AND TRADITIONAL
MALE AND FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Chryl Irvine Snyder, M.A.
Western Michigan University, 1982

Increasing numbers of nontraditional students, many of them women, are enrolling in college and university classes. The purpose of this study was to investigate the instructional communicator style expectations of nontraditional and traditional male and female undergraduate students. Students were asked to rate their own preferences on a variety of items designed to reflect instructional communicator styles. The researcher looked for differences in student expectations of their "ideal teachers" based on age and sex.

Nontraditional students rated the precise style of instructional communication higher than the traditional students who gave higher ratings to the friendly, open, dominant, and contentious styles. Differences in past experiences and present commitments may account for these ratings.

Female students rated the friendly and animated styles of instructional communication higher than the male students who gave higher ratings to the precise and contentious styles. Differences in self concepts and expectations may account for these ratings.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to a number of people who have helped me through this learning experience.

Dr. James A. Gilchrist has been the type of thesis committee chairperson that every student should have for this experience. He has encouraged, supported, advised, and given cheerfully and patiently of his time and expertise. He has fulfilled the instructional communicator style expectations of this nontraditional student, and through him I have learned.

I also wish to thank the other members of my committee: Dr. W. James Potter for his time, advice on communicator styles, encouragement, and editorial suggestions; and, Professor June Cottrell for her time, interest, encouragement, and editorial comments. I have learned from them, also.

To the nontraditional and traditional male and female students who participated in this study, and to the instructors who willingly gave classtime and loaned their students to me, I am indebted. I wish to thank them for their support.

Appreciation is also expressed to the instructors and friends who took the time to read my proposal and to offer suggestions.

Finally, a special thank you to my husband and my family for their support, patience, and understanding.

Chryl Irvine Snyder
INFORMATION TO USERS

This reproduction was made from a copy of a document sent to us for microfilming. While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this document, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help clarify markings or notations which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or “target” for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is “Missing Page(s)”. If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting through an image and duplicating adjacent pages to assure complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a round black mark, it is an indication of either blurred copy because of movement during exposure, duplicate copy, or copyrighted materials that should not have been filmed. For blurred pages, a good image of the page can be found in the adjacent frame. If copyrighted materials were deleted, a target note will appear listing the pages in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., is part of the material being photographed, a definite method of “sectioning” the material has been followed. It is customary to begin filming at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. If necessary, sectioning is continued again—beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. For illustrations that cannot be satisfactorily reproduced by xerographic means, photographic prints can be purchased at additional cost and inserted into your xerographic copy. These prints are available upon request from the Dissertations Customer Services Department.

5. Some pages in any document may have indistinct print. In all cases the best available copy has been filmed.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................. ii
LIST OF TABLES ..................................................... v

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION ..................................................... 1
   Rationale for the Study ......................................... 1
   Research Approach .............................................. 3
   Assumptions and Limitations ................................... 3
   Definition of Terms ............................................. 5

II. REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE .............................. 6
   The Nontraditional Student ...................................... 6
   Comparisons of Nontraditional with Traditional Students 11
   Differences Between Graduate and Undergraduate Students 13
   College Instructors ............................................ 15
   Communicator Styles ............................................ 18
   Chapter Summary ................................................. 30

III. DESIGN OF THE STUDY ............................................. 33
   Research Questions ............................................. 33
   Population ....................................................... 33
   Sample ........................................................... 34
   Data Collection .................................................. 35
   The Instrument ................................................... 36
   Data Analysis .................................................... 40
   Chapter Summary ................................................. 41

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
LIST OF TABLES

Table

1. Percentage Comparisons of Sample Demographics with University Population ................ 34
2. Reliability Analysis for Scales ....................... 39
3. Stepwise Results of Discriminant Analysis on Type .... 43
4. Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients for Type ....................... 44
5. Classification Results by Type ....................... 45
6. Mean Communicator Style Scores by Type ................ 46
7. Type ANOVA on Communicator Style Scales ................ 47
8. Stepwise Results of Discriminant Analysis on Sex .... 49
9. Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients for Sex ....................... 50
10. Classification Results by Sex ....................... 50
11. Mean Communicator Style Scores by Sex ................ 52
12. Sex ANOVA on Communicator Style Scales ................ 53
13. Type by Sex Interaction ANOVA on Communicator Style Scales ....................... 55
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale for the Study

Changes in a society often require professionals to examine the significance or consequences of these changes for their fields. Occurrences over the past 20 years have resulted in one such change—an increasing number of older students, many of them women, enrolling in colleges and universities. Researchers indicate that the enrollment of nontraditional-age students will remain stable or increase while the enrollment of traditional-age students will decrease in the next decade. There is a need for lifelong learning in our rapidly changing society. According to Jensen (1981), the average American adult will have five careers in a lifetime. With the present focus in colleges and universities on retention of students and the concern over declining enrollments due to fewer traditional-age students, the professionals in these organizations may need to re-examine their behaviors in relation to all students, particularly nontraditional students.

Nontraditional students often enter educational settings established primarily to serve young adults. Most of these older students spend little time on campus because of other responsibilities in their lives. The primary interactions of these students while they are on campus are usually with instructors. These instructors
are often the students' peers and may even represent the most important social interactions on campus for these students. These potentially influential, learning-experience interactions with instructors may result in nontraditional students opening up to what is happening around them at a time when this may be vitally important; conversely, the interactions may contribute to these students withdrawing into themselves. These interactions may also influence nontraditional students' perceptions of their colleges and universities.

Researchers in organizational communication, including Norton and Potter, have investigated the communicator styles of individuals as perceived by themselves and/or by others. The application of this research has included adaptations of the styles of individuals to that of others for improved interactions. Further application of some of these concepts to college and university settings may bring an increased understanding of the interactions of instructors and students.

Chronological age has not been included as a possible variable to the perceptions of the communicator styles of others in previous research. Sex has been included as a variable in this type of research; however, the interaction between sex and age has not been considered. The increasing numbers of nontraditional students and female students on college and university campuses make these important factors to consider in the study of instructional communicator styles. It could provide information that would facilitate the adaptations that may be required of instructors for nontraditional students. It would contribute to the growing knowledge about these
Research Approach

This study was an investigation of the instructional communicator style expectations of nontraditional and traditional male and female undergraduate-level college students. Students were asked to rate their own preferences on a variety of items designed to measure styles of communicating. The researcher sought to find if resulting patterns of instructional communicator style expectations of students were related to chronological age and/or sex. Student responses were divided into two groups according to an age division that separated nontraditional and traditional students, and into groups of males and females. The responses were compared for any differences that appeared in the instructional communicator style expectations of these groups of students. The following questions were the primary focus of this research:

1. Do nontraditional and traditional students have different instructional communicator style expectations?
2. Do male and female students have different instructional communicator style expectations?
3. Is there a significant interaction between type (nontraditional and traditional) and sex on instructional communicator style expectations?

Assumptions and Limitations

The focus of this investigation was on student expectations of instructional behaviors. The focus was not on any one instructor in the classroom; the responses may represent a composite of many students and knowledge about an age span that needs further study.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
instructors with whom the subjects have interacted. The researcher assumed that students' perceptions and expectations affect reality for them and that the communicator styles of college and university instructors affect the students enrolled in their courses. The researcher also assumed that verbal and nonverbal communication are basic to all human interactions.

The research focused on behaviors that were considered to be states, not traits. The perspective was that individuals' styles of communicating are flexible, not fixed parts of their nature. Norton (1978b) pointed out three variables which may have an effect on communicator styles: context, situation and time. Individuals may vary their styles according to the setting, the situations in which they are communicatively involved, and over time due to their experiences.

The researcher sought information to generalize about particular groups of individuals. There are usually exceptions to any generalizations and this may be a limitation for all studies that group individuals into categories for analysis. The researcher did not seek to determine the effectiveness of instructors, or whether the communicator styles of college and university instructors affected the level of learning that students reached as a result of instructional interactions. These may only be measurable many years after these communication interactions have occurred. The research was carried out during spring and summer, 1982 at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. The results may not reflect the same expectations of students enrolled at other times in this or any
other school.

**Definition of Terms**

The following definitions were used in this study:

**Nontraditional Student.** An undergraduate student 25 years of age or older.

**Traditional Student.** An undergraduate student 24 years of age or younger.

**Undergraduate Student.** A student enrolled in an undergraduate curriculum and class or classes who has not yet received a baccalaureate degree.

**Instructional Communicator Styles.** "The way . . . [instructors] verbally and paraverbally interact with students to signal how literal meaning should be taken, filtered, or understood" (Norton, 1977, p. 99).
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

This review of the literature provides a theoretical background for the investigation of the instructional communicator style expecta-
tions of nontraditional and traditional male and female undergraduate students. It focuses upon four areas of study: (1) the nontradi-
tional student; (2) comparisons of nontraditional with traditional students; (3) college instructors; and, (4) communicator styles.

The Nontraditional Student

Extent of Participation

Lenz and Shaevitz (1977) reported that seven million people over the age of 25 were in college in 1977, and this was expected to increase to eleven million by the 1980s. Between 1972 and 1980, the number of college students 25 years old or older increased 54% (Kaercher, 1982). According to Loring (1978), 6.6 million of the 27 million adults involved in some type of structured learning in 1975 were enrolled in a college degree program. Census Bureau information reported by Schmid (1980) stated: "Of the 2.3 million student increase in college enrollment from 1972 to 1979, one-half of the new students were part-time students 25 years old and older" (p. A-16). Stone (1979) reported that "... the Census Bureau estimates that by 1985, 40% of all college students will be over 25"
By 1990, the National Center for Education (cited in Front and Center, Spring 1982) predicted that 47% of college students will be older students compared to 38% in 1980 and 28% in 1970. According to the same publication, approximately 27% of the enrollment at Western Michigan University is now nontraditional.

The enrollment of female nontraditional students has also increased. Census Bureau information reported by Schmid (1980) also stated:

The number of women attending college in the United States has surpassed that of men for the first time since World War II. The biggest change . . . was the large number of women age 35 and over attending college (p. A-16).

The preceding data show that older adults are participating as students in college and university programs. Further, it appears that their numbers are increasing and will continue to do so.

Instructional Needs

Snyder (1981) reported on a needs assessment of 1,001 nontraditional undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at Western Michigan University during the Fall Semester of 1980. She listed the following items related to instructional needs that were important to the subjects in her study:

1. Professors who are personally interested in my progress.
2. Professors who have a realistic view of my responsibilities outside class.
3. Professors who provide more than one way to meet course requirements.
4. Grades based on projects, papers, and class participation instead of on tests alone.
5. Professors who are relaxed and informal in the classroom.
6. Professors who modify the course outline to satisfy student needs and/or interests.
7. Course objectives to guide my study.
8. Encouragement from my professors.
9. Professors who use many examples in their teaching.
10. Courses with many class discussions.
11. The use by professors of films, tapes, and other audiovisual materials in courses.
12. Courses using many source materials instead of single textbooks (pp. 43, 51).

The same instructional needs were also given high rankings by 561 nontraditional students in a study of six, two-year colleges in the State of New York conducted by Mangano and Corrado (1980). Seven of these items were determined to be of great or some importance to 1,214 subjects in a study reported by Emling (1981). These subjects included potential nontraditional students, nontraditional students, and former nontraditional students from seven colleges and universities in the State of Michigan.

Mangano and Corrado also included a survey of faculty and staff to determine their perceptions of nontraditional student needs. These researchers found that faculty and staff rated many items in various categories in the survey other than instructional needs, as more important than the students rated these items. However, seven items that received significantly higher ratings by the nontraditional subjects were related to instructional needs. Faculty members did not seem aware of the importance of these instructional needs to the
nontraditional students in this study.

Many authors have provided recommendations to improve instructional interactions with nontraditional students. Eldred and Marienau (1979) urged the student-mentor type of relationship to help with the instructional needs of nontraditional students. The faculty mentor serves as a facilitator for students and encourages them to become active partners in the educational process. This requires more personal interaction between faculty and students, according to these authors.

Interviews with outstanding instructors of nontraditional students provided this list by Apps (1981) to fulfill the instructional needs of these students:

1. learn to know your students;
2. use the students' experiences as class content;
3. when possible, tie theory to practice;
4. provide a climate conducive to learning;
5. offer a variety of formats;
6. offer a variety of techniques;
7. provide students feedback on their progress;
8. help students acquire resources;
9. be available to students for out of class contacts (pp. 145, 146).

Holmes (1980) researched two different approaches used by adult educators and found in the literature on nontraditional students: the pedagogical approach and the andragogical approach. He stated that these may actually be two extremes of a continuum. Pedagogy,
According to Knowles (1970), the concept of andragogy is based on certain assumptions about adult learners: their self-concepts are related to being self-directed, they use experiences as resources for learning, they want to apply what they are learning when they learn it, their learning is related to problem-centeredness, and tasks associated with their social roles determine their readiness to learn. Holmes (1980) found that the important interpersonal behaviors connected to andragogy centered on "expressed affection," and that adult educators who use this approach are "non-directive in nature" (pp. 26, 27). Knowles (cited in Holmes, 1980) stated that the andragogical instructor encouraged "... situations which increase cooperative interaction among learners and increase their participation in and directions of learning" (p. 27).

The instructional needs of nontraditional students has been the focus of research, and it is evident that this is an area of concern. Further research may be important to determine the specific interaction behaviors required to meet the instructional needs of nontraditional students.
Comparisons of Nontraditional with Traditional Students

Apps (1981) pointed out that both similarities and differences exist between nontraditional and traditional groups of students. He reported that researchers have found no differences in the intellectual capabilities of these two groups. According to Lenz and Shaevitz (1977), both groups want to gain information from their learning activities that is related to their lives and/or experiences. Mangano and Corrado (1980) also found more similarities between traditional students and nontraditional students attending college full-time than between traditional students and nontraditional students only able to attend college part-time. These similarities were related to social concerns and expressed needs for campus activities and remedial services.

The differences listed by Apps (1981) between nontraditional and traditional students included the amount of life experience, motivations for learning, academic behaviors that were related to these differences in past experiences, and school-related problems. He listed four types of problems for nontraditional students: "(1) unrealistic goals; (2) poor self-images; (3) social-familial problems; and (4) a sometimes excessive practical orientation" (p. 49). Reber (1976) included self-image and experience, along with a difference in readiness to learn which may be related to motivation, and the time factor which often puts pressure on nontraditional students. The time factor includes time available to participate, time to fulfill the requirements of courses or a degree, and the perceived shortage
of time in life in which to use the acquired learning. Knowles (1970) also listed time, self-concept, experience, and readiness to learn as important factors related to nontraditional students. He pointed out that older students are more often volunteer students than are traditional ones. Apps (1981) also stated that the most important difference between teaching traditional and nontraditional students "...is the need to take into account the older student's work and life experiences as a beginning place for learning" (p. 147).

Hulicka (1975) listed motivational factors as a difference between these two groups of students. He connected this to older people being more selective than younger people regarding what they want to learn. According to Troll (1975), the learning abilities of older students may be affected by whether they believe the material has meaning for them. This may be related to the practical orientation approach of nontraditional students listed by Apps. Eldred and Marienau (1979) also stated that adults want to plan their own learning based on their past experiences and their future goals. Gross (1977) stated: "Growing older may change what, why, and how you learn, but it does not diminish your capacity to learn" (p. 18).

Alciatore and Alciatore (1979), reporting on a study of college seniors, found that older students were less critical of instructors than were younger students (under 24) in their study. However, they found no differences in students' choices of qualities of best, worst, or ideal teachers related to students' ages. Clark (1980) reported on a study conducted at an eastern university that also compared older students with younger students. He concluded:
Older students returned to the college setting (1) more resolved than younger students to avoid delay in academic tasks; (2) more approving of the role and purpose of teachers; (3) more approving of the purposes and established processes of higher education than the group of young students who enrolled in college immediately after completing high school (p. 98).

Thus, it is apparent from the literature that there are differences between traditional and nontraditional students. It further appears that some of these differences are related to the experiences and the age variation between these two student groups.

Differences Between Graduate and Undergraduate Students

Snyder (1981) also found some differences in instructional needs between nontraditional graduate students and nontraditional undergraduate students in her study at Western Michigan University. However, these differences related to the ranking of items. The same items were important to both groups of students.

Koch (1981) found approximately the same dimensions of instructional ratings important to graduate students in a study as has been found by other research of undergraduates. However, there were some differences related to the criteria of quality used by the students.

Cronen and Price (1974) conducted a study related to course evaluations that used students' class levels as a variable. Their search of the literature found little on class levels and course evaluations. They cited two studies that found no relationship between class level and the evaluation of instructors, and three studies that found higher level students rated instructors more favorably. The study by Cronen and Price found what they considered to be evidence
of maturation in the student role from freshman to senior year in college—the freshmen seemed to expect more external motivation and were less able to separate the fairness of an instructor from the expertise of an instructor than students at higher levels.

Cronen (1976) looked at course evaluations in graduate programs. These also included student perceptions of faculty members. He suggested the following differences between graduate and undergraduate students: a difference in perspectives, fewer graduate than undergraduate students on most campuses, and graduate students are older, are more successful academically than average, have been in school longer, and have had other experiences, such as outside teaching or teaching in the college setting as graduate assistants. He found graduate students did not evaluate courses/instructors in the same way as undergraduates. Graduate students did not include fairness as an item in their evaluations, and such items as clarity and organization were not of much importance to them. However, these three items were identified as important to the undergraduate students in this study.

Cowan (1982) reported on a needs assessment of students at Western Michigan University and the responses of 208 of the approximately 3,400 graduate students enrolled during the 1980-81 academic year. These graduate students found many of the items on the questionnaire were not applicable to them. Many of these dealt with " . . . student conduct at the university" (p. 4). Cowan stated:

... it appears that graduate students are most satisfied with those items directly related to their academic goals, for example, course content, quality of instruction and class size.
In other words, graduate students are most concerned about and satisfied with the specific areas which facilitate their obtaining degrees (p. 4).

It appears that some of the differences between graduate and undergraduate students may be similar to some of the differences between nontraditional and traditional students. However, it is not clear whether the differences between graduate and undergraduate students are due to their differences in age and total accumulation of experiences, or due to specific educational experiences. Thus, a comparison of nontraditional students with traditional students seems warranted at the undergraduate level, rather than at the graduate level and/or graduate and undergraduate levels.

College Instructors

Bush (1969) provided historic research on college instructors and their relations with college students. She found that around the year 1900, personal relations between faculty and students became more important. Before this time, a one-way model rather than a two-way model of communication seems to have been the practice with only downward communication. No upward communication or feedback was considered important. According to this author, the 1960s and 1970s brought pressures for improved interpersonal relations between college instructors and their students.

The considerable research literature on college teaching includes many studies that are based on student perceptions, preferences, or expectations. According to Braskamp, Caulley, and Costin (1979), student ratings of faculty members are the major method of evaluation.
of instructors rather than self-ratings or colleague ratings. Grush and Costin (1975) found that students were objective and should be asked about those variables they perceive as important for college instructors.

Many of the studies on college instructors include items related to instructional skills and rapport with students. Communication skills are a part of both of these dimensions. Alciatore and Alciatore (1979) reported on a survey of the reactions of college seniors to their instructors. They listed the following qualities they found of the best rated teachers: "interest in students; good personality; interest in subject matter; ability to make subject interesting; objectivity in presenting subject matter and in dealing with students" (p. 94). These authors also listed the following items they found related to the worst teachers: "poor communication skills; poor personalities (with lack of enthusiasm cited most often as the reason); lack of organization; lack of objectivity; little interest in students" (p. 94).

Feldman (1976) reviewed 72 studies based on undergraduate student views. He found 19 separate categories of what he termed "characteristics" of instructors (p. 252). Some of these categories were:

- stimulation of interest; enthusiasm, clarity and understandability; elocutionary skills; clarity of objectives and requirements; feedback to students; encouragement of discussion (openness); respect for students (friendliness); availability and helpfulness (p. 252).

He divided the studies into two groups: those with structured responses and those with unstructured responses. He found that when students could freely describe their ideal instructors, the following
characteristics were listed:

friendliness (concern and respect for students); helpfulness (availability) and openness to other's opinions (encouragement of class questions and discussion); and dimensions primarily involving the teaching task of facilitation (instructor in the role of Interactor and Reciprocator) (p. 264).

He found that these same items did not receive as high ratings in more structured response studies.

Mazzuca and Feldhusen (1978) searched the literature and found the following characteristics of instructional skill: "clear explanations, flexibility, use of relevant examples, logical sequence of thought, fairness of grading, and student participation" (p. 4). For rapport, they found these characteristics: "sympathetic attitude toward students, ability to get along with students, fairness-impartiality, liberal or progressive attitude, trust, warmth, and friendliness" (p. 4). Two other categories they also included were motivational skills and personal characteristics. They found the following characteristics of motivational skills: "stimulating intellectual curiosity, motivating students to do their best, ability to encourage thought, and stimulation of student interest" (p. 4). Personal characteristics were: "sense of humor, sincerity-honesty, personal appearance, and punctuality" (p. 4).

Mazzuca and Feldhusen (1978) also researched student attitudes toward instructors. They found a change from the past in these attitudes. The students were more "concerned with the teaching and learning fundamentals" and were less concerned with the characteristics of teachers, their personalities, or "the nature of instructor
student interactions" than students in previous studies (p. 11).

Tucker, Gottlieb, and Pease (1964) researched the reasons why some doctoral students did not complete their degrees. Some of their recommendations to reduce the attrition rate are related to the communication interactions of college instructors with their students. They recommended:

1. Professors should develop more sensitivity to the needs of their students.

2. Department chairmen should hold meetings of their graduate faculty to discuss ways of developing effective faculty-student relations.

3. Maximum communication and understanding should be achieved between professors and students in terms of what the student expects and what is expected of the student (p. 293).

The nonverbal communication behaviors of college instructors have also been researched. Seals and Kaufman (1975) reported on a study of these behaviors and their effect on students. They found that instructors who were more active nonverbally received higher ratings by their students than those received by less active instructors.

It appears that instructional behaviors are important to student attitudes at the college level, and that the way instructors communicate with their students is a basic part of these behaviors.

Communicator Styles

Interpersonal styles, styles of communication, and communicator or communicating styles all refer to communication behaviors. A number of researchers have listed and categorized various behaviors
to reflect distinctive ways in which people often interact, verbally and nonverbally with others. Some of these researchers have developed survey instruments to determine the way individuals communicate and/or how others perceive this communication. The results are often used to help these individuals improve, change, or adapt their interactions with others, particularly in organizations.

By the time a person has reached adulthood, that person has developed a style of communicating, and the use of this style is probably based on positive, past experiences, according to Knapp (1978). Individuals may use mixed styles (Miller, Nunnally, & Wackman, 1975), or a primary style (Mok & Lynch, 1978), and a backup style (Mok, 1972). Mok and Lynch stated:

> If our styles are similar, we think alike, enjoy the same kinds of activities, share similar priorities in life. But if our styles differ, we very likely talk 'past' each other. Even worse, we may actually offend each other, all without realizing or intending it (p. 106).

**Selected Approaches**

Mok and Lynch (1978) listed four styles of communicating based on Jungian psychology: "intuitor," "thinker," "feeler," and "sensor" (pp. 106, 107). Knapp (1978) called this the "role-shifting approach" and stated that "... we all develop a primary emphasis on one of these four styles" (p. 281). These styles are based on categories of behaviors, but no one style is considered better than another. Individuals vary their uses of these styles or may use one as a preferred style because it has worked well in the past. Mok (1972)
stated that "whether a given style should be considered positive or negative depends on its use under normal or stress conditions" (p. I-1). He also included lists of occupations which are conducive to each of the four styles. Professors are included in the intuitior style list, teachers in the feeler style list, and professors and teachers in the thinker style list.

The Wilson Learning Corporation used four "social styles" which are similar to Mok's styles, to separate the ways people communicate: "analytical," "driver," "amiable," and "expressive" (Knapp, 1978, p. 284). According to Knapp, these are related to "responsive, non-responsive, assertive, and nonassertive" behaviors, and the approach is based on the concept that once people understand their styles they can effectively adapt to that of others (p. 284). The introduction to the Wilson Learning Corporation's catalogue (1981) stated that this company incorporated these concepts into programs to assist business people "... at all levels in organizations to become more effective and productive and to enhance the quality of their work-life."

Bramson (cited in Time, 1980) identified five styles of communication behaviors that are reflective of "troublemakers": "... hostile-aggressives, complainers, indecisives, unresponsive and know-it-alls" (p. 72). His focus is on helping people learn to cope with these troublemakers through the management of their own communication behaviors. He stated that "people who are difficult have learned that behavior previously because in the short run it has worked for them" (p. 72).
Miller, Nunnally, and Wackman (1975) listed four styles of verbal communication based on group therapy practices. The differences among these styles are based on "intentions" and "behaviors" (p. 195). According to these authors, Style I and Style II are learned while individuals are growing up, Style III is associated with the intellect and may be learned while attending college, and Style IV is the most effective for interpersonal relations. The verbal and nonverbal behaviors associated with Style IV include "self-disclosure skills" and "awareness of other skills" (p. 210). These authors stress that effective communicators adapt their styles through recognition of their own communication behaviors and those of others, and then change their behaviors to match their intentions.

O'Connell's (1979) approach included four communication styles based on the work of Maier: "blaming, telling, selling and problem solving" (p. 12). These terms describe the goals of the communication and this approach has been used to help managers "understand the effect of their behavior on employees," according to O'Connell (p. 12). Individuals may use one or more of these styles within a conversation, but usually have one dominant style that is "... built by personal experience and reinforced by organizational norms" (p. 24). She stated that "using the same approach to every situation ignores the complexity of people and organizations, and it is self-limiting" (p. 24).

Norton's Construct

Norton (1978b) developed a "communicator style construct" which
included 10 styles of communicating: "animated," "attentive,"
"contentious," "dominant," "dramatic," "friendly," "impression
leaving," "open," "precise," and "relaxed" (pp. 99-101). He defines
communicator style as "... the way one verbally and paraverbally
interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted,
filtered, or understood" (p. 99). Norton (1980) stated that
communicator style research has focused on many areas, including
"... marital patterns, therapeutic interactions, small-group
processes, medical communication, dyadic communication, and personality traits" (p. 94).

Montgomery and Norton (1981) used this construct to look at
sex differences and similarities in communicator style. However,
their research focused on self-perceptions of communicator style.
They found differences between males and females related to the
precise and animated styles based on self-perceptions.

Norton (1977) also used his construct to help determine teacher
effectiveness in a university. He found "... strong evidence
that perceived teacher effectiveness is related to perceived
communicator style—that is, the way one is perceived to communicate"
(p. 525). Norton found the following styles to be important for
teacher effectiveness: attentive, friendly, impression leaving,
precise, and relaxed.

The Animated Style

Norton (1977) stated that "the animated communicator provides
frequent and sustained eye contact, uses many expressions, and
gestures often" (pp. 528, 529). A person reflecting this style uses various postures and body movements. To be animated is to be "stimulating," "invigorating," and "lively" according to The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (1971, p. 59). The animated and dramatic styles are similar in that they both tend to reflect exaggeration and may allow the release of tension (Montgomery & Norton, 1981). These styles use "... active, high-energy-expending behaviors" according to Montgomery and Norton (1981, p. 126). Norton (1977) did not find this style to be an important variable in his study of teacher effectiveness. In his "short form" instrument, Norton (Montgomery & Norton, 1981) used the following four items for individuals to determine whether they used the animated style:

- My eyes reflect exactly what I am feeling when I communicate.
- I tend to constantly gesture when I communicate.
- I actively use a lot of facial expressions when I communicate.
- I am very expressive nonverbally in social situations (p. 128).

The Attentive Style

Norton (1977) stated that "the attentive communicator really likes to listen to the other, shows interest in what the other is saying, and deliberately reacts in such a way that the other knows he or she is being listened to" (p. 529). According to Norton and Pettigrew (1979), there is a relationship between attentiveness, posture, verbal behavior, and eye contact. They further stated:

- A strong predictive relationship has been found between attentive activity and projection of a positive communicator image, interpersonal attractiveness, and effectiveness in teaching and
psychotherapeutic contexts (p. 13).
This style is related to empathy and listening, and involves verbal and paraverbal signals that let communicators know that their messages are understood and/or being attended to (Norton & Pettigrew, 1979).

Norton and Pettigrew (1979) listed verbal actions reflecting this style such as verbal reflection of the speaker's message, talking about similar incidents, and using neutral phrases. They also listed such nonverbal behaviors as head nodding, looking directly at the speaker, forward trunk leaning, physical closeness, listener silence, spending time with others, relaxed posture, and smiling.

Norton (1977) found that the attentive style was important for teacher effectiveness. He stated that the effective instructors rated high on all of the attentive items on the communicator style instrument:

This person can always repeat back to someone else exactly what was meant.

Usually, this person deliberately reacts in such a way that people know that he/she is listening to them.

This person really likes to listen very carefully to people.

This person is an extremely attentive communicator (p. 539).

The Contentious Style

Norton (1977) stated that "the contentious communicator is argumentative" and may have difficulty dropping an argument (p. 528). This style is related to the dominant style. A contentious communicator may be quarrelsome and may enjoy heated discussions. Norton (1977) reported that the participants in the study of teacher effectiveness
who saw themselves as good communicators did not see themselves as contentious. In his "short form" instrument, Norton (Montgomery & Norton, 1981) used the following items for individuals to determine whether they use the contentious style:

- When I disagree with somebody, I am quick to challenge them.
- Once I get wound up in a heated discussion, I have a hard time stopping myself.
- It bothers me to drop an argument that is not resolved.
- I am very argumentative (p. 128).

**The Dominant Style**

Norton (1977) stated that "the dominant communicator talks frequently, takes charge in a social situation, comes on strong, and controls informal conversations" (p. 528). Markel, Long, and Saine (cited in Montgomery and Norton, 1981) stated that dominance is "any communication device or strategy . . . which lessens the communication role of another" (p. 123). According to Montgomery and Norton (1981), a person reflecting this style controls interactions and they related this to " . . . talk time, talk frequency, control of space, speaking intensity, and simultaneous speech" (p. 123). Norton (1978) stated that the literature on dominance stresses the " . . . physical manifestations, nonverbal, and psychological correlates" (p. 99). Norton (Montgomery and Norton, 1981) listed the following items for individuals to determine their use of the dominant style of communicating:

- In most social situations I tend to come on strong.
- In most social situations I generally speak very frequently.
I try to take charge of things when I am with people.
I am dominant in social situations (p. 128).

The Dramatic Style

Norton (1977) described the dramatic communicator as one "... who manipulates exaggerations, fantasies, stories, metaphors, rhythm, voice, and other stylistic devices to highlight or understate content" (p. 528). He stated that "it relates to coping with anxiety, positive self-image, status, popularity, ambiguity tolerance, and critical group functions" (Norton, 1978b, p. 100). People who score low on this style do not see their communicator styles as any different than those who score high, while those who score high do see a difference, according to Norton (1980). A significant difference was also detected by viewers of video-tapes showing low and high dramatic scorers (Norton, 1980). Norton (1980) stated that "Johnny Carson provides a perfect example" of someone who reflects both the dramatic style and the relaxed style (p. 95). The following items were used in Norton's Communicator Style "short form" measure for individuals to determine their use of the dramatic style:

- Regularly I tell jokes, anecdotes, and stories when I communicate.
- Often I physically and vocally act out what I want to communicate.
- I very frequently verbally exaggerate to emphasize a point.

The Friendly Style

"The friendly communicator is encouraging to people, acknowledges
other's contributions, openly expresses admiration and tends to be tactful," according to Norton (1977, p. 529). People who see themselves as good communicators also see themselves as friendly communicators. An effective teacher uses the friendly style according to the student participants in Norton's (1977) study of teacher effectiveness. Norton (1978b) cited Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson who term this style a confirming one, and Steiner who refers to the "stroking function" of the friendly style of communicating (p. 101). Norton (Montgomery & Norton, 1981) used the following items for individuals to determine their use of the friendly style of communicating:

- I readily express admiration for others.
- To be friendly, I habitually acknowledge verbally other's contributions.
- Whenever I communicate, I tend to be very encouraging to people.
- I am always an extremely friendly communicator (p. 128).

The Impression Leaving Style

The effective teachers in Norton's (1977) study received high ratings on the items used to assess the impression leaving style:

- What this person says usually leaves an impression on people.
- This person leaves people with an impression which they definitely tend to remember.
- The way this person says something usually leaves an impression on people.
- This person leaves a definite impression on people (p. 540).

Norton (1977) stated that "the impression leaving communicator tends to be remembered because of the stimuli which are projected." What is
said and the way it is said is emphasized" (p. 529). Montgomery and Norton (1981) stressed that this style is reflected in the "nonverbal, rational cues" (p. 126).

The Open Style

Norton (1978b) stated that the open style "... is characterized by being conversational, expansive, affable, convivial, gregarious, unreserved, somewhat frank, possibly outspoken, definitely extroverted, and obviously approachable" (p. 101). He also described a person reflecting this style as someone who "... readily reveals personal things about the self, easily expresses feelings and emotions" (1977, p. 529). Participants in his study of teacher effectiveness who saw themselves as good communicators also saw themselves as reflecting this style. Norton (Montgomery & Norton, 1981) used the following items for individuals to determine their use of the open style of communicating:

- As a rule, I openly express my feelings and emotions.
- I readily reveal personal things about myself.
- Usually I tell people a lot about myself even if I do not know them well.
- I am an extremely open communicator (p. 128).

The Precise Style

"The precise communicator tries to be strictly accurate when arguing, prefers well defined arguments, and likes proof or documentation when arguing," according to Morton (1977, p. 529). He used the
following items for individuals to determine their use of the precise style of communicating:

Very often I insist that other people document or present some kind of proof for what they are arguing.

I like to be strictly accurate when I communicate.

In arguments I insist upon very precise definitions.


In Norton's study of teacher effectiveness, the student participants included the precise style as important for teacher effectiveness (Norton, 1977).

The Relaxed Style

"A relaxed communicator is calm and collected, relatively free from nervousness and anxiety in his/her communication," according to Montgomery and Norton (1981, p. 125). Norton (1977) stated that the relaxed communicator "... is not nervous under pressure, and does not show nervous mannerisms" (p. 529). Student participants in Norton's (1977) study of teacher effectiveness rated effective teachers as relaxed communicators. The teachers in this study saw themselves as more relaxed than the students rated them on the items that reflect this style:

This person has no nervous mannerisms in his/her speech.

This person is a very relaxed communicator.

The rhythm or flow of this person's speech is not affected by nervousness.

Under pressure this person comes across as a relaxed speaker (Norton, 1977, p. 540).
Norton (1977) suggested various reasons why an instructor may reflect this style to students: "... because he or she is confident about the body of material being presented, is comfortable with the student-teacher role, ... is self-assured," or "... because he or she does not care anymore" (p. 540).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has included a review of some of the literature on nontraditional students, data on the extent of their participation, and information on their instructional needs. The numbers of older adults enrolling in college and university classes has increased over the last 20 years and it has been predicted that this trend will continue. Studies have been conducted to determine the needs of this emerging group of college and university students. These studies may have resulted from the increasing number of older students.

This search of the literature has also found differences between nontraditional students and traditional students, and differences between graduate-level students and undergraduate-level students. However, it is not clear whether the differences between graduate-level students and undergraduate-level students are due to their differences in age or due to specific differences in educational experiences that may be related to a maturation in their role as students. From this, it seems evident that a study that looks for any differences between nontraditional and traditional groups of students should focus on those at the undergraduate level.

It was also found that some of the differences between
nontraditional and traditional students were related to the instructional needs of these groups, and that there may be differences in the expectations of these two groups of students related to their total accumulation of experiences.

The enrollment of female students has also increased in colleges and universities. Many of these students are older. It may be important to consider differences in the expectations of students based on sex. Although sex differences were not a primary interest of this study, it was included in the design as a control variable so that differences between nontraditional and traditional students could be distinguished from sex differences. This is particularly important because of the high percentage of nontraditional students who are female.

Also described in this review of the literature were studies on college instructors with a focus on student perceptions, and several different conceptualizations of communicator style used by current writers and researchers. It was found that verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors are important to individuals and can affect their perceptions. There is strong evidence in the literature that the communicator style used by an individual is an important variable in his/her interaction with others.

Much of the communicator style research has been done in organizational settings other than college and university organizations. It was found that one communicator style approach has been used in the educational setting—Norton's communicator style construct. This approach was used to study the relationship between teacher
effectiveness and communicator style. It would seem important to investigate student expectations of instructional communicator style, extending communicator style research through the addition of an age variable, and include a sex variable. A comparison of the instructional communicator style expectations of nontraditional and traditional male and female undergraduate-level students accomplishes this and provides an important addition to the literature on communicator style.
CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This chapter reviews the research questions, sample procedures, measurement instruments, and data collection procedures. Also included are procedures for data analysis.

Research Questions

The following research questions were asked in this study:

1. Do nontraditional and traditional students have different instructional communicator style expectations?

2. Do male and female students have different instructional communicator style expectations?

3. Is there a significant interaction between type (nontraditional and traditional) and sex on instructional communicator style expectations?

Population

The population from which the sample was drawn consisted of undergraduate students enrolled at Western Michigan University during the 1982 Spring and Summer Sessions. Table 1 lists the demographic characteristics of this population (data obtained from the registrar's office). Unfortunately, data were available on the number of nontraditional/traditional students only for the Fall 1981 Semester. According to the Office of Institutional Research (October 1981), 13.31% of the undergraduate students enrolled for that semester were nontraditional,
were traditional.

Sample

Faculty members from a variety of disciplines were contacted to inform them of the study and to request permission to attend their classes to administer the survey instrument. Positive responses were received from 16 faculty for the 25 classes they taught. This convenience sampling yielded 372 student responses. A total of 33 students were excluded from the analysis because they were foreign students, graduate students, or unclassified students. Two others were excluded because their ages were listed incorrectly. The demographic characteristics of this sample are also shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Spring 1982 Enrollment</th>
<th>Summer 1982 Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>38.28%</td>
<td>52.20%</td>
<td>53.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>61.13%</td>
<td>47.80%</td>
<td>46.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minorities</td>
<td>15.43%</td>
<td>6.29%</td>
<td>8.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>4.45%</td>
<td>4.12%</td>
<td>6.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores</td>
<td>9.20%</td>
<td>11.16%</td>
<td>7.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>23.44%</td>
<td>27.36%</td>
<td>21.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>62.91%</td>
<td>55.00%</td>
<td>57.82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown, the sample drawn appears to over-represent minorities (15.43% versus 6.29%-8.20%). To determine whether ethnic identification might adversely affect the validity of the sample, t-tests were conducted comparing black students (n=44) with all other students (n=293) on each scale. The black student sample was chosen because it was the largest group within the minority sample. None of the differences in the way these students answered the questions was statistically significant.

The sample appears to over-represent nontraditional students (18.10% versus 13.31%) and female students (61.13% versus 52.20%-53.03%), both of which are variables included in the design of the study. The sample appears to be reasonably representative of student classifications.

The sample included students from 56 different major fields of study, 100 of which were majoring in communication and sizable groups majoring in accounting, marketing, and education. Thus, communication majors were over-represented in the sample. T-tests were performed on each of the scales comparing communication majors with all others, yielding no significant differences (p .05).

Data Collection

All data were collected during regularly scheduled classes. The researcher told the students that she was a graduate student in the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences, that she was gathering data for research on the communicator style expectations that college students had of their instructors, and that this information would be
used in her thesis for a master's degree. The researcher read a synthesis of the instructions printed at the beginning of the survey instrument, asked the students to fill out the instrument if they gave their permission to participate, assured them of the confidentiality of the information they provided, and explained how to fill out the computer answer sheet. A copy of these instructions is included in Appendix A.

The instrument took approximately 15 to 20 minutes for completion. Five additional minutes were used in most of the classes to explain the basis of the study and to answer students' questions. The researcher believed that this time was important because students should be given the opportunity for learning as a result of their participation.

Separate request forms were also made available to those students who wanted a brief report of the results of the study. This report will be mailed to the students after the research and the thesis have been completed. (See Appendix B for Report of the Results Request)

The Instrument

The questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix A. Questionnaire items were randomly ordered. Items were drawn from Norton's (Montgomery & Norton, 1981) "short form" communicator style questionnaire and from an instrument developed by Potter (1982) to measure the same dimensions. A total of 63 scale items were included.

All items were modified from their original form to provide a common stem and set of response categories. For example, one of Norton's (1978a) original items read: "In most social situations I
generally speak very frequently" (p. 2). One of Potter's (1982) original items read: "In order for a college teacher to be good, he/she should: probe student points of view during discussions by using argumentation and debate" (p. 2). Given a common stem, these items became: "My 'ideal' college teacher: generally speaks very frequently in most social situations"; "probes student points of view during discussions by using argumentation and debate." The stem included the word 'ideal' so that students would not focus on any one particular teacher in the classroom.

Norton's response categories ranged from "1=very strong disagreement with the statement" to "6=very strong agreement with the statement" (1978a, p. 2). Potter's response categories ranged from "1=strongly agree" to "5=strongly disagree" (p. 2). The study being reported in this paper had subjects indicate the level of agreement/disagreement that the item described a characteristic expected of their 'ideal' teacher. "Strongly agree" was assigned a scale value of "1," "strongly disagree" was assigned a scale value of "5," and intermediate responses were assigned appropriate values. The "no opinion" response was assigned a scale value of "9." This response occurred infrequently and was treated as missing data.

The ten styles included in the instrument were: animated, attentive, contentious, dominant, dramatic, friendly, impression leaving, open, precise, and relaxed. Norton (Montgomery & Norton, 1981) provided four items for each of these styles. Four additional items from Norton (Montgomery & Norton, 1981) were also included that reflected communicator image.
Potter (1982) also used communicator style statements to examine the relationship between an instructor's communicator style and a student's learning style. Potter used the same styles, but some of the items were different than Norton's items. These were included in the instrument in an effort to obtain the most reliable instrument possible.

A reliability analysis was conducted using only the items from Norton's scale, only the items from Potter's scale, and a scale using items from both Norton and Potter to determine internal consistencies. For the analysis, each scale was constructed by adding together each response score on the four items in the scale and dividing by four. Thus, an average score was computed, not a weighted score. A criterion of .50 for an alpha reliability coefficient was selected in order for the scale to be regarded as having acceptable reliability. Table 2 reports the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients calculated for each scale.

The results of this table show that the highest reliability of internal consistencies for most of the subconstructs was achieved with the use of Norton's items. Since these had been used previously in a variety of studies, and since all scales met or exceeded the acceptable reliability criterion, it was decided to use only Norton's scale for the analysis of data for this study. It was also decided to omit communicator image because it was not a communicator style.

According to Pettigrew (1977), Norton's communicator style measure has been shown to have both high validity and reliability. Norton (1978b) reported the internal reliabilities of the subconstructs
TABLE 2

Reliability Analysis for Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Norton</th>
<th>Potter</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animated</td>
<td>.67 (4 items)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>.67 (5 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>.64 (4 items)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>.50 (4 items)</td>
<td>.56 (3 items)</td>
<td>.69 (7 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>.57 (4 items)</td>
<td>.37 (3 items)</td>
<td>.54 (7 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>.57 (4 items)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>.61 (4 items)</td>
<td>.43 (4 items)</td>
<td>.70 (8 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impression Leaving</td>
<td>.80 (4 items)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>.73 (5 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>.65 (4 items)</td>
<td>.39 (3 items)</td>
<td>.66 (7 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>.54 (4 items)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>.60 (5 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>.72 (4 items)</td>
<td>.19 (3 items)</td>
<td>.68 (7 items)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Only one of Potter's items was used for these scales.
(2) None of Potter's items were used for these scales.

as follows: "... friendly (.37), animated (.56), attentive (.57), contentious (.65), dramatic (.68), impression leaving (.69), open (.69), relaxed (.71), ... and dominant (.82)" (p. 106). No internal reliabilities were found in the literature for the precise style of communicating. Norton (1978b) reported evidence of content and construct validity of the instrument, but predictive validity was not as clear.
Montgomery and Norton (1981) reported that Norton's communicator style construct has "... demonstrated structural stability across a wide variety of communication situations" (p. 123). Thus, the sub-constructs of the measure are distinct.

The instrument also included an age question to divide the sample into groups of nontraditional and traditional students, and a sex question to divide the sample into groups of males and females. The other demographic questions in this section asked for ethnic background, citizenship status, class level, and major field of study. (See Appendix A for Instructional Communicator Style Expectations Measure)

Data Analysis

The first and second research questions were concerned with the main effects of type and sex. Since no significant interaction effects were found (see Chapter IV), main effects were tested without controlling for possible interaction.

Two procedures were used, multiple discriminant analysis and one-way analysis of variance. The step-wise discriminant analysis procedure identifies a linear combination of scales which significantly discriminates between groups and the relative contribution of each scale to the discrimination. The resulting discriminant function was then used to classify subjects into groups. The .05 level was set to evaluate the significance of the discriminant function.

The discriminant analysis indicates the extent to which group membership (nontraditional/traditional or male/female) can be predicted from a combination of scales. In contrast, the analysis of variance
procedure considers each scale separately. With the use of the ANOVA model, no significant interaction effect was assumed. The test for each main effect controlled for the other main effect. For example, when the main effect for sex was tested for the contentious scale, the effect of type was controlled. See Nie, et. al (1975, pp. 405, 406) for a description of the model. In order to accommodate "experiment-wide" error rate, the alpha level was set at .005 for these comparisons.

The third research question asked whether there was a significant interaction between type (nontraditional and traditional) and sex (male and female) on instructional communicator style expectations. This question was addressed by a series of 2 X 2 (SEX X TYPE) analysis of variance tests on each scale. In order to minimize Type I error, the alpha level set for each scale was .005, producing an "experiment-wide level of .05. These procedures are similar to those used by Montgomery and Norton (1981).

Chapter Summary

This chapter detailed the procedures used in this study to investigate the instructional communicator style expectations of nontraditional and traditional male and female undergraduate students at Western Michigan University. The research questions were presented and the population was described. The final sample was 337 students. The data was collected from these students during regularly scheduled classes. The instrumentation was based on questionnaires used by Norton and by Potter. The procedures used to analyze the data included multiple discriminant analysis and one-way analysis of variance.
CHAPTER IV

REPORT OF RESULTS

This chapter reports the analyses of the data collected in this study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the instructional communicator style expectations of nontraditional and traditional male and female undergraduate students. Discussion of the data centers on the three questions of the study: (1) Do nontraditional and traditional students have different instructional communicator style expectations? (2) Do male and female students have different instructional communicator style expectations? (3) Is there a significant interaction between type (nontraditional and traditional) and sex on instructional communicator style expectations?

Sample size varies across the statistical tests because of missing data. All statistical tests were conducted using appropriate subprograms of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, & Bent, 1975) and SPSS Update (Hull & Nie, 1979).

Results

Question 1

Do nontraditional and traditional students have different instructional communicator style expectations?
Statistical procedures used to test for the effects of type on students' instructional communicator style expectations were multiple discriminant analysis, analysis of variance, and computation of the means for each scale by type.

Table 3 lists the stepwise results of discriminant analysis on type. Because greatly unequal sample sizes complicate interpretation of classification results, discriminant analysis was performed on a reduced sample. This sample included all nontraditional students and a computer generated random sample of 20% of the traditional students. Table 3 clearly shows the existence of a possible association between types of students and their responses to the items on seven of the instructional communicator style scales: friendly, dominant, attentive, open, precise, relaxed, and contentious. Nontraditional students and traditional students differed most on their responses to the items which made up these seven instructional communicator styles. The discriminant function was found to be significant ($X^2=27.095$, df=7, 98, p=.003). The final Wilks' Lambda was 0.7460793.

**TABLE 3**

Stepwise Results of Discriminant Analysis on Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Wilks' Lambda</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>0.891783</td>
<td>0.0009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>0.840641</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>0.798993</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>0.784676</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>0.773886</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>0.760688</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>0.746079</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Table 4 shows the standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients for type. These weights indicate the relative importance of each of the seven scales in discriminating between nontraditional and traditional students. The scales are presented in their order of importance in contributing, either negatively or positively, to the function. The table shows the friendly style to be the most important scale to use to statistically distinguish between the two groups of students. However, all seven scales contributed significantly to the function.

**TABLE 4**

Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients for Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>0.58919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>-0.51520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>-0.46323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>0.40824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>0.38378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>0.34873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>0.25659</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows the likelihood of correctly predicting group membership of the 98 cases included by the scores on the items making up the seven instructional communicator style scales. This table clearly shows a high percentage of the cases were correctly identified.

Table 6 shows the mean scores on each scale of the nontraditional group and the traditional group. The mean is the average score of all
TABLE 5
Classification Results by Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual Group</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
<th>Predicted Group 1</th>
<th>Membership 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nontraditional</td>
<td></td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td></td>
<td>68.5%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of Cases Correctly Classified: 70.41%

of the cases in a group divided by the number of cases and shows which group selected which scales as the most important in their expectations of instructional communicator style. The instructional communicator style expectations measure used for this study scaled the items from "1" as the most important to "5" as the least important.

Table 6 also provides the rankings of the styles by type. Nontraditional students rated two styles as more important than traditional students, the attentive style and the precise style. The other eight styles were rated more important by the traditional student group. Ranking of the styles by type shows the attentive, impression leaving, friendly, relaxed, and animated styles as the most important for both groups. The least important for both groups were contentious and dominant. The precise style and the dramatic style received different rankings by each group.

The analysis of variance provides data for determining whether
### TABLE 6

Mean Communicator Style Scores by Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Type 1 - Nontraditional</th>
<th>Type 2 - Traditional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Rank Order of Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>1.700*</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impression Leaving</td>
<td>1.7705</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>2.0958</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>2.0980</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animated</td>
<td>2.4953</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>2.5129*</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2.6343</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>2.6535</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>3.0625</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>3.4375</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Higher ranked item between groups
there was a main effect of type on individual scales in this study. The results of this analysis are provided in Table 7. This table shows one scale for type with an F-ratio significant at the .005 level, the friendly style. These results were consistent with the discriminant analysis. Table 6 shows the friendly style was ranked the third more important scale for both types. Traditional students rated this more important than nontraditional students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animated</td>
<td>3.783</td>
<td>1,295</td>
<td>.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>1,317</td>
<td>.963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>3.899</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>6.708</td>
<td>1,289</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>4.867</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>10.957</td>
<td>1,316</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impression Leaving</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>1,321</td>
<td>.835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2.402</td>
<td>1,305</td>
<td>.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>1.465</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>.227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>1.121</td>
<td>1,302</td>
<td>.290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the statistical tests require a positive answer to the first question in this study. A student's type (nontraditional
or traditional) does appear to have an effect on instructional communicator style expectations. A cluster of seven scales significantly discriminated between the nontraditional and traditional students. However, the friendly scale was the only one producing a significant difference on the univariate F-test.

**Question 2**

Do male and female students have different instructional communicator style expectations?

Statistical procedures used to test for the effects of sex on students' instructional communicator style expectations were the same as those used to test for the effects of type: multiple discriminant analysis, analysis of variance, and computation of the means for each scale by group.

Table 8 lists the stepwise results of discriminant analysis on sex. In order to adjust for large differences in sample size (129 males versus 206 females), this sample was reduced. The resulting sample included 99 males and a computer-generated random sample of 45% of the females. Table 8 clearly shows the existence of a possible association between the sex of students and their responses to the items on five of the instructional communicator style scales: contentious, animated, precise, friendly, and relaxed. Male students and female students differed most on their responses to the items which made up these five instructional communicator styles. The discriminant function was found to be significant ($\chi^2=36.573$, df=6,191, p=.000).
The final Wilks' Lambda was 0.8617054.

**TABLE 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Wilks' Lambda</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>0.925331</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Animated</td>
<td>0.898480</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>0.886801</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>0.877651</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>0.872068</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 shows the standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients for sex. These weights indicate the relative importance of each of the five scales in discriminating between male and female students in this study. The scales are presented in their order of importance in contributing, either negatively or positively, to the function. The table shows the contentious style as the most important scale to use to statistically distinguish between the two groups of students. This style contributed almost twice as much as the next style, the friendly style, to the function. However, all five scales contributed significantly.

Table 10 shows the likelihood of correctly predicting group membership of the 191 cases by the scores on the items making up the five instructional communicator style scales. This table clearly shows a high percentage of the cases were correctly identified.

Table 11 shows the differences between the mean scores on each
scale for the male group and the female group. This table also provides the rankings of the styles by sex. Male students rated four styles as more important than female students: dramatic, precise, dominant, and contentious. Six styles were rated more important by the female student group: attentive, impression leaving, friendly, relaxed, animated, and open. Ranking of the styles by sex showed
attentive, impression leaving, friendly, relaxed, and animated as the most important styles for both groups. The least important styles for both groups were contentious and dominant. The dramatic style, the precise style, and the open style received different rankings by each group.

The analysis of variance provides data for determining whether there was a main effect of sex on individual scales in this study. The results of this analysis are provided on Table 12. This table shows two scales for sex with an F-ratio significant at the .005 level, the contentious style and the precise style. These results were consistent with the results of the discriminant analysis. The contentious style was ranked last by both males and females as shown on Table 10. Table 10 also shows the precise style was ranked seventh in importance by male students and eighth by female students. These styles were both rated higher by male students in this study.

The results of the statistical tests require a positive answer to the second question in this study. A student's sex does have an effect on instructional communicator style expectations. Multiple discriminant analysis produced five scales which significantly discriminated between males and females. These scales were, in order of importance: contentious, friendly, animated, precise, and relaxed. Univariate analysis of variance identified significant differences between males and females for the precise scale and the contentious scale.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Male N</th>
<th>Rank Order of Mean</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Female N</th>
<th>Rank Order of Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>1.7362</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6803*</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impression Leaving</td>
<td>1.7362</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6803*</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>1.9646</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8502*</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>2.0042</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.0037*</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animated</td>
<td>2.3996</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.3476*</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>2.4277*</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.5075</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>2.4463*</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.6709</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2.5310</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.5013*</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>2.8198*</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.9251</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>3.1315*</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.3695</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Higher ranked item between groups
TABLE 12
Sex ANOVA on Communicator Style Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animated</td>
<td>1.303</td>
<td>1,295</td>
<td>.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>1.770</td>
<td>1,317</td>
<td>.184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>12.089</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>1.574</td>
<td>1,289</td>
<td>.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>0.890</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>.346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>4.109</td>
<td>1,316</td>
<td>.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impression</td>
<td>4.351</td>
<td>1,321</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>1,305</td>
<td>.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>12.915</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>1,302</td>
<td>.722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 3

Is there a significant interaction between type (nontraditional and traditional) and sex on instructional communicator style expectations?

Type. Data were collected from 337 students. Of these students sampled, 18% were nontraditional (25 years of age or older) and 79% were traditional (24 years of age or younger). The age range was 17 to 65 years. The mean age of the sample was 23.22 years. The mean
The mean age of the nontraditional students was 32.28 years and the mean age of the traditional students was 21.12 years.

**Sex.** There were 129 male students and 206 female students in the sample. Of the students sampled, 38% were males and 61% were females. The nontraditional sample included 24 (39%) males and 37 (61%) females. The traditional sample included 100 (38%) males and 165 (62%) females.

**Interaction.** To test for significant interaction between type and sex, a 2 X 2 fixed effects analysis of variance (ANOVA) with independent variables of type and sex was utilized to analyze the data gathered in this study.

Table 13 shows the results of this analysis on the 10 communicator styles. There were no scales where the interaction F-ratio was significant at the .005 level. For only one instructional communicator style scale, the dramatic style, was the F-ratio close to being significant. Thus, there did not appear to be any significant interaction effect of type and sex on the communicator style scales in this study.
TABLE 13
Type by Sex Interaction ANOVA on Communicator Style Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animated</td>
<td>0.372</td>
<td>1,295</td>
<td>.542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>1,317</td>
<td>.684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentious</td>
<td>1.330</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>1,289</td>
<td>.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>4.273</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>1,316</td>
<td>.921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impression Leaving</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>1,321</td>
<td>.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>1,305</td>
<td>.801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise</td>
<td>0.536</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>.465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>1,302</td>
<td>.813</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes a discussion of the findings of the study, a discussion of the implications of the findings, limitations, and recommendations for further research.

Discussion of the Findings

This study was an investigation of the instructional communicator style expectations of nontraditional and traditional male and female undergraduate-level students. The number of older students and the number of female students are increasing and it was believed this type of study could be helpful at this time.

Question 1

In the first question, the researcher asked whether there was a main effect of type (nontraditional and traditional) on instructional communicator style expectations. Differences were found between these two types of students and it appeared that type did have an effect on the expectations of the students in this study. A cluster of seven scales, friendly, precise, attentive, relaxed, dominant, contentious, and open, significantly discriminated between the two types. One scale, the friendly style, produced a significant difference on the univariate F-test. Nontraditional students rated
two scales as more important than traditional students, attentive and precise. The mean scores showed little difference for the attentive scale. A greater difference was found between the scores on the precise scale. The highest ranked scale for both groups was attentive. The lowest ranked scale was contentious.

The concept of communicator style is another way to look at communication interactions. The communication behaviors of instructors in the classroom are a vital ingredient in the educational process, according to the literature on student perceptions. It may be that people's expectations of the communication behavior of others can affect the reality of many of their communication interactions. Thus, differences in expectations of instructional communication may provide different experiences in the classroom for nontraditional students than for traditional students.

The amount of experience was one of the main differences suggested in the literature between nontraditional and traditional students. Many of the differences between all types of students may come from past experiences. It may be that these experiences affect students' expectations of their instructors. More life experiences probably increase the number and, perhaps, variety of communication interactions with others. These interactions may change a person's style of communicating, as suggested in the literature, and may also change a person's expectations of the communicator style of others.

The search of the literature provided insights into some of the problems, possible expectations, and needs of nontraditional students. Many instructional needs were found that could be reflected in some
of the instructional communicator styles used in this study, yet the nontraditional sample rated only two styles higher than the traditional sample. This may have to do with the acceptance of the role of instructors (Clarke, 1980) and a less critical approach to instructional behavior (Alciatore & Alciatore, 1979). It may be that nontraditional students have certain expectations, but do not express them as strongly because of past experiences, and because they are more accepting of and/or used to a variety of styles of communicating.

Some of the differences between nontraditional and traditional students in this study may also be related to the number of hours of enrollment per semester or session. Nontraditional students are often part-time or less-than-part-time students, while traditional students are more likely to be enrolled on a fulltime basis. Nontraditional students often have families, jobs, and other outside commitments which leave them with little time to attend school. Both Reber (1976) and Knowles (1970) listed the time factor as a problem for many nontraditional students.

The precise style was rated as more important by the nontraditional students in this study. Looking back at the review of the literature, this instructional communicator style expectation rating is understandable. An instructor who uses the precise style of communication would tell students exactly what was expected of them, what assignments were required, how students would be graded—exactly what was required to complete the course. Nontraditional students with many outside pressures and limited time available for school and study, may prefer an instructor who explains exactly what is required.
These students may not be able to put off school work until a later time.

Apps (1981) stated that older students "... sometimes have an excessive practical orientation toward school" (p. 49). An instructor who uses the precise style of communication may give very clear and precise explanations during classtime that help these students connect the learning to something they already know which may help them use the learning now.

This practical orientation may be grounded in the fact that many older students are already involved with society, know what they want/need to learn, and why they want/need this learning. It may also be related to the concept that these students are more often volunteer students (Knowles, 1970). They may see school more on a course by course contract basis rather than just something to get through. They have committed valuable time and money, often scarce resources for them. It is important to them to be there, otherwise they would probably not participate.

The traditional-age students in this study gave higher ratings to the friendly, open, dominant, and contentious styles of instructional communication. Traditional students may have more time available to them for the social interactions that are a part of the friendly and open styles. Younger students are more often fulltime students, spend more time on campus, and have more time for involvements while they are in school.

Traditional students may be more accepting of instructors who use the dominant style of communication than nontraditional students.
The use of this style by instructors would lessen the communication role of students. The andragogical approach, suggested by Knowles (1970) for use with older students, would tend to increase the communication role of students. The instructor would be non-directive, encourage cooperative interaction among learners, and encourage active participation by students in the learning process. This would result in a give-and-take interaction that may be preferred by many older students. This also goes along with the self-directed approach to learning of the older student (Knowles, 1970).

Because nontraditional students are often the peers of their instructors, they may view their relationships with them on a more equal basis than traditional students. A younger student may view a relationship with an instructor as a superior-subordinate interaction and be more accepting of the dominant and contentious styles of instructional communication. The contentious instructor may use valuable classtime to try to prove a point and this may be bothersome to older students who want to get on with the learning.

The results of this study regarding the expectations of the two types of students involved make sense when related to the literature on nontraditional students and their instructional needs.

Question 2

In the second question, the researcher asked whether there was a main effect of sex on instructional communicator style expectations. Differences were found between males and females. It appeared that sex did have an effect on the expectations of the students in this
study. A cluster of five scales, contentious, friendly, animated, precise and relaxed, significantly discriminated between males and females. Two scales, precise and contentious, produced a significant difference on the univariate F-test. Female students rated six scales higher than male students, attentive, impression leaving, friendly, relaxed, animated, and open. The highest ranked scale for both groups was attentive. The lowest ranked scale was contentious for both groups.

Researchers have found sex differences in attitudes toward teachers, in communication behaviors, and in self perceptions of communicator style. For example, Haslett (1976) found differences between the attitudes of males and females toward teachers that were related to the academic self-concepts of students; Baird and Bradley (1979) found differences in the styles of management and communication between males and females; Montgomery and Norton (1981) found sex differences in self perceptions of communicator style. Haslett also reported that "males generally tended to rate teachers as being less effective than did females" in her study (p. 56). Differences in behaviors and self perceptions may affect expectations of the behaviors of others.

Females may be more concerned with relational matters than males. One repeated conclusion of research into sex differences has been that females have a higher social sensitivity than males (Henley, 1977). Research cited in Swensen (1973) concluded that females usually get physically closer to others than do males, and are more likely to sit beside others like individuals who are cooperating.
Rosenthal (cited in Knapp, 1978a) found females were more sensitive to the nonverbal cues of others.

Traditional sex roles in our society have typically cast women in relationship roles. Although this may be changing, a woman's sense of self may still be dependent upon her relationship roles with others. Eakins and Eakins (1981) stated:

Women's sense of self may be more dependent on the reflection she sees mirrored in others' eyes than a man's is. Her selfhood may be defined more by the approval and acceptance she senses from others. Men may have developed a sense of self-regard that does not depend as much on outside sources (p. 125).

Perhaps, because women have often been dependent on others, they have had to be more concerned about and sensitive to others.

Two styles with higher means for females and higher classification percentages as discriminant variables were friendly and animated. In light of the research findings listed above, the friendly instructional communicator style preferred by females is understandable. This style is more of a relational style, and would tend to reflect back a positive self-image to female students. An instructor using this style may seem to be more concerned about relationships, thus be more like the female students. Female students may be better able to relate to an instructor who uses this style with students.

Not only have females been reported to have more sensitivity to the nonverbal cues of others, but also, according to LaFrance and Mayo (1981), studies have found that women "... have a greater capacity than men to produce facial expressions that viewers can interpret correctly" (p. 128). Perhaps, because they are better able to send and receive these cues, females may also prefer the animated
style of instructional communication. This style uses many nonverbal
cues, such as gestures and facial expressions. The females in
Montgomery and Norton's (1981) report of two studies on sex differences
and similarities in self perceptions of communicator styles, listed
higher scores on the animated style. Thus, females may not only use
this style themselves, but prefer that others use it also.

LaFrance and Mayo (1981) also stated that males in our society

... are expected to be proactive, that is, they are expected
to be active, independent, self-confident, objective, and de­
cisive. They are expected to be less tuned to the socio­
emotional aspects of human relationships and more concerned
with getting the job done (p. 127).

Two styles with higher means for males and high classification per­
centages as discriminant variables were precise and contentious.
These styles would fit into the expectations for males in our society.
Males may also prefer this behavior from others. Thus, their higher
ratings for these styles of instructional communication.

The results of this study regarding the expectations of male
and female students for instructional communicator style correspond
to the findings in the literature.

Question 3

In the third question, the researcher asked whether there was a
significant interaction between type (nontraditional and traditional)
and sex on instructional communicator style expectations. No signifi­
cant interaction was found between these two variables with the
sample of this study. Thus, the combination of type and sex together
did not interact to affect instructional communicator style
expectations of these students.

Implications of the Findings

Differences were found in this study between nontraditional and traditional students, and between male and female students. A study by Mangano and Corrado (1980) found that faculty did not seem aware of the importance of some of the instructional needs of nontraditional students. Awareness of these differences would seem to be important for those who work with these students in college and university settings. Increasing numbers of nontraditional and female students, greater concern for student retention, and declining enrollments may make this awareness even more important. Faculty and instructional development programs at colleges and universities should include findings such as these in their courses and materials for those who work with older students.

If styles of communicating are states rather than traits, then individuals are flexible and can adapt their styles to the needs, expectations, and/or the styles of others. Instructors can use a variety of styles to fulfill the expectations of the students within their classrooms.

The researcher looked at expectations of students enrolled in one university during two enrollment sessions. However, these findings may indicate the possibility of similar findings among other student populations.

These findings add to the expanding knowledge of nontraditional students, the communication process, communicator styles, and male
and female differences and similarities.

Limitations

The limitations of the study should be considered before further research is planned. This study grouped all students 25 years of age and older for a comparison with students 24 years of age and younger. The variation within the nontraditional group may be much greater than any variation between the nontraditional and traditional group. This is a long period in the life span and the variations within this group may also need to be considered in any further research.

Data for this study were gathered during spring and summer sessions when the average age of traditional students is probably higher than in the fall or winter semesters. More juniors and seniors enroll during these sessions than freshmen and sophomores. Traditional undergraduate-level students are usually 18 to 22 years of age. Within a representative sample of this group, the age mean would probably be lower than 21.12 years, the traditional mean in this study. According to Cronen and Price (1974), students may mature in their role as students as they move up in class levels. The responses of higher level students may not accurately reflect the choices that would result from a representative cross-section of undergraduates at varied stages in their roles as students. The results are probably representative of the 1982 Spring and Summer Sessions, but cannot be assumed to be representative of fall and winter semesters when more freshmen and sophomores are enrolled.

The sample was limited in numbers of nontraditional male
students. Analysis to look for differences and similarities between nontraditional males and females could not be carried out.

Recommendations for Further Research

Further research needs to be conducted into instructional communicator style expectations of nontraditional and traditional male and female undergraduate students. Research should be conducted at other times and with other populations. Numbers of nontraditional males should be increased for a comparison of the expectations of nontraditional male and nontraditional female students on the instructional communicator style scales.

All samples for research should include students from all undergraduate levels, as well as both part-time and full-time students. It may be that students from different disciplines have different expectations; samples from various disciplines should be compared for any differences that may exist. Male and female students are being encouraged to enter areas of study formerly encouraged for one sex only. Research into instructional communicator style expectations from this approach could be important for those who will work with these differing student populations.

Larger samples of older students that include groups of minority students for comparison may also be an important area of research to consider.

Further refinement of the scales to raise their reliability ratings should also be considered before further research is undertaken. It may be that more scales should be added for research into
instructional communicator styles. Some of Potter's items may actually reflect additional styles rather than the same styles as Norton's instrument.

Concluding Remarks

Instructors at the college level need to know and to understand some of the similarities and differences among their students. Much research has been conducted to understand children, young adults, and the aged within our society. More must be done to understand the middle years, the years of the majority of nontraditional students.
Appendix A

INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATOR STYLE EXPECTATIONS MEASURE
INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATOR STYLE EXPECTATIONS MEASURE

If you consent to participate in this study of the communicator style expectations you have of your college instructors, please fill out this instrument. If you do not consent to participate, please do not fill it out.

You have impressions of how others communicate—that is, their style of communication. This measure focuses upon your sensitivity to the way instructors communicate.

It is not designed to look at what is communicated, rather it is designed to explore the way you want instructors to communicate.

Because there is no such thing as a "correct" style of communication, none of the following items have right or wrong answers in general.

Please do not spend too much time on the items. Let your first inclination be your guide. Try to answer as honestly as possible. All responses will be strictly confidential. Please do not write your name anywhere on the questionnaire or the computer sheet.

Some questions will be difficult to answer because you honestly do not know. For these questions, however, please try to determine which way you are leaning and answer in the appropriate direction.

The following scale is used for each item in Part I.

1 Strong agreement with the statement
2 Agree with the statement
3 Somewhat agree, somewhat disagree with the statement
4 Disagree with the statement
5 Strong disagreement with the statement

9 No opinion

Some of the items will be similarly stated. But, each item has a slightly different orientation. Try to answer each question as though it were the only question being asked.

Finally, answer each item as it relates to a face-to-face communication situation—namely, the style of instructional communication you want from your college teachers. Do not focus on any one particular teacher. Answer the items as each relates to your "ideal" style of instructional communication.

W. J. Potter - 1982
Part I - INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATOR STYLE EXPECTATIONS

Please record your choices on the computer sheet using the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each statement as it relates to the way you want your college instructors to communicate.

1. Strong agreement with the statement
2. Agree with the statement
3. Somewhat agree, somewhat disagree with the statement
4. Disagree with the statement
5. Strong disagreement with the statement
6. No opinion

My "ideal" college teacher:
1. is a very good communicator in a small group.
2. usually leaves an impression on students by the way he/she says something.
3. requires precise answers on tests.
4. is tactful.
5. is very argumentative.
6. moves around when talking rather than standing in one place.
7. appears relaxed even if he/she is under a lot of pressure.
8. as a rule, openly expresses his/her feelings and emotions.
9. always finds it very easy to communicate on a one-to-one basis with strangers.
10. uses argument as a tool of teaching.
11. is an extremely open communicator.
12. leaves a definite impression on students.
13. talks with students about matters besides coursework.
14. under pressure, comes across as a relaxed speaker.
15. dramatizes a lot.
16. once he/she gets wound up in a heated discussion, has a hard time stopping himself/herself.
1 Strong agreement with the statement
2 Agree with the statement
3 Somewhat agree, somewhat disagree with the statement
4 Disagree with the statement
5 Strong disagreement with the statement
9 No opinion

My "ideal" college teacher:

17. speaks like an authority on his/her subject.
18. often physically and vocally acts out what he/she wants to communicate.
19. very frequently verbally exaggerates to emphasize a point.
20. has no nervous mannerisms in his/her speech.
21. has a rhythm or flow of speech that is not affected by nervousness.
22. is a very precise communicator.
23. to be friendly, habitually acknowledges verbally students' contributions.
24. is easy to get to know.
25. in an argument, insists upon very precise definitions.
26. is always an extremely friendly communicator.
27. actively uses a lot of facial expressions when he/she communicates.
28. is very quick to challenge students when he/she disagrees with them.
29. readily expresses admiration for students.
30. is bothered when he/she drops an argument that is not resolved.
31. prevents class discussions from becoming too freewheeling and getting off the topic.
32. tends to be very encouraging to students whenever he/she communicates to them.
33. regularly tells jokes, anecdotes, and stories when he/she communicates.
1 Strong agreement with the statement
2 Agree with the statement
3 Somewhat agree, somewhat disagree with the statement
4 Disagree with the statement
5 Strong disagreement with the statement
9 No opinion

My "ideal" college teacher:

34. tends to come on strong in most social situations.
35. tends to constantly gesture when he/she communicates.
36. is open to student suggestions.
37. is a very relaxed communicator.
38. very often insists that students document or present some kind of proof for what they are arguing.
39. usually leaves an impression on students by what he/she says.
40. is a very good communicator.
41. usually reacts in such a way that students know that he/she is listening to them.
42. can always repeat back to students exactly what was meant.
43. probes student points of view during discussions by using argumentation and debate.
44. when he/she communicates, his/her eyes reflect exactly what he/she is feeling.
45. sets the rules in the course.
46. readily reveals personal things about himself/herself.
47. tries to take charge of things when he/she is with students.
48. challenges all points of view.
49. makes students feel relaxed and at ease in class.
50. really likes to listen very carefully to students.
51. usually tells students a lot about himself/herself even if he/she does not know them well.
1 Strong agreement with the statement
2 Agree with the statement
3 Somewhat agree, somewhat disagree with the statement
4 Disagree with the statement
5 Strong disagreement with the statement
9 No opinion

My "ideal" college teacher:

52. is flexible and allows students to set their own deadlines.
53. has no preconceived notions about students.
54. says 'hi' to students and talks with them outside of class.
55. generally speaks very frequently in most social situations.
56. is very expressive nonverbally.
57. likes to be strictly accurate when he/she communicates.
58. tries to find the good points of each student.
59. leaves students with an impression which they definitely tend to remember.
60. is dominant in social situations.
61. is a unique individual.
62. finds it extremely easy to maintain a conversation with a student of the opposite sex whom he/she has just met.
63. is an extremely attentive communicator.

Part II - CURRENT STATUS

In order for this study to be useful, the following demographic information is needed. Please record your answers on the computer sheet.

64. Sex: (1) Male  (2) Female
65. Ethnic Background: (1) Afro-American, Black  (2) American Indian  (3) Oriental American  (4) Spanish Surname  (5) White or other
66. Are you a U.S. citizen?  (1) Yes  (2) No
67. Class Level: (1) Freshman       (2) Sophomore       (3) Junior
       (4) Senior          (5) Unclassified

68. Major Field of Study (see attached list): write in and code
    under "A" on the computer sheet.

69. Age: write in and code under "B" on the computer sheet.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION
## List of Major Fields of Study

### College of Applied Science
- AGR Agriculture
- DE Distributive Education
- EE Electrical Engineering
- HE Home Economics
- IT Industrial Technology
- IEN Industrial Engineering
- ME Mechanical Engineering
- PAS Paper Science & Technology
- TRS Transportation Technology
- IDP Inter-Disciplinary Program

### College of Business
- GBS General Business
- MGT Management
- MKT Marketing

### College of Arts & Sciences
- CAS Communication Arts & Sciences
- ENG English
- LAN Languages
- LIN Linguistics
- PHI Philosophy
- REL Religion
- BIO Biology
- BMS Biomedical Science
- CHM Chemistry
- CPS Computer Science
- GEG Geography
- GEL Geology
- MAT Mathematics
- PHY Physics
- PSY Psychology
- ANT Anthropology
- ECO Economics
- EVS Environmental Studies
- HIS History
- MEV Medieval Institute
- POL Political Science
- PAP Public Administration
- SOC Sociology
- SOS Social Science
- SM Coordinate Majors

### College of Education
- JHS Junior High School Education
- SEC Secondary Education

### College of Fine Arts
- ART Art
- DAC Dance
- MSC Music
- THR Theatre

### College of Health & Human Services
- MS Medical Science
- OT Occupational Therapy
- SPN Speech Pathology & Audiology
- SW Social Work

### Librarianship
- LBS Library Science

### Honors College
- HNC Honors College Student

### Undecided
- UND Undecided
- OTH Other
Appendix B

REPORT OF THE RESULTS REQUEST
Dear Student:

If you would like a report of the results of this study, please print your name below and the address where you will be in the Fall. I will send you a brief report.

Thank you for your interest and for participating in this research project.

Sincerely,

Chryl Snyder

NAME ________________________________
ADDRESS __________________________________
__________________________________________
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Front and Center. Newsletter, Center for Women's Services, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, Spring 1982.


Knowles, M. S. The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy

Koch, W. R. Dimensions Underlying Student Ratings of Instruction.
Los Angeles, California: Paper presented at the Annual Meeting
of the American Education Research Association (65th), 1981.
(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 204 395)

LaFrance, M., & Mayo, C. A review of nonverbal behaviors of women
and men. In J. Civikly (Ed.) Contexts of Communication. New York:

Lenz, E., & Shaevitz, M. H. So You Want to Go Back to School. New

Loring, R. K. Adapting Institutions to Adults. Chicago: Lecture
given before the 33rd National Conference on Higher Education,

Mangano, J. A., & Corrado, T. J. Toward a Taxonomy of Adult Two-Year
Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Washington,
D.C.), 1980.

Mazzuca, S. A., & Feldhusen, J. F. Effective college instruction:
how students see it. College Student Journal Monograph, 1978, 12
(1, Pt. 2), 1-12.

Miller, S., Nunnaly, E. W., & Wackman, D. B. Alive and Aware:
Improving Communication in Relationships. Minneapolis, Minnesota:
Interpersonal Communication Programs, Inc., 1975.

Mok, P. P. I-Speak Your Language. A survey of personal styles manual,

Mok, P., & Lynch, D. Easy new way to get your way. The Readers

Montgomery, B. M., & Norton, R. W. Sex differences and similarities
in communicator style. Communication Monographs, 1981, 48 (2),
121-132.

The nation today. The Knoxville News Sentinel, Knoxville, Tennessee,

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (2nd Edition). New

Norton, R. W. Communicator Style Measure. Questionnaire, University
of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1978a.


Registrar's Office. 1982 Spring Session enrollment (May 7, 1982) & 1982 Summer Session enrollment (July 6, 1982), Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.


Snyder, C. A. A Review of Nontraditional Students and a Survey of Their Needs at Western Michigan University. Unpublished Honors College senior paper, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, April 1981.

Stone, E. The new kid in class is your mother. MS, September 1979, pp. 46-50.


