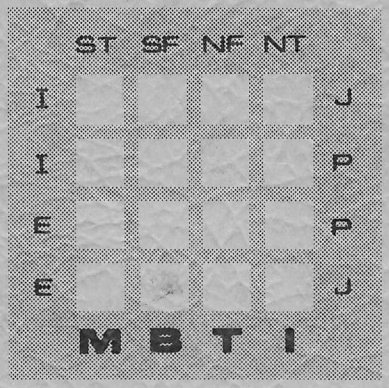
Research in Psychological Type



Volume 5, 1982

Research in Psychological Type, Volume 5, 1982.

COMMUNICATION STYLE PREFERENCES AND ADJUSTMENTS AS AN APPROACH FOR STUDYING EFFECTS OF SIMILARITY IN PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE

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There is a need for more research studying the effects of similarity in psychological type. In a review of research, Carskadon (1979) pointed out that previous studies have shown the importance of similarity on some of the MBTI scales, but not others. These studies have produced ambiguous results regarding the effects of type similarity in general. Differences in type, however, are presumed to be associated with a wide variety of human relations problems in general and interpersonal communication problems in particular. It is generally assumed that the greater the psychological type similarity between people the easier it should be for them to communicate and thus to develop a stable and mutually satisfying relationship. The research reviewed by Carskadon (1979) and the more recent study by Sherman (1981) give some support to the belief that the greater the similarity between people the better the relationship will be--with the possible exception of those relationships involving people who are identical in type. Results of previous research have generally been in this direction, but often have not been statistically significant.

Effects of type similarity have generally been tested in correlational studies using the number of MBTI scales on which dyad members have the same preference as one variable and then using scores which measure relationship stability, mutual satisfaction, or communication effectiveness as the other variable. Studies using this approach are not likely to find statistically significant correlations because the range of possible scores in the similarity scale is far too limited. There are only five possibilities: the two people can match on none, one, two, three, or all four of the scales.

In a 16 x 16 matrix including all possible combinations of type, there are 256 possible sender-receiver pairings. When the focus is on two-way communication and each dyad member functions both as sender and receiver, 120 of the cells in this 16 x 16 matrix are duplicated. However, there are still 136 unique combinations of type

in two-way communication dyads. A five-point similarity scale is too limited for the study of that many dyads. Too many of the dyads have the same similarity scores. Sixteen of the 256 sender-receiver combinations have no preferences in common, 64 have one, 96 have two, 64 have three, and 16 have the same preferences on all four scales. Eight of the 136 unique two-way communication dyads have no preferences in common, 32 have one, 48 have two, 32 have three, and 16 have the same preferences on all four scales. It is possible that when previous studies have failed to find statistically significant correlations between type similarity and scores measuring stability, satisfaction, or effectiveness--it has been because of the extremely limited range of possible scores in the similarity scale that was used.

It is also possible that using similarity scores based on the number of MBTI scales on which both members of the dyad have the same preferences is not the best application of type theory. The appropriate application of the four MBTI scale preferences is in situations where the unit of analysis is the personality of one individual. When the unit of analysis is the relationship between two people, a different approach is needed. Relationships are developed and sustained through effective communication. When the relationship is the unit of analysis, it is not the degree of similarity in MBTI scale preferences that is most important--at least not within itself--but rather the degree of similarity in function regarding communication style preferences.

If you had 16 chemicals with each including one element from each of four two-element sets and you wanted to measure the relative degrees of similarity between chemicals in all possible pairings, you would not count the number of elements any two chemicals had in common. You would focus on how those 16 chemicals actually function. Your similarity scale would be based on function, not on the number of common elements. Even so, when studying the "chemistry" of interpersonal relationships, the focus should not be on the "elements" of MBTI scale preferences--but rather on the function in terms of communication style preferences.

Communication Style Preferences

All people use all four communication styles--sensing, intuition, thinking, and feeling--but not with equal

preference, skill, or effectiveness. Each of the 16 psychological types has a unique pattern of primary, secondary, tertiary, and least preferred communication styles. The primary and secondary styles are always different but not opposite. The tertiary and least preferred styles are also different but not opposite. S and N are opposite. T and F are also opposite. The combinations of S or N with T or F are different but not opposite. The first two communication style preferences and the last two always include one of the perception styles (S or N) and one of the judgment styles (T or F), but never both of the perception styles or both of the judgment styles. The S-N scale tells which perception style a person prefers. The T-F scale tells which judgment style a person prefers. The J-P scale tells whether a person uses the preferred judgment style or the preferred perception style as the first choice for communicating with others, since in theory the J-P scale indicates how the person prefers to approach the outside world.

The primary communication style is always the preferred style in the preferred process for dealing with the outside world, as indicated by J-P, and the secondary communication style is always the preferred style in the non-preferred process for dealing with the outside world. The E-I scale tells whether a person has extraverted or introverted his or her psychologically most fully developed style (the dominant). The opposite of the psychologically most fully developed style (in other words, the opposite of the dominant) is always the fourth choice, not only as a psychological style, but also the fourth choice as a communication style. (This is based on our interpretation of type theory and on preliminary empirical data.) The primary communication style of extraverts is their psychologically most fully developed style (the dominant) and so in communication style their fourth choice is the opposite of their first choice (which is their dominant psychological style) and their third choice is the opposite of their second (which is their auxiliary psychological style). With introverts, however, it is the secondary communication style that is psychologically the most fully developed (the dominant) and so in communication their fourth choice (which, as previously stated, is the opposite of the dominant) is the opposite of their second choice in communication and their third choice in communication is the opposite of their first communication choice (which is the auxiliary). The communication style preferences of the 16 psychological

Table 1

Communication Style Preferences
of the 16 Psychological Types

TYPE[a]	CHOICE[b,c] 1 2 3 4	TYPE	CHOICE[b,d] 1 2 3 4
IS<u>TJ</u>	T S F N	ES<u>TJ</u>	T S N F
IS<u>FJ</u>	F S T N	ES<u>FJ</u>	F S N T
IS<u>TP</u>	S T N F	ES<u>TP</u>	S T F N
IS<u>FP</u>	S F N T	ES<u>FP</u>	S F T N
IN<u>FJ</u>	F N T S	EN<u>FJ</u>	F N S T
IN<u>TJ</u>	T N F S	EN<u>TJ</u>	T N S F
IN<u>FP</u>	N F S T	EN<u>FP</u>	N F T S
IN<u>TP</u>	N T S F	EN<u>TP</u>	N T F S

[a] Dominant function is underlined.
Auxiliary function is the one of the middle two letters that is <u>not</u> underlined.

[b] Choice 1 = primary communication style
Choice 2 = secondary communication style
Choice 3 = tertiary communication style
Choice 4 = least preferred communication style

[c] For I's:
Primary communication style is the auxiliary.
Secondary communication style is the dominant.
Tertiary communication style is the opposite of the auxiliary.
Least preferred communication style is the opposite of the dominant.

[d] For E's:
Primary communication style is the dominant.
Secondary communication style is the auxiliary.
Tertiary communication style is the opposite of the auxiliary.
Least preferred communication style is the opposite of the dominant.

types are outlined in Table 1, as well as the rules for determining them. (A review of how to identify each type's dominant and auxiliary and what these terms mean can be found in the MBTI Manual and in Isabel Myers' book, Gifts Differing.)

Communication Style Adjustments

In order for two people to communicate effectively, they have to use the same communication style at the same time. Communication tends to break down when people are using different styles and especially when they are using opposite styles. Effective communication demands adjustment. Sometimes one or both dyad members must shift into their second, third, or fourth communication style preference. It is easier for senders to adjust to the style preferences of receivers in some dyads than it is in others. The order of importance for the sender's use of the four styles is determined by the style preferences of the receiver. The receiver's first, second, third, and fourth choices--in that order of importance--are the styles the sender needs to use. The relative level of difficulty in the sender's use of the four styles is determined by the sender's own preferences. The easiest style for senders to use is their primary communication style. It is harder for them to use their secondary style, still more difficult for them to shift into their tertiary style, and hardest of all for them to shift into their least preferred style. Using these two facts, one can construct communication adjustment indices reflecting the relative level of difficulty any sender would have in adjusting to the communication style preferences of any receiver.

A communication adjustment index is a four-digit number in which the four places reflect descending levels of importance and thus can be used to reflect the relative importance of using each of the receiver's four styles (the thousands place for the primary, the hundreds place for the secondary, the tens place for the tertiary, and the ones place for the least preferred style of the receiver). The numbers that go into these four places reflect the sender's preferences (1=the primary, 2=the secondary, 3=the tertiary, and 4=the least preferred style of the sender). For instance, an INFP sender might be trying to communicate with four different receivers: an ISTJ, another INFP, an ENFP, and an ESFJ. An INFP is a dominant F who approaches the outside world with the

auxiliary, N. Using the material in Table 1, the INFP sender's first through fourth communication style preferences are, respectively, N#1, F#2, S#3, and T#4. For the ISTJ, a dominant S who approaches the outside world with the auxiliary, T, the communication style preferences are T#1, S#2, F#3, and N#4. Putting the numbers reflecting the sender's preferences into the thousands, hundreds, tens, and ones place corresponding to the receiver's primary, secondary, tertiary, and least preferred communication styles, respectively, the communication adjustment index would be 4321, indicating maximal difficulty of the INFP to communicate with the ISTJ. With the other INFP, the index would come out 1234, indicating minimal difficulty. The INFP would have only slightly more difficulty with the ENFP, where the index would come out 1243, while the index with the ESFJ would indicate more difficulty, coming out at 2314.

There are 24 communication adjustment indices ranging from 1234 to 4321. The lower the index the easier communication should be. The higher the index the more difficult communication should be. The 24 one-way, sender-receiver communication adjustment indices, of course, do not constitute an interval scale and must be converted into a rank ordering reflecting 24 levels of communication adjustment difficulty. When dyad members are identical in psychological type they are also identical in communication style preferences and thus have the lowest possible communication adjustment index. It is convenient, therefore, to reverse the polarity of the communication adjustment scale for purposes of comparison with the similarity scale based on the number of MBTI preferences two people have in common. Thus a one-way dyad with the greatest possible ease of communication adjustment would be assigned number 24, while that with the least possible ease of communication adjustment would be assigned number 1.

When it is possible to identify one person as "sender" and the other person as "receiver," it is appropriate to use the 24-point ordinal scale reflecting relative levels of difficulty or ease in one-way communication adjustment. In most communication situations, however, it is more accurate to think of a dyad involving persons "A" and "B" who function both as senders and receivers. To study these two-way communication situations, a different kind of adjustment scale is needed. Since adjustment indices and ranks are only ordinal data, addition is not

appropriate. Indices and ranks, however, can be averaged by finding the median score and these scores can be ranked. Results in this case, however, are the same, and it is easier to understand the operation if discussed in terms of addition.

Adding together the communication adjustment indices for the two dyad members in all 136 unique dyads produces a new set of scores ranging from 2468 to 8642 and reduces the range of possible scores to 17. (For instance, for an ISFJ and an ENFP, the communication adjustment index for the ISFJ as sender and ENFP as receiver would be 4132, and that for the ENFP as sender and ISFJ as receiver would be 2431; adding these together would yield a total of 6563.) The lower the index the easier two-way communication should be and the higher the index the more difficult two-way communication should be. These indices totals must be converted into a rank ordering reflecting the 17 different levels of difficulty in two-way communication adjustment. Once again, it is convenient to reverse the polarity of the scale to facilitate comparison with the similarity scale based on the number of MBTI preferences two people have in common. (In our above example, this would yield a rank score of 6.) In both the one-way and two-way communication adjustment scales, therefore, the lower the ranking the greater the communication adjustment difficulty.

Comparison of Scales

Each of the 256 one-way communication adjustment scores is found in a dyad that also has a score on a similarity scale based on the number of MBTI preferences the sender and receiver have in common. This is also the case with each of the 136 unique two-way communication dyads. The outline on the following page lists the communication adjustment indices with their corresponding ranks down the left side of the page--first for the two-way scale and then for the one-way scale. Across the top, from left to right, this outline also lists the number of MBTI scales on which both members of the dyad have the same preferences. Underneath the number of MBTI scales in common is the number of all the possible combinations which have the communication adjustment index score shown on the far left column. This outline, therefore, shows the distribution of scores and thus compares both the two-way and one-way communication adjustment scales with the commonly used scale based on the number

Communicati Adjustment Index R (TWO-WAY S
2468
2486
2648
2765
2864
4268
4286
5438
5555
6428
6464
6563
6824
7454
7733
8462
8642

(ONE-WAY S
1234
1243
1324
1342
1423
1432
2134
2143
2314
2341
2413
2431
3124
3142
3214
3241
3412
3421
4123
4132
4213
4231
4312
4321

Communication Adjustment Index (TWO-WAY SCALE)	Rank	Number of Dyads with Each Similarity Score when that Score Is the Number of MBTI Preferences Shared by Both Members 0	1	2	3	4	Totals
2468	17					16	16
2486	16				8		8
2648	15				4		4
2765	14			8			8
2864	13				4		4
4268	12			8			8
4286	11				8		8
5438	10		8				8
5555	9			8			8
6428	8				4		4
6464	7			8			8
6563	6		8				8
6824	5		4	4			8
7454	4			8			8
7733	3	8	8				16
8462	2				4		4
8642	1		4	4			8
	Totals	8	32	48	32	16	136
(ONE-WAY SCALE)							
1234	24					16	16
1243	23				16		16
1324	22				8		8
1342	21			8			8
1423	20			8			8
1432	19				8		8
2134	18			16			16
2143	17				16		16
2314	16		8				8
2341	15			8			8
2413	14			8			8
2431	13		8				8
3124	12		8				8
3142	11			8			8
3214	10				8		8
3241	9			8			8
3412	8		8	8			16
3421	7	8	8				16
4123	6				8		8
4132	5		8				8
4213	4			8			8
4231	3				8		8
4312	2	8	8				16
4321	1		8	8			16
	Totals	16	64	96	64	16	256

of MBTI preferences the dyad members have in common.

Inspecting the distribution of scores in this outline shows that there is an obvious positive relationship between the similarity scale based on the number of MBTI preferences dyad members have in common and the two kinds of communication adjustment scales. When the two people have the same preferences on all four MBTI scales, they also have the highest rank, indicating the easiest one-way or two-way communication adjustment. That is the only area, however, where there is a perfect match between scales. When two people have opposite preferences on all four MBTI scales, they are not opposite in their communication style preferences. At the low end of the one-way and two-way communication adjustment scales, there is little relationship at all between the communication adjustment scales and the similarity scale based on the number of common MBTI preferences.

There is nothing in type theory to suggest that the way to define relative levels of similarity is by counting the number of common preferences on the four MBTI scales. That approach, while most obvious, is also somewhat arbitrary. A better operational definition of similarity would seem to be the degree to which people can easily adjust to the communication style preferences of others. "Identical," "similar," "different," and "opposite" should be defined in terms of communication style preferences--not simply in terms of MBTI scale preferences. In effect, there is a need to take into account which preferences are dominant and which are auxiliary, and which are characteristically extraverted in communication and which are used more for the introverted world.

This approach increases the range of possible scores from five to 17 for the two-way communication adjustment scale and from five to 24 for the one-way communication adjustment scale. This increase in the range of possible scores greatly reduces the number of dyads having the same score. As a result, this approach provides a much more powerful statistical tool. Researchers are much more likely to find statistically significant correlations between type similarity and various scores which measure communication effectiveness, relationship stability, mutual satisfaction, etc. if they will test the effects of type similarity by focusing on the resulting similarity in communication style preferences.

	C
R O B E R ' C S E P I E T V R Y E S P R O E N	
	2
ESTJ	1
	1
ESTP	1
ESFJ	
	1
ESFP	
	2
ENTJ	1
	1
ENTP	
ENFJ	
ENFP	
	2
ISTJ	1
	1
ISTP	1
ISFJ	
	1
ISFP	
	2
INTJ	1
	1
INTP	1
INFJ	
INFP	

Note: *Ran*
Rank
In

Table 2

Communication Adjustment Rank Scores
For *One-Way* and Two-Way Dyads

ROBERT'S PERCEPTION OF PERSON B	PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE OF SENDER OR PERSON A															
	ESTJ	ESTP	ESFJ	ESFP	ENTJ	ENTP	ENFJ	ENFP	ISTJ	ISTP	ISFJ	ISFP	INTJ	INTP	INFJ	INFP
	24	*17*	*3*	*11*	*22*	*14*	*1*	*8*	*23*	*18*	*9*	*5*	*20*	*16*	*7*	*2*
ESTJ	17	11	2	9	15	9	1	5	16	12	4	6	14	10	3	3
	17	*24*	*14*	*22*	*11*	*3*	*8*	*1*	*18*	*23*	*16*	*20*	*5*	*9*	*2*	*7*
ESTP	11	17	9	15	9	2	5	1	12	16	10	14	6	4	3	3
	3	*11*	*24*	*17*	*1*	*8*	*22*	*14*	*9*	*5*	*23*	*18*	*7*	*2*	*20*	*16*
ESFJ	2	9	17	11	1	5	15	9	4	6	16	12	3	3	14	10
	14	*22*	*17*	*24*	*8*	*1*	*11*	*3*	*16*	*20*	*18*	*23*	*2*	*7*	*5*	*9*
ESFP	9	15	11	17	5	1	9	2	10	14	12	16	3	3	6	4
	22	*14*	*1*	*8*	*24*	*17*	*3*	*11*	*20*	*16*	*7*	*2*	*23*	*18*	*9*	*5*
ENTJ	15	9	1	5	17	11	2	9	14	10	3	3	16	12	4	6
	11	*3*	*8*	*1*	*17*	*24*	*14*	*22*	*5*	*9*	*2*	*7*	*18*	*23*	*16*	*20*
ENTP	9	2	5	1	11	17	9	15	6	4	3	3	12	16	10	14
	1	*8*	*22*	*14*	*3*	*11*	*24*	*17*	*7*	*2*	*20*	*16*	*9*	*5*	*23*	*18*
ENFJ	1	5	15	9	2	9	17	11	3	3	14	10	4	6	16	12
	8	*1*	*11*	*3*	*14*	*22*	*17*	*24*	*2*	*7*	*5*	*9*	*16*	*20*	*18*	*23*
ENFP	5	1	9	2	9	15	11	17	3	3	6	4	10	14	12	16
	23	*18*	*4*	*12*	*21*	*13*	*2*	*7*	*24*	*17*	*10*	*6*	*19*	*15*	*8*	*1*
ISTJ	16	12	4	10	14	6	3	3	17	11	8	7	13	7	5	1
	18	*23*	*13*	*21*	*12*	*4*	*7*	*2*	*17*	*24*	*15*	*19*	*6*	*10*	*1*	*8*
ISTP	12	16	6	14	10	4	3	3	11	17	7	13	7	8	1	5
	4	*12*	*23*	*18*	*2*	*7*	*21*	*13*	*10*	*6*	*24*	*17*	*8*	*1*	*19*	*15*
ISFJ	4	10	16	12	3	3	14	6	8	7	17	11	5	1	13	7
	13	*21*	*18*	*23*	*7*	*2*	*12*	*4*	*15*	*19*	*17*	*24*	*1*	*8*	*6*	*10*
ISFP	6	14	12	16	3	3	10	4	7	13	11	17	1	5	7	8
	21	*13*	*2*	*7*	*23*	*18*	*4*	*12*	*19*	*15*	*8*	*1*	*24*	*17*	*10*	*6*
INTJ	14	6	3	3	16	12	4	10	13	7	5	1	17	11	8	7
	12	*4*	*7*	*2*	*18*	*23*	*13*	*21*	*6*	*10*	*1*	*8*	*17*	*24*	*15*	*19*
INTP	10	4	3	3	12	16	6	14	7	8	1	5	11	17	7	13
	2	*7*	*21*	*13*	*4*	*12*	*23*	*18*	*8*	*1*	*19*	*15*	*10*	*6*	*24*	*17*
INFJ	3	3	14	6	4	10	16	12	5	1	13	7	8	7	17	11
	7	*2*	*12*	*4*	*13*	*21*	*18*	*23*	*1*	*8*	*6*	*10*	*15*	*19*	*17*	*24*
INFP	3	3	10	4	6	14	12	16	1	5	7	8	7	13	11	17

Note: *Rank scores for one-way dyads appear in italics.*
Rank scores for two-way dyads are in regular print.
In two-way dyads both A and B send and receive.

In Table 2, all possible combinations of psychological type are outlined in a 16 x 16 matrix. The 16 possible types for the sender (or Person "A") are listed across the top and the 16 possible types for the receiver (or Person "B") are listed down the left side. In each cell of this matrix, the upper number is the one-way communication adjustment rank score for that sender--receiver dyad. In the 1-24 ordinal scale for one-way communication adjustment ranks, the larger the number the greater the similarity in style preferences and thus the easier it should be for the sender to adjust to the style preferences of the receiver. The lower number in each cell of this matrix is the two-way communication adjustment rank for that dyad. In the 1-17 ordinal scale for two-way communication adjustment ranks, the larger the number the easier two-way communication adjustment should be. The 120 cells in the lower left portion of the matrix duplicate cells in the upper right portion. The 120 duplicated ranks on the two-way communication adjustment scale are included in the table in order to make it easier to locate the adjustment rank score for any dyad.

Research Using Communication Adjustment Scales to Study Effects of Similarity in Psychological Type

The following section includes a brief description of methods employed and results obtained in six studies using communication adjustment scales to investigate effects of psychological type similarity in a wide variety of communication situations with relatively large samples of subjects. Since the primary purpose of this article is to suggest an approach for future research, rather than to discuss research already done, the illustrative studies reported below will be presented in abbreviated form.

Marital Communication

Ten professionally trained marriage counselors working in church-related centers selected 90 couples that had been involved in marriage counseling for the previous six months: 30 couples judged by the counselors to have a worse relationship at that time than they had six months earlier; 30 couples judged to have experienced no change in their relationship over the previous six months; and 30 couples judged to have a better relationship at that time than they had six months earlier. These groups were assumed to reflect relative levels of communication

effectiveness since the marriage counseling situation demands effective husband-wife communication if differences are to be resolved and the relationship improved. The MBTI was administered to all 180 subjects. Two-way communication adjustment scores were calculated for each of the 90 marital dyads. The median two-way communication adjustment scores were: 5 in the "worse" group, 8.5 in the "no change" group, and 13.5 in the "better" group. The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks revealed significant over-all difference ($H=13.37$, $df=2$, $p<.01$). Mann-Whitney U tests revealed significant differences in each comparison of groups ($p<.05$ for the "worse"-"no change" and "no change"-"better" differences, $p<.01$ for the "worse"-"better" difference). The higher the two-way communication adjustment scores the more likely the couple was to have improved their relationship through the six months spent in marriage counseling.

Organizational Communication

Questionnaires were given to people at all levels of management in a large corporation. Both members of each manager-subordinate dyad were asked to rate the communication in that dyad as being "successful" or "unsuccessful." Thirty manager-subordinate dyads were selected for study with no individual being included in more than one of the dyads studied. There were 10 "bad" communication dyads in which both people rated communication in that dyad as being "unsuccessful." There were 10 "mixed" dyads in which one rated communication as being "successful" and the other rated it as being "unsuccessful." There were 10 "good" communication dyads in which both people rated their communication as being "successful." The MBTI was administered to all 60 subjects. Two-way communication adjustment scores were calculated for each manager-subordinate dyad. The median two-way communication adjustment scores were: 5.5 in the "bad" group, 9.5 in the "mixed" group, and 12.5 in the "good" group. The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks revealed significant over-all difference ($H=8.91$, $df=2$, $p<.02$). Mann-Whitney U tests revealed significant differences in each comparison of groups ($p<.05$ for the "bad"-"mixed" and "mixed"-"good" differences, $p<.01$ for the "bad"-"good" difference). The higher the two-way communication adjustment scores, the more likely the manager-subordinate dyads of this study were to be in the group where both rated their communication as being "successful" and the less likely those dyads were to be in the group where both rated

their communication as being "unsuccessful."

Communication in Discussion Classes

The MBTI was administered to 12 teachers and 266 students in 24 discussion classes. Two-way communication adjustment scores were calculated for each teacher-student dyad. A record was made of each student's grade in that course and of each student's over-all grade point average. Grade point averages were subtracted from course grades, resulting in adjusted course grades. There was a positive correlation between teacher-student two-way communication adjustment scores and adjusted course grades (Spearman's rho=.46, $p<.001$). The greater the similarity between the communication style preferences of teacher and student the higher the student's grade in the course relative to his or her college grade point average was likely to be.

Communication in Lecture Classes

This study involved the same 12 teachers, but this time the focus was on 24 lecture classes with a total of 661 students. The MBTI was administered to all these teachers and students. One-way communication adjustment scores for each teacher-student dyad were calculated with the teacher in the "sender" position. Adjusted course grades were calculated the same way as in the previous study. There was a positive correlation between teacher-student one-way communication adjustment scores and adjusted course grades (Spearman's rho=.53, $p<.001$). Thus in both of these classroom studies, the greater the communication style preference similarity between teacher and student the higher the student's grade (beyond his previous GPA) was likely to be.

Communication in Sales

Ten sales representatives of a life insurance company identified 20 prospects who had recently purchased insurance and 20 who had been exposed to a sales presentation, but who had not purchased any insurance. The MBTI was administered to the 10 sales representatives and 40 prospects. One-way communication adjustment scores were calculated for each dyad with the sales representative being in the "sender" position. The median one-way communication adjustment scores were 11 for those who did not purchase insurance and 19 for those who did. The Mann-

Whitney U test revealed that this difference was significant ($U=115$, $p<.01$). The prospects who bought insurance were much more similar in communication style preferences to the sales representatives than were those prospects who did not buy insurance.

Religious Communication

Carskadon (1981) found significant relationships between psychological type and religious preference. The present study, however, was confined to only one religious group--the Church of Christ. The MBTI was administered to a number of pulpit ministers. The ministers were selected for this study such that all 16 psychological types were represented by one minister each. All 16 ministers included in this study were in cities with several local congregations of the Church of Christ, they were all in relatively large congregations (500-2,000 members), and all had been with their present congregations for a relatively long time (five to nine years). In each of the 16 congregations, a random sample of 50 new adult members who had affiliated with the congregation during the tenure of the present minister took the MBTI.

One-way communication adjustment scores were calculated for each minister-member dyad. The frequency distribution counting the number of dyads observed at each level on this 24-point scale revealed a very strong under-representation at the low end of the scale, a moderate under-representation in the middle of the sacle, and a very high over-representation at the upper end of the scale. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov one-sample test revealed that this difference was statistically significant ($D=.41$, $N=800$, $p<.001$). It appears that sensing-type preachers attract sensing-type members; intuitives attract intuitives; thinkers attract thinkers; and feeling types attract feeling types--even within a religious group that has been shown to have an over-representation of sensing types.

Subsequent studies in several of these congregations, however, have found a possible confounding variable. There are similar over-representations of certain types among those who were members of the congregation before the tenure of the present minister. It may be that sensing-type congregations hire sensing-type ministers and it may be the type distribution in the congregations that

attracts similar types as new members.

Discussion

Results of the studies summarized in the previous section provide some support for the hypothesis that the more similar two people are in the ways in which their psychological types are reflected in communication style preferences, the easier it will be for them to communicate effectively. These studies tested that hypothesis with a rather large number of subjects in a wide variety of communication situations. These results, however, provide only tentative support for that hypothesis. Replications are needed in studies of different populations in other communication situations with other ways of measuring communication effectiveness before any firm conclusions can be reached. These illustrative studies, however, do demonstrate quite clearly that it is possible to find statistically significant correlations between type similarity and communication effectiveness if the focus of the study is on the ways in which type preferences are reflected in communication style preferences.

These studies do not contradict the results of earlier studies which have found problems in dyads of identical type. These six studies focused on over-all effects throughout the entire range of scores in the 17-point two-way communication adjustment scale and the 24-point one-way communication adjustment scale and not just on those dyads of identical type. The focus on communication style preferences, however, may provide a possible explanation concerning those problems in identical dyads.

When two people have identical preferences on all four MBTI scales they also have identical communication style preferences and communication should be relatively easy for them--but only in their common primary style. Most relationships that exist over a long time require at least some use of all four styles. Some situations require the practical, common sense, reality-based, results-oriented style of the sensing type. Other situations call for the more creative, imaginative, meaning-centered, theory-oriented style of the intuitive type. Still other situations demand the logical, analytical, impersonal judgment of the thinking style. And some of the most important situations in human relations require the more subjective, personal, emotional, value-based

judgment of the feeling style. When two people have the same strengths in terms of communication styles, they also have the same weaknesses. That may explain why identical dyads have sometimes been found to be less satisfactory than moderately mixed dyads.

One approach to the study of a dyad's relative strengths or weaknesses in the use of the four styles is to focus on their combined preferences. In the system outlined earlier, 1=the primary, 2=the secondary, 3=the tertiary, and 4=the least preferred style of each individual. These numbers can be used to describe a person's preferences for the four styles. Scores for an ESTJ, for example, would be: sensing 2, intuitive 3, thinking 1, and feeling 4. If these were numbers in an interval scale, one could simply add the scores of both dyad members for each style, thus resulting in a seven-point scale of relative strength or weakness in a dyad's use of each style--with scores ranging from two through eight. These numbers, however, are only ranks in an ordinal scale where the ordinary operations of arithmetic--such as addition--do not apply. One can, however, average the scores for each style using the median rank for that style and the results are exactly the same. It is proper, therefore, to go ahead and use that seven-point scale to indicate the relative strengths or weaknesses in a dyad's use of each style. In such a scale, a dyad's score for a particular style is 2 when that style is the first choice for both dyad members and 8 when that style is the fourth choice for both dyad members. For example, in an identical dyad when person "A" is an ESTJ and person "B" is also an ESTJ, their combined scores on the four styles would be: sensing 4 (A2 B2), intuitive 6 (A3 B3), thinking 2 (A1 B1), and feeling 8 (A4 B4). As an example of a mixed dyad, when person "A" is an ESTJ and person "B" is an ESTP, their combined scores on the four styles would be: sensing 3 (A2 B1), intuitive 7 (A3 B4), thinking 3 A1 B2), and feeling 7 (A4 B3).

This focus on a dyad's relative strengths or weaknesses in the use of the four styles could be useful in answering several questions. Content analysis (with appropriate tests for significant levels of inter-judge agreement) can be used to identify the communication style being used at a particular time in a conversation. It seems reasonable to assume that a dyad would likely spend the most time using the style with the lowest score on this scale and the least time using the style with the

highest score. That subject, however, needs to be studied empirically to find the answer. Another application of this focus on a dyad's relative strengths or weaknesses in the use of the four styles would be in studies which correlate combined scores on each style with productivity scores on different tasks which require the application of the different styles.

Several of the dyads have combined scores of 3 on two of the styles. An interesting study in these dyads would focus on the question of which dyad member does the style shifting. A theoretical and empirical analysis would need to be made to determine the preference on each of the four MBTI scales which would involve the greatest ease or ability to shift communication styles. If such type differences were found, then in 64 of the 136 unique dyads there would be an unusually rich opportunity for interesting study. These 64 dyads would be unbalanced in that communication adjustments would be easier for one dyad member than for the other. In these 64 unbalanced dyads, the one-way communication adjustment indices and ranks would be different for the two people involved.

Several questions could be investigated in regard to these unbalanced dyads. Are the 64 unbalanced dyads less stable than the 72 balanced dyads? If so, is there a correlation between degrees of instability and levels of imbalance? In these 64 unbalanced dyads, does the person for whom communication adjustment is easier report greater satisfaction with the relationship than the person for whom that adjustment is harder? If so, are differences in levels of satisfaction correlated with differences in levels of imbalance? The answers to these questions could be of great practical benefit in marriage counseling, premarriage counseling, family counseling, and organizational applications concerning the formation of work units. Knowledge about the functioning of unbalanced dyads could help prevent the formation of dyads likely to be unstable or identify the cause of problems in existing dyads.

The focus on a dyad's relative strengths or weaknesses in the use of the four styles and on the problems that may be associated with various levels of imbalance can be extended to the study of groups with three or more members. As group size increases, however, the application of this method of study becomes increasingly complex.

Conclusion

The methods of investigation suggested in this article can be useful in studying the effects of similarity in psychological type and can lead to a wide variety of practical applications. The central element in the methods of investigation that have been suggested is a shift in focus. Whenever the unit of analysis is a relationship rather than the personality of one individual, the focus should not be on the MBTI scale preferences--but rather should be on the ways in which those psychological type preferences are reflected in communication style preferences and in various strengths and weaknesses in the use of each communication style.

One final word of warning is needed. Professor Egon Guba once suggested "the law of the hammer"--which argued that "if you give a child a hammer, things to be pounded immediately become the most important features of the child's environment." Professor Guba was warning against the "tool illusion" in research. The researcher should begin with the question and then look for a "tool" to help answer that question. Researchers should not focus on a methodology and then start looking for questions that can be answered by the methodology.

This article has outlined a suggested methodology, reported some studies which illustrate the value of that methodology, and concluded with some questions that could be answered by the application of that methodology. If researchers are careful to avoid the "tool illusion," the methods of investigation suggested in this article may be of some value.

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ERRATA

A couple of mistakes slipped by your high-N RPT Editor and his production staff when the previous issue, Volume 4, went to press. Corrections are as follows:

The authors of the article "Physician Satisfaction, Personality Type and Work Setting in Family Practice" should have been listed as Edward J. Hughes, Nancy R. Mosier, and Vincent R. Hunt.

In the article "Psychological Type and Religious Preferences," on page 77 the first sentence should have read, "When all subjects were used, the only (marginally) significant ($\chi^2(3)=7.75$, $p<.06$) results were on S-N: both fundamentalists and Catholics were 62% S and 38% N, while more liberal religions were 49% S and 51% N, and non-believers were 30% S and 70% N."

We regret any inconvenience or misunderstanding that may have arisen from these errors.

50,000 – 1,000,000 last yr

4 yrs as treasurer

president-elect

president $2,000,000 annual