# THE EFFECT OF INTERACTION BEHAVIOR ON SOURCE CREDIBILITY, HOMOPHILY, AND INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

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This study investigated the relationship between interaction behavior in a small group setting and the resulting perceptions group members have of one another. Trained raters coded the interaction behavior of subjects, who discussed a task-oriented topic in small groups. Results indicate that interaction behavior can account for a substantial percentage of the variance in group members' perceptions of one another. Apparently, the same interaction behavior may simultaneously result in both more positive and more negative perceptions on the part of other group members, suggesting that different interaction strategies are appropriate for varying desired personal outcomes.

Over the past quarter century results from experimental and field research have repeatedly indicated the importance of the source credibility variable in the communication process (Andersen & Clevenger, 1963; Littlejohn, 1972). Similarly, the interpersonal attraction variable has been found to influence heavily interaction behaviors of communicators (Berscheid & Walster, 1969). Source credibility has been considered primarily as an agent responsible for certain communication outcomes, such as attitude change. More recently, credibility has increasingly been examined as itself a communication outcome, and attempts have been made to determine what causes a source's credibility to increase or decrease (Littlejohn, 1972). Interpersonal attraction has been examined in a variety of contexts: as a cause of communication, as an effect of communication, and as a variable responsible for certain communication outcomes (Berscheid & Walster, 1969).

Homophily, the degree to which two communicators perceive themselves as similar, has received considerable attention from researchers concerned with the communication of new ideas, products, and practices. This variable, also, has been examined as a cause of communication, as an effect of communication, and as a variable responsible for certain communication outcomes (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971).

Credibility, attraction, and homophily can all be viewed as ways that receivers (or potential receivers) perceive sources, or potential sources, of communication. These perceptions have been found to affect communication in several ways. Credibility (Wheeless, 1973), attraction (Berscheid & Walster, 1969), and homophily (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) are all significantly related to voluntary exposure to communication. Receivers seem to be more willing to expose themselves to communication from sources they perceive to be credible, attractive, and/or homophilous than they are to sources they perceive less positively on these variables. Subsequent to exposure, credibility (Wheeless, 1972; Anderson, 1973) has been shown to be positively related to the acquisition of information from communication. Essentially, receivers learn more from sources they perceive to be credible than from those they perceive less positively. Finally, credibility (Andersen & Cleven ger, 1963), attraction (Berscheid & Walster, 1969). and homophily (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) art related to influence through communication. Re

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ceivers are persuaded more by sources they perceive to be credible and/or attractive than by those they view less positively. Similarly, in general, sources homophilous with their receivers are more persuasive with them. This conclusion, however, should be modified to include the concept of "optimal heterophily;" i.e., the most influential source is highly homophilous with the receiver in all other important respects, but is perceived as somewhat more competent on the topic in question.

Since the perceptions that communicators have of others have such a major impact on the outcomes of communication, the variables affecting these perceptions are of concern to the communication theorist interested in determining how these perceptions operate in human communication systems. Antecedent or external conditions, such as an individual's reputation, of course, should be expected to impinge on a receiver's perceptions, as should the receiver's personality, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. These variables, indeed, may account for most of the variance in perception. Much of person A's perception of person B, therefore, is a product of variables over which person B has little or no control. The major variable over which person B can exert considerable control is his or her communication behavior in the presence of person A. A major outcome of variability in communication behavior, therefore, should be associated variability in perceived credibility, attraction, and homophily. Since these variables all have important correlates beyond a given communication transaction (such as exposure, information gain, attitude change, and behavior change), determining how communication behavior affects perceived credibility, attraction, and homophily has considerable intrinsic value. But of at least equal importance, since these variables have been found to affect both the degree and the quality of communication between people, determining how communication behavior affects these variables in <sup>a</sup> given communication transaction may provide us with a tool for predicting the impact of one

communication transaction on subsequent transactions.

The present investigation focused on source credibility, homophily, and interpersonal attraction as outcomes of communication. These three constructs were chosen for study for two reasons. First, as noted previously, all three have a major impact on communication. Second, while most research has investigated these variables individually, there is reason to believe that they may operate together as part of a single system. Rogers and Bhowmik (1971), for example, argue that perceived homophily is positively related to attraction and the "character" or "safety" dimensions of credibility. Later support for this position has been provided by Rogers (1973) and Alpert and Anderson (1973). It was hypothesized that interaction behavior of communicators in a small group would predict the degree of source credibility, homophily, and interpersonal attraction attributed to those communicators by other members of their group.

## Rationale

Source credibility, homophily, and interpersonal attraction are perceptions of one person on the part of another person or persons. What a person "in reality" is may or may not influence that person's credibility, homophily, or attractiveness in a given case. Whether a person's communication behavior gives an accurate reflection of that person is moot. Observers of that behavior should be expected to interpret a person's communication behavior as reflective of the "real person" and utilize these interpretations in conjunction with other observations of the person's behavior, information, and opinions about the person provided by other people, and the observer's own orientations, attitudes, beliefs, etc., in forming impressions of the person. An important question for communication scholars, therefore, is: to what extent are observable interaction behaviors predictors of a communicator's perceived source credibility, homophily, and interpersonal attraction?

This investigation was designed to provide an initial indication of the answer to that question.

## METHOD

## Operationalization and Measurement

## Interaction Behavior

Interaction behavior was operationalized as scores assigned to subjects by observer raters employing the Interaction Behavior Measure (IBM) developed by McCroskey and Wright (1971). In the pilot study the raters were undergraduate students in the same classes as the subjects. Raters in the main study were nine graduate students in communication. The IBM was developed by means of factor analytic procedures and based on the earlier work of Leathers (1969). The six dimensions on the instrument are labeled Orientation, Tension, Relevance, Interest, Flexibility, and Verbosity (McCroskey & Wright, 1971). Each dimension is measured by observations recorded on two bipolar, seven-step scales yielding a possible score range of 2-14. The Orientation scales are: task-oriented or socially-emotionally oriented and ideational or personal. Scales for Tension are: bothered or cool and tense or relaxed. Relevance scales are: relevant or irrelevant and related or unrelated. Interested or apathetic and involved or withdrawn are the scales for Interest. Flexibility scales are: flexible or inflexible and unchangeable or changeable. The Verbosity scales are: wordy or short and brief or lengthy.

Previous research has indicated the reliability and factoral stability of the instrument when employed in a manner similar to that in the present investigation (Consoli, 1971; Larsen, 1971; McCroskey & Wright, 1971; McMurray, 1972). Because of the procedures employed in the pilot study in this investigation, it was not possible to test the reliability of the instrument. However, factor analysis indicated the presence of the previously observed six dimensions. In the main study, the raters were formed in three person teams so that reliability for each team for each dimension could be estimated by the Hoyt (1941) procedure. In general, the estimated reliability was high, from .60 to .95. Estimates for two teams, however, indicated lack of reliability on the Tension and Flexibility dimensions (below .60). Consequently, subanalyses of the data were performed to determine whether including only the groups with reliable ratings on these dimensions increased the precision of the prediction of the criterion variables.

#### Interpersonal Attraction

Interpersonal attraction was operationalized as scores on three dimensions of interpersonal attraction as measured by 15 Likert-type scales developed by McCroskey and McCain (1972). These scales have been found to be reliable and the factor structure has been replicated across several studies (McCroskey & McCain, 1972; Quiggens, 1972; Wakshlag, 1973). Factor analysis of the data in the pilot study also indicated the presence of the three dimensions previously observed. The three dimensions of interpersonal attraction were labeled Task, Social, and Physical (McCroskey & McCain, 1972). Analysis of the data from the main study indicated the presence of three indepc..dei.i dimensions. Both orthogonal and oblique analyses were performed. In each analysis a three-factor solution was rotated. The preset criterion for a satisfactory loading of an item on a resulting factor was that the item must have a principal loading of at least .60 and no secondary loading above .40. All except one item met the criteria and loaded on the intended factor in both analyses (see Table 1). Estimated internal reliability of measurement, based on the Hoyt procedure for each of the three dimensions, as noted in Table 1, exceeded .80.

The factors in the oblique analysis were examined to determine their intercorrelations. Task and Physical Attraction were found to correlate at .20, Task and Social at .36, and Physical and Social at .38. Since these are fairly low correlations indicating little shared variance, these results indicate that the three dimensions of attraction in this study were relatively independent.

	Factor									
Item	Physi	cal	Tasl	k	Social					
Number †*	Orthogonal	Oblique	Orthogonal	Oblique	Orthogonal	Oblique				
1	.25	.11	22	08	71*	70*				
2	06	.10	.10	05	.81*	.86*				
3	17	03	.08	07	.75*	.78*				
4	16	01	.20	.06	.77*	.78*				
5	.27	.17	22	11	63*	50				
6	.85*	.85*	10	02	22	05				
7	.87*	.90*	02	.05	16	.00				
8	.83*	.86*	.00	.07	12	.03				
9	67*	65*	.13	.05	.29	.17				
10	75*	78*	.10	.05	.10	06				
11	09	05	.68*	.71*	.02	12				
12	.08	.03	77*	80*	07	.08				
13	.05	03	85*	87*	17	02				
14	05	.05	.77*	.76*	.28	.16				
15	04	.05	.66*	.65*	.25	.14				
Eigenvalue	3.40	3.36	3.00	2.94	3.07	2.80				
Variance	23	22	20	20	20	19				
Internal Reliability of 5 Best										
Items	.86		.81		.84					

### TABLE 1 Factor Loadings and Reliability for Interpersonal Attraction Measure

\*satisfactory loading

† 1. I think he (she) could be a friend of mine.

It would be difficult to meet and talk with him (her).
 He (she) just wouldn't fit into my circle of friends.

4. We could never establish a personal friendship with each other.
5. I would like to have a friendly chat with him (her).

6. I think he (she) is quite handsome (pretty). 7. He (she) is very sexy looking.

8. I find him (her) very attractive physically. 9. I don't like the way he (she) looks.

10. He (she) is somewhat ugly.

11. He (she) is a typical goof-off when assigned a job to do.

12. I have confidence in his (her) ability to get the job done.
13. If I wanted to get things done, I could probably depend on him (her).

14. I couldn't get anything accomplished with him (her).

15. He (she) would be a poor problem solver.

## TABLE 2 Factor Loadings and Reliability for Credibility-Homophily Measure

			Extro-		Fa	actor						
	Soci	ability	ver	sion	Hom	ophily	Com	petence	Com	posure	Cha	racter
Scale	A	B*†	A	В	A	В	A	B	A	В	A	B
Good natured-												
irritable	.82*	.90*	08	03	.15	03	.23	.06	.19	.05	23	.02
Cheerful-gloomy	.83*	.91*	14	.03	.19	.01	.19	.02	.18	.02	21	.04
Unfriendly-friendly	70*	73*	.12	03	20	05	10	.08	14	01	.34	.17
Timid-bold	01	.10	.78*	76*	06	.02	01	.09	35	23	.08	.09
Verbal-quiet	.11	.03	91*	.93*	.12	.02	.13	.06	.20	01	02	.03
Talkative-silent	.16	.10	90*	.93*	.12	.02	.12	.05	.16	06	03	.04
Thinks like me-												
like me	1.	00	00	0.2	01*	0.4*	25	12	14	05	11	07
IIKe me	.16	.02	09	03	.81*	.84*	.25	.13	.14	.05	11	.06
Unlike me-like me	15	01	.12	02	8/*	91*	15	01	07	.02	.15	.00
attitudes-												
shares my												
attitudes	14	.01	.10	.00	84*	89*	06	;09	08	01	.22	.09
Expert-inexpert	.13	.01	13	.07	.14	.03	.71*	.73*	.14	.00	17	03
Unintelligent-												
intelligent	12	.02	.01	.10	09	.04	71*	71*	28	19	.25	.13
Intellectual-narrow	.21	.10	13	.06	.23	.11	.74*	.75*	.12	04	17	.01
Poised-nervous	.17	.03	36	.16	.15	.06	.22	.06	.76*	.76*	09	.00
Tense-relaxed	16	01	.33	10	10	01	17	.00	82*	85*	.11	.04
Calm-anxious	.20	.08	17	08	.09	.01	.20	.04	.83*	.89*	07	.03
Dishonest-honest	21	03	.10	08	12	.04	34	21	03	.09	.73*	.74*
Unsympathetic-												
sympathetic	21	02	.00	.06	16	02	18	01	13	07	.79*	.82*
Good-bad	.24	.06	05	.01	.21	.08	.12	06	.07	.00	77*	80*
Eigenvalue	2.27	2.22	2.63	2.38	2.45	2.36	2.05	1.70	2.36	2.21	2.20	1.93
Variance	13	12	15	13	14	13	11	9	13	12	12	11
Internal Reliability												
of 3 Best Items		.91		.96		.89		.79		.92		.81

\*satisfactory loading

†A=Orthogonal solution, B=Oblique solution

### Source Credibility and Homophily

Source credibility was operationalized as scores on semantic differential-type scales designed to measure five dimensions of credibility. The scales selected for inclusion were those suggested by McCroskey, Jensen, and Valencia (1973). Scales designed to measure Competence, Character, Sociability, Composure, and Extroversion were included (see Table 2). In addition, scales designed to measure perceived Homophily (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) were added (see Table 2). This measure of homophily focused on perceived attitudinal similarity. Although previous research concerning homophily in communication has used primarily external, presumably "objective," observations of similarity as an indicant of homophily, as Rogers and Bhowmik (1971) have noted subjective perceptions of homophily are probably much more important in human communication. Research completed subsequent to the collection of the present data indicates that these perceptions are multidimensional. However, since this information was not available at the time of this study, only the dimension concerning attitudinal similarity was included.

Factor analysis of the data from the pilot study indicated the presence of five dimensions of response. The expected dimensions were obtained, however, Character and Sociability combined to form a single factor. The data from the main study were subjected to both orthogonal and oblique factor analyses employing the same criteria for acceptable loadings noted above for the attraction analyses. Six-factor solutions were rotated. Each item in both analyses met the criteria and loaded on the intended factor. Internal reliability estimates for the dimensions ranged from .79 to .96 (see Table 2). The factors in the oblique analysis, which as indicated in Table 2 were virtually identical (in terms of loadings for primary items) to the factors in the orthogonal analysis, were found to be intercorrelated. Sociability and Character shared a .53 correlation. Competence and Character resulted in a .42 correlation. Composure and Extroversion shared a .48 correlation. Other intercorrelations were .20 or smaller. These results indicate that although there were six distinct dimensions of response reflected on the scales, the dimensions were not completely independent.

## Subjects

There were two parts to this investigation, the pilot phase and the main study. The pilot study involved 37 Ss (after exclusion of Ss who provided incomplete data) in three small group communication classes in a midwestern university. The main study included 115 Ss in eight classes in interpersonal communication at an eastern university. In both cases, Ss were randomly assigned to groups. In the pilot study, the group size varied from four to six, depending on enrollment. In the main study, there were five Ss in each of 23 groups.

## Procedure

The pilot study was conducted during the ninth week of the semester. Ss had been assigned to groups during the third week and had been involved in a variety of problem-solving task discussions each class period for six weeks. During the third week of the semester, the raters in the classes had been trained in the use of the IBM and had practiced using it with live discussion groups. The raters and the Ss came from the same classes. During a regular class period, with no indication of the fact that an experiment was in progress, one group engaged in a discussion for 25 minutes while another group served as observers, rating each S's interaction behavior once every five-minute period. There was no attempt to insure that each observer was rating the same interaction as every other observer. Rather, while one observer was rating one S, another observer could be rating a different S.

The main study was conducted the tenth week of the semester. The Ss had engaged in a number of small group activities and projects during the term and were well acquainted with each other. The groups were constituted by randomly assigning five Ss to each group. The groups, therefore, should be thought of as essentially zero-history groups. Even though the Ss had worked together before and were acquainted, the particular combination of Ss in the groups was unique to that time.

The group task was to arrive at a group evaluation of the course in which the Ss were enrolled and to provide suggestions concerning how the course might be improved. Observers in the main study were nine graduate assistants trained in the use of the IBM. Three observers were assigned to rate each group. The discussions lasted 30 minutes, with each observer rating each S every five minutes.

In both the pilot study and the main study, the Ss were asked to complete the credibility, homophily, and attraction measures for each member of their group (other than themselves) after the discussion. In the pilot study, the Ss took the

instruments home and were instructed to return them the following week. This proved to be a poor procedure since many Ss failed to return the instruments because they either lost them or forgot them. As a consequence, there were insufficient data for 27 of the original 64 Ss to be retained in the study. While there is no reason to suspect that this attrition systematically biased the results, the sharply reduced sample size substantially reduced the power of the statistical tests made on the data and could well have prevented many meaningful effects from achieving significance. This problem was overcome in the main study by having the Ss complete the instruments during the same class period immediately after the discussion.

### Data Analyses

The data were submitted to a series of step-wise multiple regression analyses. The predictor variables were the ratings on the six dimensions of the IBM. These scores were computed by taking the mean rating for a given dimension across the time periods for a single rater and then taking a mean across raters. The criterion variables were the scores on the credibility, homophily, and attraction measures. These scores were computed by taking a mean score for the S on a given dimension across the scores assigned by the other members of the S's group on that dimension.

The analyses were designed to discover the most parsimonious prediction model. Consequently, the regression analyses were terminated when extraction of an additional predictor resulted in an increase in explained variance of less than one percent or when the entering variable resulted in the overall model being nonsignificant (p < .05), whichever came first.

#### RESULTS

#### Pilot Study

The results of the regression analyses failed to confirm the hypothesis that interaction behavior is a significant predictor of interpersonal attraction or the source credibility dimensions of Competence, Composure, and Character-Sociability. No overall regression model for these criterion variables achieved statistical significance.

The regression model for Extroversion, which included three significant predictors, was found to be the best model (F=4.96). This model included Flexibility, Interest, and Verbosity which combined to predict 36% of the variance on perceived Extroversion (see Table 3). High Verbosity, high Interest, and low Flexibility were associated with high perceived Extroversion.

The best obtained regression model for Homophily included two significant predictors, Relevance and Interest, which accounted for 41% of the variance on perceived Homophily (F=7.29). Subjects with highly relevant interactions and whose interactions were characterized as involved and interested were perceived as more homophilous by the other members of their groups (see Table 3).

#### TABLE 3 Results of Multiple Regression Analyses for Source Credibility and Interpersonal Attraction: Pilot Study

Standardized Beta Weights	Criterion				
of Predictors	Extroversion	Homophily			
Orientation	-	_			
Flexibility	41	-			
Relevance	-	.54			
Interest	.56	.71			
Tension	-	-			
Verbosity	.81	-			
Predictable Variance	.36	.41			

An impact of the small sample size was suggested in the analyses that failed to achieve statistical significance. In several instances, models predicting up to 25% of the variance were obtained, but they did not achieve satisfactory (p < .05) significance levels. Since in this investigation it was assumed that variables other than those

TABLE 4Results of Multiple Regression Analysesfor Source Credibilityand Interpersonal Attraction: Main Study(Standardized Beta Weights of Predictors)

Criterion	Orientation	Flexibility	Relevance	Interest	Tension	Verhosity	Variance
Social Attraction	.46	_	- 33	-110	96	40	variance
Physical Attraction	.39	.27	37	-1.10	00	.48	.40
Task Attraction	.55	_	31	83	23	87	.28
Competence	.49	-		29	.23	28	.39
Composure ·	.89	-	78	- 69	.22	1 17	.35
Sociability	.69	.41	.42	- 67	_	1.17	.45
Extroversion	17	_	_	- 55	_	04	.42
Character	.87	.30	.23	- 92		1.39	.75
Homophily	.43	-	-	-1.14	92	38	.38

under consideration as predictors could account for a major portion of the variance on the criterion variables, these nonsignificant results could well be the result of low power of the tests rather than the falsity of the hypothesis. The obtained significance on the variables of Extroversion and Homophily in the presence of this low power was taken as an indication that the general hypothesis is tenable and as a justification for conducting the main study under more controlled conditions.

#### Main Study

The results of the regression analyses confirmed the hypothesis that interaction behavior is a predictor of all dimensions of credibility, homophily, and attraction. The amount of variance predictable ranged from a low of 28% for Physical Attraction to a high of 75% for Extroversion (see Table 4). Some caution should be exercised in the interpretation of the following results because the degree of variance predictable is probably, in some instances, underestimated. Since some raters demonstrated unreliability in their use of the Tension and Flexibility measures, their inclusion in this analysis might be expected to reduce explained variance. Subanalyses, not reported in detail here because of sample sizes, produced results indicating that omission of the unreliable ratings increased predictable variance on each criterion

variable. This was particularly true for the Task Attraction, Competence, and Composure variables, on each of which the amount of variance predictable was increased by over 50%. However, since this research was designed as an initial exploration of the relationships among interaction behavior and perceived attraction and credibility, it is probably better to risk possible error in the conservative direction rather than attempt to interpret the results of the subanalyses without replication. The reduced sample size in these analyses makes them highly susceptible to chance fluctuations which could lead to false conclusions and interpretations. The explained variance discussed below, therefore, should be considered the minimum explainable variance, and it should be recognized that the interpretations of the observed relationships might need to be altered as a result of later research which overcomes the present reliability problem and generates predictive models including greater weights for Tension and/or Flexibility.

The regression analysis indicated that the best model for prediction of Social Attraction included all of the predictor variables except Flexibility (F=3.81). This model accounted for 40% of the variance in Social Attraction ratings. High Social Attraction was associated with low Interest, Tension, and Relevance scores and high Verbosity and (task) Orientation scores.

A four-variable model (F=3.34), accounting for 28% of the variance, was the best obtained model for Physical Attraction. People with low Verbosity and high (task) Orientation, Flexibility, and Relevance scores were perceived as more physically attractive.

Thirty-nine percent of the variance in Task Attraction ratings was found to be predictable from a five-variable model (F=3.69). People receiving high Task Attraction ratings were observed to be less Verbose and make less Relevant contributions. They also scored higher on Interest, (task) Orientation, and Tension.

A four-variable model for Composure accounted for 45% of the variance (F=6.18). High Composure was related to high Verbosity and (task) Orientation and low Relevance and Interest.

The best regression model for Sociability accounted for 42% of the variance and included all of the predictor variables except Tension (F=4.90). Subjects perceived to be more sociable were observed to be less Verbose and interested and have higher (task) Orientation, Flexibility, and Relevance.

Seventy-five percent of the variance on Extroversion was found to be predictable in a threevariable model (F=31.12). High Verbosity and low Interest and (task) Orientation were associated with high Extroversion ratings.

A five-variable model for Character accounted for 38% of the variance (F=4.13). High Character was associated with high (task) Orientation, Flexibility, and Relevance as well as low Interest and Verbosity.

The final regression analysis was for Homophily. The resulting four-variable model accounted for 33% of the variance (F=3.64). Subjects who exhibited low Interest and Tension as well as high Verbosity and (task) Orientation were perceived as more Homophilous.

#### DISCUSSION

The results of this investigation clearly indicate that observable interaction behaviors are pre-

dictors of perceived attraction, credibility, and homophily. The extent to which the results of this investigation can be generalized, of course, is limited by the constraints imposed by the design and procedures employed. The present investigation employed college students and the specific problem-solving task assigned in the main study was to arrive at a group evaluation of the course in which the students were enrolled. While it was initially assumed that this would be an interesting and involving task for the subjects, the results of the data analysis on Homophily indicated that the subjects perceived that people who exhibited low Interest were most like themselves. In fact, Interest was the best single predictor of perceived Homophily. We might expect the sign of the beta weight to be reversed if the participants in the discussion felt highly involved and interested in the topic.

Even with the present procedural limitations, however, some generalizations seem tenable. One of the more important is that a specific interaction behavior may increase ratings on one dimension of attraction, credibility, or homophily, while at the same time contributing to a decrease in another. For example, high Interest was observed to be associated positively with Task Attraction and negatively with Social Attraction. Verbosity had an exactly opposite relationship. Similarly, high Relevance was associated positively with Physical Attraction, Sociability, and Character and negatively with Social Attraction, Task Attraction, and Composure. Furthermore, high Verbosity was associated positively with Social Attraction, Composure, Extroversion, and Homophily, but negatively with Physical Attraction, Task Attraction, Sociability, and Character. Only one interaction behavior, Relevance, had only positive or negative relationships with the criterion variables. But, in this case, Relevance was included in only three of the nine models.

A major conclusion that can be drawn from this study, therefore, is that the relationships between the way people interact in a small group and the way they will be perceived in terms of attraction,

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homophily, and credibility are very complex. Any possible advice to communicators concerning what type of interaction behavior is "good," at least at this point in time, must be couched in a series of reservations concerning the desired personal outcome from the interaction.

This conclusion may not seem particularly striking at first reading. However, if we recognize that there are a large number of books on group communication and an even larger number of group process and group discussion courses currently providing prescriptions for effective group interaction behaviors, the import of the conclusion takes on a new dimension. At this point in time, we do not know what interaction behaviors contribute to what desired outcomes of human communication. Even if the present investigation were a definitive work on the relationships between interaction behaviors and perceived attraction, homophily, and credibility, which of course it is not, we would still lack information on the relationships between interaction behaviors and other desired outcomes of interaction, such as conflict resolution, decision-making, group satisfaction, information acquisition, and influence.

The clear implication of the results of this study is that there is a major need for a series of investigations designed to develop predictive models for various communication outcomes based on observable interaction behaviors. Should this paper serve as a catalyst for such an effort, it will have served a useful function.

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