



7-1981

Social Ecology of Supervised Communal Facilities for Mentally Disabled Adults: IV. Characteristics of Social Behavior

Daniel Romer

University of Pennsylvania, dromer@asc.upenn.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers

 Part of the [Communication Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Romer, D. (1981). Social Ecology of Supervised Communal Facilities for Mentally Disabled Adults: IV. Characteristics of Social Behavior. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 86 (1), 28-38. Retrieved from https://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers/367

At the time of publication, author Daniel Romer was affiliated with the University of Illinois - Chicago Circle. Currently, he is the Research Director at the Institute for Adolescent Risk Communication at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania.

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. https://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers/367
For more information, please contact repository@pobox.upenn.edu.

Social Ecology of Supervised Communal Facilities for Mentally Disabled Adults: IV. Characteristics of Social Behavior

Abstract

Behavior categories for observations of 304 mentally disabled adults were analyzed in relation to settings (sheltered workshops and residential facility), personal characteristics (age, sex, IQ, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation) and characteristics of partners. Both settings and personal characteristics predicted individual behavior rates for the 10 most frequently observed behavior categories. As many as 14 dimensions were extracted from behavior observed in more intense dyadic relationships; these dimensions were strongly related to characteristics of the individuals in the relationships. Although more intelligent individuals exhibited higher rates of verbal behavior, they were not more verbal in their intense social relationships. Furthermore, individuals at all levels of intelligence were sensitive to the intellectual characteristics of their partners. The results suggest that the social behavior of mentally disabled people is complex and sensitive to the presence and characteristics of others; peer-group composition seems to be critical to social adaptation in communal settings for this population.

Disciplines

Communication | Social and Behavioral Sciences

Comments

At the time of publication, author Daniel Romer was affiliated with the University of Illinois - Chicago Circle. Currently, he is the Research Director at the Institute for Adolescent Risk Communication at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania.

Social Ecology of Supervised Communal Facilities for Mentally Disabled Adults: IV. Characteristics of Social Behavior

DANIEL ROMER AND GERSHON BERKSON
University of Illinois—Chicago Circle

Behavior categories for observations of 304 mentally disabled adults were analyzed in relation to settings (sheltered workshops and residential facility), personal characteristics (age, sex, IQ, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation) and characteristics of partners. Both settings and personal characteristics predicted individual behavior rates for the 10 most frequently observed behavior categories. As many as 14 dimensions were extracted from behavior observed in more intense dyadic relationships; these dimensions were strongly related to characteristics of the individuals in the relationships. Although more intelligent individuals exhibited higher rates of verbal behavior, they were not more verbal in their intense social relationships. Furthermore, individuals at all levels of intelligence were sensitive to the intellectual characteristics of their partners. The results suggest that the social behavior of mentally disabled people is complex and sensitive to the presence and characteristics of others; peer-group composition seems to be critical to social adaptation in communal settings for this population.

In previous papers in this series we have discussed various aspects of social behavior of our sample of mentally disabled adults in community facilities. In these reports, we examined the reliability of observations (Berkson & Romer, 1980), correlates of general sociability (Romer & Berkson, 1980a), and predictors of social choice (Romer & Berkson, 1980b). For most of these analyses, we abstracted social behavior into general tendencies such as intensity and extensity. In the present paper our focus is more directly upon the specific types of social behavior that we observed and the factors that predict them.

Behavior observed in this study was examined in two ways. One involved an analysis of all kinds of behavior the individuals engaged in. This approach was focused upon the individual as the unit of analysis. The second approach involved the types of behavior that occurred within social re-

lationships. Here the unit of analysis was the dyad. Although our earlier analyses indicated that individuals differ considerably in the intensity and extensity of their social behavior, few of these differences were attributable to important personal characteristics such as age, sex, diagnosis, or intelligence. This result suggests that personal characteristics are unrelated to behavior. Since this result was not intuitively obvious, we were interested in determining the extent to which these characteristics are associated with different types of individual and dyadic behavior.

Intelligence was a dimension we especially thought would be related to behavior. Previous analyses indicated that staff members attributed greater sociability to more intelligent clients, even though no greater sociability was observed (Romer & Berkson, 1980a). One possible explanation for this finding is that more-intelligent clients behave in ways that are more consistent with what observers consider to be "normal" social behavior. Perhaps more-intelligent clients exhibit more varied or complex behavior patterns rather than stronger ones (cf. Mischel, 1977; Moos,

This research was supported by Grant No. HD 10321 from the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. We extend thanks to Leland Wilkinson for assistance in the use of his computer program and in the analysis of the data.

1968), or perhaps they engage in more conversation or other verbal activities that "look" like typical social behavior. If less-intelligent clients do not engage in conversation, however, they must have other ways of maintaining equally strong social relationships. We were interested, therefore, in determining what clients of differing intelligence do in their social relationships.

Both the ecological (e.g., Barker, 1968) and interactionist approaches (e.g., Endler & Magnusson, 1976) to social behavior emphasize the importance of settings. Our earlier reports suggest that settings exert considerable influence upon the general amount and intensity of individual social behavior (Landesman-Dwyer, Berkson, & Romer, 1979; Romer & Berkson, 1980a). Raush (1965, 1977) has demonstrated the impact of the setting upon the dyadic behavior of both nonaggressive and aggressive children. We would also expect the setting to influence the form and character of dyadic behavior in our present population. Our research findings suggest, however, that a major determinant of setting differences is peer-group composition variables, especially the intelligence level of peers. Our social-choice analyses indicated that moderately intelligent individuals (IQ range = 52 to 71) have particularly intense relationships with both lower and higher IQ people (Romer & Berkson, 1980b). These individuals, therefore, appear to be critical to the social integration of a setting. We were interested in determining what moderately intelligent clients did that enabled them to maintain relationships with others who differed in intellect.

A major principle guiding our analysis was that social behavior is a function not only of the individual but also of the persons with whom that individual interacts. Research with "normal" children and adults (e.g., Raush, 1965; Whiting & Whiting, 1975) indicates that the way people behave in one relationship does not necessarily predict the way they behave in another. What seems to be important is how individuals construe each other and the social situation. Because intelligence and related cognitive variables should be related to construal competencies (Mischel, 1973), intel-

ligence might be an important predictor of interpersonal sensitivity. Landesman-Dwyer et al. (1979) found, however, that with the exception of profoundly retarded people, individuals at all levels of retardation modify their social behavior in the presence of others. We were interested to see whether this result also characterized the individuals in our present sample. Perhaps the most striking place to observe the effects of others is in same- and opposite-sex relationships. If an individual's social behavior is dependent upon the presence and characteristics of the other, this should be most apparent in relation to the sex of the individuals in a relationship.

Method

Subjects

The sample was the same group of 304 adult clients studied in our earlier reports (cf. Berkson & Romer, 1980). Most of the clients (68 percent) had mental retardation as a primary diagnosis. The remaining clients were diagnosed as mentally ill (17 percent) or mentally retarded and mentally ill (15 percent). Their mean IQ (as measured with a Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test) was 58 (standard deviation [*SD*] = 23), and their mean age was 41 years (*SD* = 13). More men than women (66 and 34 percent, respectively), comprised the sample. These individuals attended one of four sheltered-workshop day programs (WA, WH, WI, and WE); 116 of them were also studied in a single intermediate-care residential facility. Some of the latter clients (81) were observed in both their residence and workshop settings (one client was observed in two workshops, bringing the total number of cases to 386).

Behavioral Observations

The present report is based on naturalistic observation of clients' behavior in their typical living and work settings. Observers spent approximately one month in each setting becoming acquainted with the clients. During this period it was possible to

learn whether any of the clients felt uncomfortable with the observation procedure or did not want to be observed. A small proportion of clients (5 percent) fell into this category and were not included in the study. Formal observations began once it appeared that clients regarded the observers as regular staff members.

Observations were conducted when clients were free to socialize (during breaks and meals in the workshops and during leisure periods in the residence). A standard procedure was followed in obtaining observations. Observers randomly selected a code name from the client roster. Once this client was located, he or she was formally observed for up to 5 seconds to determine (a) major activities and (b) with whom (if anyone) these activities were carried out. A behavior checklist containing 100 distinct categories (cf. Berkson & Romer, 1980) was used to encode behavior. Once this information was recorded, the next person on the roster was located and an observation performed. The procedure continued until everyone had been observed. If time permitted, a second round of observations was conducted with a new randomly selected code name from the roster; however, no clients were observed twice within a 5-minute period. Interobserver reliabilities, which were checked at monthly intervals, ranged from 85 to 95 percent agreement for each type of recorded information.

Approximately 100 of these observations were obtained on each client, spanning a period of 3 to 5 months. In one setting (WA), approximately 50 observations were obtained in two phases. Since the setting and clients were nearly identical for both phases, only the first phase is reported in this paper.

There were 28 categories of behavior that involved direct interaction with others; all but 2 of these "interactive" categories ("observation" and "inactive communication") were further subdivided into active and receptive categories. The active category referred to whether the subject was either actively engaged in the behavior or was directing the behavior toward another. The receptive category was used when the sub-

ject was the clear recipient of the behavior. Another 22 categories were used to encode noninteractive behavior. These categories were further subdivided to distinguish between solitary and aggregate behavior. Aggregate behavior defined noninteractive behavior that was conducted in the presence of others who engaged in the same behavior (e.g., eating in a group). Two final categories referred to cases in which the client was unavailable for observation.

Settings

The workshops were administered by a single nonprofit agency in Chicago. Although client composition differed across these settings, routines and schedules were similar. Clients spent their day engaged in supervised work and other training activities. As in most industrial settings, they had a morning and afternoon coffee break (15 minutes) and a lunch period (30 minutes). During these periods, clients congregated in the lunch rooms where vending machines and coffee were available. They also spent time in lounges or outdoors. These periods were unsupervised by staff members and provided the opportunity to observe clients' natural social behavior. Since staff members did not take part in these break activities, their interaction with clients is largely unrepresented in these observations.

The residence was an intermediate-care facility within walking or commuting distance of the various workshops. It contained four floors of dormitory-style two- and three-person rooms and had a capacity of 135 residents. Clients were observed in the dining room, various television lounges located on each floor, the recreation room, and in their own rooms and the hallways when privacy was not at issue. Although all women resided on a single floor of the home, men and women could and did move freely throughout the building. Observations were conducted in the evenings and on weekends when residents were not engaged in activities under direct staff supervision. Further details regarding the settings are presented in Berkson and Romer (1980).

Analyses

More than one behavior category could be recorded for a single observation, so the total number of behavior categories recorded per subject could exceed the number of observations. In one analysis, we calculated the rate of occurrence of each behavior by dividing the frequency of the behavior by the total number of observations for the subject. Each subject then had a profile of behavior rates spanning the entire set of 100 behavior categories. To analyze behavioral differences between subjects and settings, we selected the 12 most frequent of these behavior categories (with an average occurrence greater than 1 percent). These categories included various forms of overt communication (verbalization and gesture), inactive communication (when clients seemed to be in an interacting group but were not communicating at the moment of observation), and eating, watching television, sleeping, engaging in stereotyped activity, and affection. There was also considerable "nonsocial" behavior for which we had no specific code (e.g., standing around, looking into space).

Another way of analyzing client behavior was to examine the behavior that occurred in each client's social relationships. In this analysis, we selected all relationships that were observed with an intensity of at least 5 percent of clients' observations. This resulted in 538 dyadic relationships with a mean intensity of 10.4 percent ($SD = 7.8$). Only the 54 interactive behavior categories were involved in these relationships. We transformed the frequencies associated with these categories by dividing them by the total number of times categories were recorded for the relationship. Thus, these values correspond to proportions that add up to 100 percent within any relationship. Many of the behavior categories (23) were rarely observed and were deleted from subsequent analyses. In order to reduce these profiles further, we conducted a principal components analysis of the remaining 31 categories. This analysis, described in the *Results*, reduced the profiles to 14 dimensions of behavior.

Each set of profiles was analyzed with a

multivariate regression procedure (Wilkinson, 1980) in which each client's observations were treated as a profile. Predictors of the profiles could include subject and partner characteristics, setting differences, and interactions between any of these variables. The personal characteristics we considered were age, sex, IQ, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation. (Although physical attractiveness was also tested, it failed to predict behavior profiles and was not discussed in this report.) The issue was to determine whether behavior profiles differed as a function of client characteristics and settings and what the behavioral differences might be. This method is a generalization of canonical correlation and results in canonical variates that optimally weight the behavior so that discrimination among the predictors is maximized. If no behavioral differences exist across the predictors, canonical correlations are weak, and little prediction is possible. This method is particularly suited to the present data because all the information in clients' behavior profiles could be treated in the same analysis while taking account of the obvious interdependencies between behavior categories and between predictors.

Results

The 12 most frequently observed behavior categories (more than 1 percent) in the five settings are shown in Table 1. Despite some variability across settings, there is considerable stability in the average profiles for facilities. Active conversation was the most frequent behavior in four of the five settings. Nonsocial aggregation consistently ranked high, as did eating in the company of others. Of course, watching television ranked low in those settings where no TV was present. Since the coefficient of concordance for the rank orders was only .43, it seemed reasonable to determine what the differences between settings were.

A profile analysis of each client's behavior indicated significant prediction for both settings and individual characteristics. Four dimensions distinguished the settings. The

TABLE 1
MEAN PERCENTAGE OCCURRENCE OF MOST FREQUENT TYPES OF BEHAVIOR IN EACH SETTING

Setting	Act. verbalization	Agg. non-social	Agg. eat	Rec. verbalization	Sol. non-social	Agg. TV	Inact. communication	Act. affection	Act. unclear verbalization	Sol. sleep	Sol. stereotype	Act. gesture
Residence	18	16	13	3	10	14	2	2	1	4	2	1
WA	18	17	15	3	4	1	6	1	4	1	2	2
WH	28	22	16	5	1	0	2	2	2	1	0	1
WI	18	22	20	5	4	0	2	1	0	0	1	1
WE	40	14	18	4	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	1

Note: Act. = active, Agg. = aggregate, Rec. = receive, Sol. = solitary, Inact. = inactive.

largest, which separated the residence from the other settings, relied on the greater occurrence of television viewing and solitary nonsocial activity in the home. The second dimension reflected the greater occurrence of active conversation and inactive interaction in Workshop WA. The third depended upon greater conversation in Workshop WE, and the fourth dimension corresponded to greater amounts of aggregation and conversation received in Workshops WH and WI. The canonical correlations for the first two dimensions were quite large (.80 and .72, respectively), and all four canonicals were significant ($F = 15.34$, $48/1,096$ *df*, $p < .01$). Thus, setting differences were obtained even though individual characteristics were held constant.

All five personal characteristics (age, sex, IQ, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation) were also associated with distinctive behavior profiles. As expected, more-intelligent clients tended to engage in more conversation and less nonsocial aggregation. Women tended to have more inactive relationships and to spend more time eating. Older clients were less affectionate, less likely to engage in conversation and in inactive relationships, but more likely to aggregate with others. The largest individual predictor was diagnosis (canonical correlate = .43, $F = 5.46$, $12/284$ *df*, $p < .01$). Mentally retarded clients were more likely to engage in conversation and affection and less likely to aggregate and to sleep than were mentally ill clients. Finally, clients who were high in the desire for affiliation were more likely to converse but less likely to sleep and to aggregate. These results indicate that there was considerable predic-

tion of client characteristics from the behavior they engaged in. Thus, the clients we observed were distinguishable in terms of activities and behavior profiles.

Social Relationships

A second analysis was conducted to determine behavior patterns within more intense social relationships (intensity greater than 5 percent). The 10 most frequently observed behavior categories within more intense relationships are shown in Table 2. The three forms of conversation (active, receptive, and inactive) accounted for over 70 percent of the activity in these relationships. Since many combinations of behavior were possible within any one relationship, we were interested to learn whether the relationships differed in diversity of behavior and to what degree these differences were related to individual characteristics. An uncertainty measure of variation ($-\sum p_i \log p_i$, where p equals the proportion for the i [behavior]) was calculated for each

TABLE 2
MOST FREQUENT TYPES OF BEHAVIOR WITHIN MORE INTENSE SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Category	%
Active verbalization	59.9
Receive verbalization	9.7
Inactive communication	7.7
Active affection	4.1
Active unclear verbalization	3.7
Active gesturing	1.8
Active informal play	1.8
Receive affection	1.6
Observation	1.1
Active offering	1.0

relationship. No client characteristic was related to this measure, however. The only predictor was intensity of relationship ($F = 23.21, 1/531 df, p < .01$), suggesting that the spread of behavior categories within relationships was unsystematically related to individual characteristics.

To determine more about how relationships were structured, we performed a principal-components analysis upon the correlation matrix of the dyadic behavior categories. The 14 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were subjected to a varimax rotation and are shown in Table 3. The factors seem to cluster into communication, play, affection, aggression, helping, offering, and observation themes. Intensity of social relationships correlated most heavily with the affection dimension ($r = .57$); however, two of the helping factors were positively related to intensity ($A = .18, B = .22$), and observation was slightly negatively related to intensity ($r = -.18$).

Our first question concerning the relationship factors was whether they varied as a function of settings or personal characteristics. Table 4 shows the average factor scores for each setting. The coefficient of concordance for these profiles was virtually zero, suggesting considerable variation across settings; however, setting differences were much less evident in these factors than in the behavior discussed earlier. Only three canonical correlations were significant (.50, .41, .37), and they were smaller than the ones that predicted the behavior shown in Table 1. The largest canonical dimension used nonverbal helping (Factor A) and observation to distinguish Workshop WA from the other settings. The second dimension used the lower incidence of communication (Factor A) but greater proportion of affectionate play (Factor C) in the home to separate it from other settings. The third dimension relied upon differences in rough play (Factor A) and affectionate play (Factor C) to distinguish Workshop WI from the others. Some setting differences appeared to exist, but they were rather small in magnitude.

The major predictors of relationship profiles appeared to be individual characteristics, i.e., age, intelligence, sex, and de-

TABLE 3
SOCIAL INTERACTION FACTORS

Factor	Behavior	Loading
Communication		
A	Active verbalization	.73
	Receive verbalization	-.68
	Inactive communication	-.70
B	Active sign language	.76
	Receive sign language	.73
	Active gesture	.46
Affection		
	Active affection	.51
	Receive affection	.54
	Active sex	.68
	Receive sex	.63
Play		
A	Active rough play	.66
	Receive rough play	.38
	Active informal play	.65
B	Receive rough play	.62
	Receive informal play	.78
	Active annoyance	-.30
C	Active interactive game play	.74
	Active affection	.34
	Other social	.61
Helping		
A	Receive help	.38
	Active verbalization	-.31
	Active unclear verbalization	.79
B	Active gesture	.31
	Active help	.71
	Active annoyance	.35
C	Receive help	.48
	Active disapproval	.61
	Active unclear verbalization	-.54
Aggression		
A	Active aggression	.49
	Receive annoyance	.79
	Active gesture	.66
B	Active aggression	.45
	Receive disapproval	.85
C	Active annoyance	.30
	Active aggression	.46
	Receive aggression	.74
Offering		
	Active offering	.72
	Receive offering	.66
Observation		
	Observation	.66
	Active purchase	.67

sire for affiliation. Diagnosis, however, was not related to the factors. Older clients tended to engage in less affection and rough play (canonical $r = .36$), suggesting that their relationships were less physically active than younger people's relationships.

More sociable clients seemed to engage

TABLE 4
MEAN FACTOR SCORES FOR INTERACTION FACTORS IN EACH SETTING

Setting	Communication		Affection	Play			Helping			Aggression			Offering	Observation
	A	B		A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C		
Residence	52	-2	-3	4	-10	14	-1	6	23	27	8	11	13	-12
WA	45	-3	-31	-13	-3	-16	90	15	-2	-6	-13	-16	-4	51
WH	-11	-18	-19	-28	9	7	-5	7	10	18	9	22	9	-6
WI	37	-15	-11	79	30	3	-25	-9	-6	-15	8	-8	35	-18
WE	-65	-8	10	-20	-11	-15	-33	-6	-11	-23	-13	-14	-18	-15

Note. Decimals were omitted since scores are in standard units.

in more conversation and affectionate play but less sign language (canonical $r = .30$). With the exception of sign language, this pattern is consistent with the meaning of the desire for affiliation dimension.

A major interest in studying dyadic behavior was to determine what individuals who differed in intelligence did with each other. To study this more carefully, we trichotomized our sample of subjects and their associates as in earlier analyses (low IQ < 51, medium IQ < 72). This breakdown corresponds approximately to what is normally referred to as moderate and severe retardation (low), mild retardation (medium), and borderline and normal intellect (high). We could then examine relationships in a 3×3 matrix corresponding to three levels of client and partner intelligence with other client characteristics held constant.

Figure 1 contains the significant behavioral differences for clients and partners. Variation in four of these dimensions was predicted by a statistical interaction between client and partner IQ. As is evident, client characteristics interacted in predicting communication (Factor A). It is interesting that less-intelligent clients were most active but only when they were with partners of similar intelligence. Medium-level clients tended to be more active with higher level partners. More-intelligent clients tended to be relatively active with all partners.

A statistical interaction was also evident for affection. Low-IQ clients tended to be more affectionate with partners of medium- and higher level intelligence. Medium-level clients did not seem to favor any IQ group

and were moderately affectionate with each one.

Helping behavior (Factors A and C) not only depended upon the IQ characteristics of associates but also upon settings. Less-intelligent clients tended to help each other, and this pattern was even stronger in Workshop WA. Medium-IQ clients tended to help each other, whereas high-IQ clients did not seem to help anyone very much. In some settings, especially the home, medium-IQ clients tended to help less-intelligent clients more than they helped each other. Collapsed over settings, the pattern of receiving help (Factor C) did not seem to differ as a function of client IQ; however, in some settings less-intelligent clients received help from clients of similar intelligence, whereas in others they received help from medium-IQ partners. In the residence, medium-IQ clients received more help from their lower IQ partners.

The results for aggression given and annoyance received (Factor A) are simple to describe. Less-intelligent clients tended to annoy and aggress against their partners more than did other clients. Medium-IQ clients were least likely to engage in this activity, either with each other or with lower IQ partners. A similar pattern was observed for the dimension of annoy and aggress (Factor C). Apparently, less-intelligent clients had more of these taunting agonistic relationships than did other clients.

Sex

Figure 2 contains the behavioral dimensions that discriminated the sexes. All but

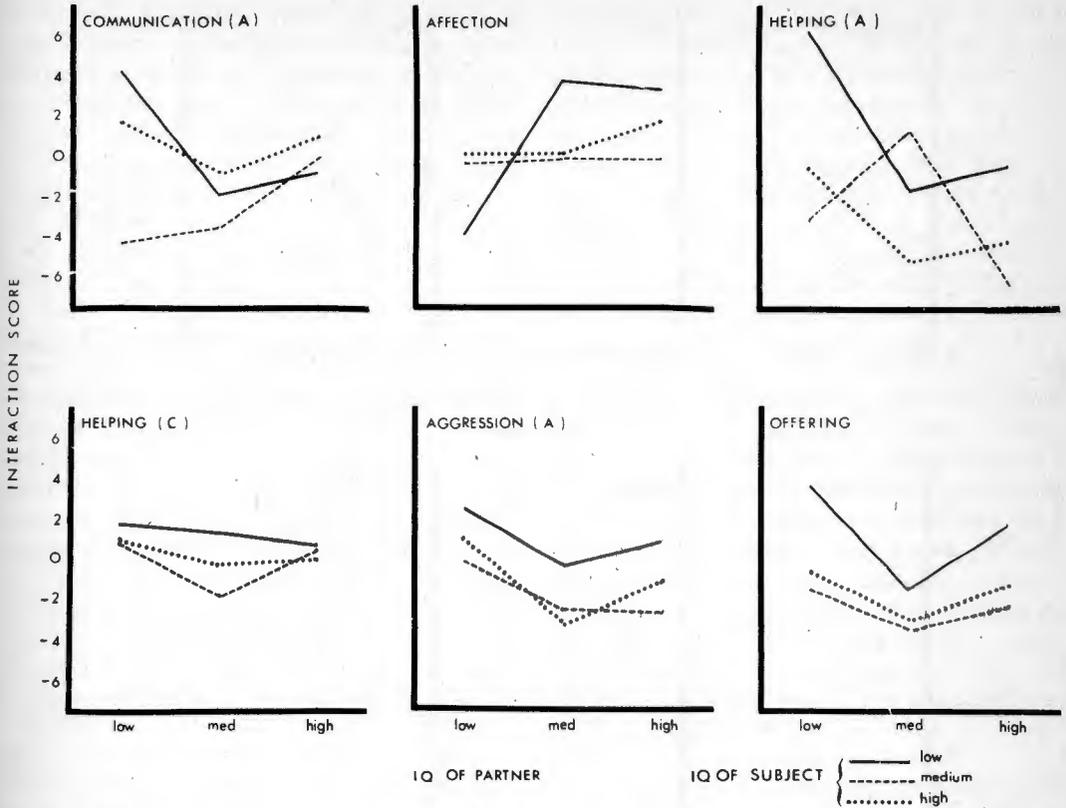


FIGURE 1. Interaction patterns for six types of dyadic behavior (factors) in terms of the IQ of the partner and the IQ of the subject of observation.

one of these dimensions (Helping, Factor A) involved some form of statistical interaction between the sexes. Opposite-sex relationships tended to be more affectionate. In the case of affection and play (Factor C), however, the interaction depended upon the setting. In the residence, male groups engaged in even less affection, whereas in one setting their affection and play was greater than that of the other groups.

The pattern for communication (Factor A) depended upon the setting. Averaged over settings, it appears that women were less active on this dimension; however, in two workshops male partners tended to be less active while in another workshop male partners were more active. Although women tended to help everyone more (Factor A), offering was greater for opposite-sex relationships. Helpful-annoyance relationships (Factor B) tended

to be more likely for men, but this depended upon setting. In the residence, same-sex partners were less likely to do this, but in one workshop they were more likely to do it.

Aggression (Factor A) appeared to be most likely for male partners, but in one setting even this pattern was not true. Furthermore, women seemed more likely to have aggressive relationships with men than with other women.

Discussion

The present analyses indicate significant prediction of individual behavior from knowledge of personal characteristics such as age, sex, intelligence, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation. These results stand in contrast to our earlier findings (Romer & Berkson, 1980a), which suggest that many of these characteristics are unrelated to so-

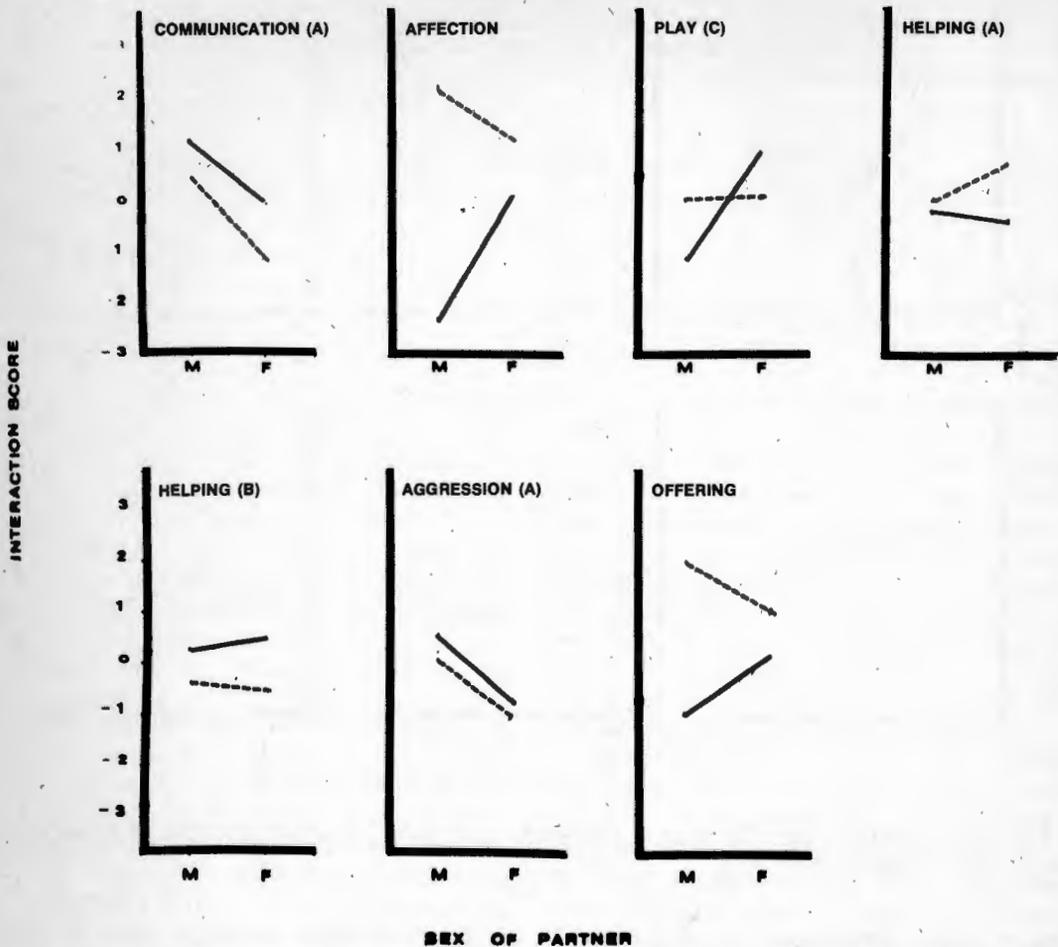


FIGURE 2. Interaction patterns for seven types of behavior (factors) in terms of the sex of the partner and the sex of the subject of observation. The solid line represents males; the broken line, females.

cial behavior. In particular, both sex and intelligence, which were previously found to be independent of amount of social behavior, predicted the content of interpersonal behavior.

Our earlier analyses indicated that the present settings differed considerably in amount of social behavior (Romer & Berkson, 1980a, 1980b). The present analysis of behavior category rates showed, however, that types of behavior were quite stable across settings, with differences occurring in isolated categories. It appears, therefore, that the settings we have studied differ more in amount of social behavior than in the types of behavior that could occur. The analysis of behavior in intense dyadic relationships indicated considerable

variability across settings. As a result, one might expect even greater prediction due to settings. Nevertheless, the major predictors of relationship profiles appeared to be the characteristics of partners. This result is consistent with our earlier findings that peer characteristics are an important correlate of setting differences in social behavior. When these peer characteristics are included in the prediction equation, the prediction for settings per se becomes less important.

It was noteworthy that as many as 14 patterns of interpersonal behavior were observed in social relationships. These patterns spanned a wide range of content, suggesting that there could be many types of relationships. Although social relationships

were most likely to involve some form of conversation, affection and inactive communication were also common. It was interesting that only the frequency of affection and sex strongly predicted the intensity of social relationships. Even though these categories only accounted for an average of 6.5 percent of behavior in relationships, their presence was indicative of attachment.

That so many independent factors were needed to describe the interrelations between types of behavior is testimony to the complexity of social behavior. One might expect, for example, that a general factor would emerge, with affection and other forms of prosocial behavior describing one pole and aggression and other forms of anti-social behavior describing the other pole. Since so many of these behavior categories were actually independent of each other, it appears that such general behavioral tendencies are far less evident than one might expect. Although it is tempting to attribute this lack of behavioral cohesion to the present subject population, the same pattern has also been observed in "normal" populations (Shweder, 1975).

As expected, more-intelligent clients were more actively verbal; however, in their intense social relationships, they engaged in only slightly more active conversation than did less-intelligent clients, and low-IQ clients were most active of all with fellow low-IQ clients. These findings indicate that although more-intelligent clients are generally more verbal, they are not necessarily so in their intense social relationships. Furthermore, there was no evidence that more-intelligent clients engaged in more behaviorally varied relationships. The spread and variety of dyadic behavior categories were unsystematically related to all personal characteristics. These conclusions are limited, of course, to the behavior categories and sampling we employed. More sensitive behavioral measurement may yet uncover differences related to intelligence.

One behavioral dimension that distinguished the IQ groups was annoyance and aggression. Low-IQ clients tended to engage in more of these types of behavior than

did other groups. One might argue that this finding reflects a lack of attachment in the relationships that low-IQ clients had. This interpretation is not necessarily correct, however, since the relationships of low-IQ clients were no less intense than those of other clients. Furthermore, their relationships may simply have more physical aggression than those of higher IQ clients, who may have used more subtle (i.e., verbal) but no less aggressive means of expression.

Although we can only conjecture, the findings regarding intelligence differences suggest that the greater sociability attributed to more-intelligent clients by staff members may result from their greater display of verbal behavior and their lower inclination to engage in aggression. Verbal communication is the typical form of interaction for normal adults, and aggression, of course, is associated with hostility. More research is clearly needed to determine the meaning of these behavioral differences in social relationships across levels of intelligence.

As noted in the introduction, medium-IQ clients seem to have the most intense relationships with clients who differ in intelligence (Romer & Berkson, 1980b). There was no simple behavioral pattern in the present results to suggest why this would happen. Medium-IQ clients tended to receive affection from less-intelligent peers but were not more actively affectionate with peers who differed in intelligence. Medium-IQ clients also had more inactive relationships with lower IQ partners and engaged in helping relationships with lower IQ clients in some settings. It is not clear, however, why their behavior patterns would be appealing to other clients who differed in intelligence. Future researchers should determine why medium-IQ clients have more intense relationships with others who differ in intelligence.

The predominant predictor of behavior in intense relationships was a statistical interaction between the characteristics of the partners in the relationships. For some kinds of behavior, however, this interaction also depended upon the setting. These findings are consistent with research on

more normal populations (Raush, 1965, 1977) and suggest that people over a wide range of intelligence are sensitive to the characteristics of others and the social setting in the social relationships they have. The results are also consistent with Landesman-Dwyer et al.'s (1979) conclusion that with the exception of profoundly retarded people, individuals at all levels of retardation modify their social behavior in the presence of others. In total, the results reinforce our earlier conclusion that peer-group composition variables are of critical importance for understanding and promoting social integration in community settings for mentally disabled persons.

D. R.

Department of Psychology

Box 4348

University of Illinois at Chicago Circle
Chicago, IL 60680

Manuscript submitted 6/18/80.

References

- Barker, R. G. *Ecological psychology: Concepts and methods for studying the environment of human behavior*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968.
- Berkson, G., & Romer, D. Social ecology of supervised communal facilities for mentally disabled adults: I. Introduction. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 1980, 85, 219-228.
- Endler, N. S., & Magnusson, D. *Interactional psychology and personality*. Washington, DC: Hemisphere, 1976.
- Landesman-Dwyer, S., Berkson, G., & Romer, D. Affiliation and friendship of mentally retarded adults in group homes. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 1979, 83, 571-580.
- Mischel, W. Toward a cognitive social learning reconceptualization of personality. *Psychological Review*, 1973, 80, 252-283.
- Mischel, W. The interaction of person and situation. In D. Magnusson & N. S. Endler (Eds.), *Personality at the crossroads: Current issues in interactional psychology*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 1977.
- Moos, R. H. Situational analysis of a therapeutic community milieu. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 1968, 73, 49-61.
- Raush, H. L. Interaction sequences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1965, 2, 487-499.
- Raush, H. L. Paradox levels and junctures in person and situation systems. In D. Magnusson & N. S. Endler (Eds.), *Personality at the crossroads: Current issues in interactional psychology*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 1977.
- Romer, D., & Berkson, G. Social ecology of supervised communal facilities for mentally disabled adults: II. Predictors of affiliation. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 1980, 85, 229-242. (a)
- Romer, D., & Berkson, G. Social ecology of supervised communal facilities for mentally disabled adults: III. Predictors of social choice. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 1980, 85, 243-252. (b)
- Shweder, R. A. How relevant is an individual differences theory of personality. *Journal of Personality*, 1975, 43, 455-484.
- Whiting, B. B., & Whiting, M. W. M. *Children of six cultures: A psychocultural analysis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975.
- Wilkinson, L. REGM: A multivariate general linear hypothesis program. *Journal of the American Statistician*, 1980, 34, 183.