

The Relative Importance of Communication Competence, Communication Satisfaction
and Commercial Friendship in Hair stylist-Client Consultation Communication:
A Coorientational Approach

By

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A Thesis Submitted in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science in Communication
Corporate Communication

At

The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

May 2016

Graduate Studies

The members of the Committee approve the thesis of

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Acknowledgements

Andy Schecher: My partner for life, my biggest cheerleader, and my best friend.

Grad school and this thesis would not have been possible without your endless support.

Your belief in me has powered me through the last two crazy years. I am so thankful for your patience with my long days and late nights at class or writing/reading/grading. You have been an amazing partner the nearly 6 years, especially the last two years. Without your unwavering support, my grad school experience would not have been possible. I love you.

Dad: Soccer, volleyball, track, beauty school, UWGB, UWW and more...Your continued support through my ten-year school journey was exactly what I needed to be able to accomplish my many goals. Whether I was living at home with you, or just a phone call/short drive away, I knew your support and love for me never waivered. I've always wanted to make you proud by finishing my undergraduate and now graduate degree. I am going to miss you so much in Colorado, but I know we will remain extremely close and plan many trips to see each other as often as possible! Thank you for being the best Dad and friend I could ever ask for.

Mom: You always said that our paths are only straight in hindsight...this couldn't be truer of my journey as my path has never been very straight going forwards. You are the most positive person and that was exactly what I needed throughout the last two years, and in life overall. Thank you for raising me to be such a strong and independent woman, without these characteristics, I wouldn't have been so prosperous. I love how close we are, even when many miles separate us. Thank you for being so supportive in all of my life and school adventures. Whatever it was, you never hesitated to support anything I was up to. I can always feel your love and positive energy, even from the mountains. Thank you, you are everything to me.

Grandpa: Although he is no longer with us, my Grandpa was one of my biggest inspirations to continue my education. As a teacher, principal, and superintendent, his passion for education and hard work always kept me going. My connection to Colorado began when he spent time completing his PhD at the University of Colorado-Boulder. Now, Andy and I will head that way to start a new adventure. My undergraduate degree was quite a journey to complete and he was able to see me graduate from UWGB. I'm so happy that he was able to see me begin my graduate program at UWW in 2014. Thankfully, he was able to come see Whitewater and my office before he passed away.

He was so proud of my accomplishments and I will continue to make him proud in everything I do. Grandpa, this is all for you.

Dr. Kate Ksobiech: Thank you for being extremely available and willing to help me be successful in all that I do. You've inspired me to be a better student, writer, and person. I appreciate your enthusiasm to share your experience and expertise in research. Our immediate connection has made this process much more bearable. You help to make the seemingly impossible (this thesis), possible. Thanks for the many reminders that we need to make time to laugh and have fun during the stressful times. I'm thankful that we were able to build a friendship that I know will continue into the future. I would not have survived this process without your endless calming and supportive nature. You're the best, KK!

Dr. S-A Welch: From undergraduate classes, to graduate classes, I'm thankful for your influence on my educational experience. Thank you for your guidance in school and life. Our many talks always helped bring me back to reality when times were tough. I truly appreciate the support you provided. Your patience to stick with me on this project is greatly appreciated.

Dr. Jonathan Wickert: I knew our UWGB connection was a good sign when I got to know you as a teacher. Thank you for motivating me to my best in your class. You pushed me outside of my comfort zone and that has paid off and will continue to in future endeavors. You have been an important part of my graduate school experience. Thank you for your commitment to my thesis and everything you have done to help me.

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The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 2016
Under the Supervision of Dr. Kate Ksobiech

Abstract

The beauty industry's primary educational focus is on technical skills, safety and sanitation laws required to pass state licensure board exams, with minimal focus on communication skills (Braxton, 2001). Concerns arise as hair stylists enter the beauty industry with less than adequate knowledge regarding communication in the salon. As a result, communication challenges affect not only the hair stylists' ability to provide adequate services, but also the clients' experiences as well. The purpose of this study is to provide insight into an understudied area of the communication dyad existing between hair stylists and clients. Coorientation approach provides a framework to examine the relationships between two groups, hair stylists and clients, in their communication during hair appointment consultations. Support was found for two of three agreement hypotheses, concluding that, false consensuses, or inaccurate perceptions, were found for communication competence and commercial friendship, but not for communication satisfaction. Therefore, no alignment was found for the individual answers of the hair stylists and clients, respectively. Support was found for two of three accuracy hypotheses, concluding that, hair stylists overestimate the importance of communication competence and commercial friendship as compared to the clients' actual answers. Results shed light on the disagreement and inaccuracies between hair stylists and clients during consultation communication. Changes in cosmetology education, as well as continuing education may be necessary in order to address this problem.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The United States' salon and spa industry is thriving, contributing approximately \$2.5 billion to the U.S. economy (IBIS World, 2016). Approximately one million beauty industry establishments make up the industry, with hair stylists or cosmetologists in the United States estimated to total 350,000 in 2015 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Women, the typical clientele, are the largest consumers of beauty industry services. Female clients are ideal because of their roles as primary decision makers regarding family spending. For women, from the ages 35-44, beauty investments are nearly \$66.00 higher per purchase than the average consumer (IBIS World, 2016). Nationally, beauty industry employment is expected to increase by 10% from 2014-2024, a faster growth rate than other occupations in general (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015; U.S. Census Bureau; 2008; 2009). Statewide, Wisconsin has approximately 10,000 employed cosmetologists.

Beauty industry professionals strive to remain competitive by emphasizing education of the latest trends, use of technology, wedding services, “how-to”

demonstrations, men's services, or environmentally friendly products and services (IBIS World, 2016). Although this may seem like a comprehensive list of potential continuing education topics, the most crucial component of continuing education in the field of cosmetology is missing: client communication.

Communication is the foundation through which hair stylists can provide personalized recommendations for clients regarding desired style/color, hair concerns, and product suggestions (Gimlin, 1996; Ford, 2003). Without effective communication skills, even the best technical beauty skills may be useless. Given the growing beauty industry, the role of communication within the cosmetology education system must be examined so that cosmetologists can be adequately prepared for salon careers and provide the most ideal experiences for their clients.

Statement of the Problem

Beauty industry education currently provides programs that have only limited focus on public speaking and appropriate etiquette. The majority of training involves technical skills and learning the laws and sanitation regulations necessary to pass the state regulatory board exam (Braxton, 2001). As a result, the beauty industry is experiencing a deficiency regarding formal communication training in cosmetology school as well as

post-graduation, continuing education. Communication challenges in the salon occur due in part to a lack of formal training regarding consultation communication. The U.S. Department of Labor suggests hair stylists need their professional and continuing education to include: creativity, customer service, listening, physical stamina, tidiness, and time management (U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2017). Communication skills may be implied in the listening and customer service qualities, but should likely stand-alone and be highlighted as a desired quality (Shahbazi & Akareen, 2013). Braxton (2001) emphasizes the importance of communication in that “attitude, work ethic, communication, and people skills, combined with technical skills, are crucial for today’s [cosmetology] professionals” (p. 5).

Given the number of clients served by each hair stylist in a salon is vital to the success of both the individual stylist and the salon itself, the role which consultation communication plays in relationship building and customer loyalty becomes even more paramount. The lack of communication education may lead hair stylists to misunderstand their clients’ wishes or an inability on the part of the stylist to communicate their ideas to the client effectively. In either case, the stylist/client

relationship may be damaged and perhaps result in loss of business for both stylist and salon.

The present study explores consultation communication between hair stylist and client from the perspectives of each group. Its findings will hopefully help hair stylists to better understand how to communicate with their clients and, in the end, serve to build stronger relationships through effective communication, thereby building a faithful clientele, which is essential to a hairdresser's career and a salon's financial success (Gimlin, 1996).

Purpose of Study

This study sought to offer organizational communication scholars the opportunity to gain insight into the professional communication dyad existing between a hair stylist and a client, a dyad, which occurs thousands of times on a daily basis across the nation. Specifically, using the coorientation approach, the study was aimed at examining the degree to which stylists and clients agree regarding the relative importance of various aspects of consultation communication, which occurs during a client's salon appointment. Further, the researcher sought to examine how well, if at all, stylists could predict the relative importance of these factors to their clients. Results from this study produced

suggestions for changes in the professional, communication-related training of hair stylists as well as improved the understanding of hair stylists regarding what is and is not of relative importance to their clients during a salon visit. Coorientation analysis was used in to compare the perceptions of the hairstylists, their predictions regarding the clients' perceptions, and the clients' own perceptions regarding the relative importance of a series of consultation communication variables.

Significance of Study

The quality of consultation communication between hair stylist and client is an area of the client's hair salon experience, which deserves attention. Given the increasingly competitive environment of the beauty industry, hair stylists must be mindful of the preferences of their clients, current and future. If hair stylists do not constantly analyze their client base and act upon those analyses, hair stylists may be in danger of losing loyal clients or missing out on opportunities to gain new clients. For hair stylists, successful consultation communication may well have significant implications, both professionally in terms of reputation and financially in terms of services sought. For clients, successful consultation communication with their hair stylists may well improve the quality of the hair salon visit, increasing customer satisfaction and thereby developing

a positive relationship between stylist and client, making subsequent visits likely to be more rewarding.

Literature Review

This literature review summarizes studies, which have focused on the factors, deemed to be important for hair stylists and clients with respect to consultation communication during the salon visit. Additionally, the literature review covers research related to understanding the process of and resulting gaps in communication effectiveness throughout the hair appointment. The literature review has been divided into the following sections: (1) overview of the beauty industry; (2) education and training background (3) the coorientation approach; (4) theoretical framework; and (5) the present study's hypotheses.

Overview of the Beauty Industry

The service industry, focused on beauty salons, is unique from other commercial industries because, rather, than selling tangible products, the service industry provides intangible, diverse, indivisible, and perishable products. Customers cannot see or touch the product before investing in a haircut or chemical service (Lee, Chen, Yu & Tsui,

2012). Hair salons act as a marketplace that offers hairstyling, cutting and coloring as a service and also provides the opportunity to purchase professional products. Hair stylists rely on clients' desire for change and without that desire; hair stylists would not have a career. Clients rely on stylists for information and ideas related to hair and fashion trends. Stylists also provide information to their clients regarding the health of their hair as well as suggestions for products they might need or hairstyle changes. The desirability and feasibility of any given hairstyle must align with items such as hair type/texture, face shape, client lifestyle, and budget (Soulliere, 1997).

Education and Training Background

Hair stylists have varied academic backgrounds. One schooling option is a technical college offering a two-year associate degree; another option is a private school, which typically offers a one-year program. A cosmetology student will typically pay an average tuition of \$14,000 for a cosmetology school in the U.S. (Wisconsin Department of Professional Services, 2015). Both technical school and private school options require students to complete the specified state required hours in "on the [salon] floor experience" to gain licensure. Each state regulates the required hours for licensure, with the average required clock hours for cosmetology students being approximately 1,500.

Wisconsin requires 1,800 hours in order to gain licensure, one of the highest hour requirements in the country (Gimlin, 1996; Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau; 2008; 2009; Wisconsin Department of Professional Services, 2015). A less popular form of schooling is through an apprenticeship program. For this schooling option, most of the apprenticeship training occurs in a salon and the theory classes are completed at a local cosmetology school. Students must pass both a written and practical state board exam. Regardless of which cosmetology school option a future hair stylist chooses, the student will likely receive a similar curriculum focused on technical necessities in order to gain state licensure.

Hair stylists must obtain the appropriate license in order to legally work in a salon. Qualifications for a license vary by state, but generally, an individual must have fulfilled the following criteria: (1) reached a minimum age of 16, (2) received a high school diploma or equivalent: (3) graduated from a state-licensed barber or cosmetology school. After graduating from a state-approved training program, students take a state licensing exam that includes a written test and, in some cases, a practical test of styling skills or an oral exam. A fee usually is required to apply for a license, and periodic renewals may be necessary.

Throughout cosmetology programs, the curriculum is heavily focused on foundational knowledge and skills to pass state examination boards. Although this portion of the curriculum is extremely important and necessary, an alarming gap exists between the current communication-based content and the communication skills desirable in cosmetology graduates. The communication skills needed to conduct and effective consultations and appointments are rarely a priority in schools or in other training capacities (Braxton, 2001).

Adams, Jackson and Ekelund (2002) contend that cosmetology education admission requirements are less rigorous than traditional higher education. The purpose of cosmetology licensing is to “define the tasks and functions of the occupation, prescribe that these tasks and functions may not be legally performed except by those upon whom the state has conferred a license, and describe the procedures for the acquisition of a license” (p. 262). Job descriptions for cosmetologists are widely accepted and understood; yet, a wide variety exists regarding the requirements for each state in the country.

A payroll employee is a hair stylist who works for the salon, most often on an hourly wage with opportunities for commission. On the other hand, non-employee salons

consist of hair stylists who pay rent for their chair or studio and essentially are small business owners. United States salons with payroll employees total 88,876 as opposed to non-employer salon establishments totaling 824,119 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau; 2008; 2009). Earning potential is much greater for individuals who are non-employees as they have more control of services and prices offered. Hair stylists who work as employees of a salon often benefit from training that is provided either by the salon or a third party organization. However, if a hair stylist owns his or her own business, training is often no longer offered or provided. A non-employee hair stylist must seek out and pay for any desired training. Often times, chair renters (non-employees), who share a workspace, will collaborate and bring training to the salon. Otherwise, any technical or artistic training would likely be offered at a local, professional beauty supply store. Classes of this nature are optional, and at the expense of the stylist.

Regular training, or continuing education, was suggested (Lee, Chen, Yu, Tsui, 2012) to upgrade hair stylist skills and increase the number of services they have the ability to offer. Additional training regarding people/communication skills has also been recommended (e.g. professionalism, courtesy, and confidentiality regarding customers'

personal information gathered during appointments). Training, especially during the early stages of assimilation, has been shown to be beneficial in improving the newcomer's transition into a new organization (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Miller, 1987). Recent cosmetology school graduates can benefit from early intervention as they transition into their new role. Organizations can benefit from the use of structure during the integration of newcomers. Training related to both social job norms may well influence how well newcomers ultimately transition to a new salon/situation (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Jablin, 1987; and Kramer, 2010). Providing training that includes activities such as rehearsing communication skills and identifying appropriate strategies within the salon context may well allow new stylists to perform more professionally when it comes time to experience a paying client consultation (Benn, Jones, & Rosenfield, 2008). According to Arthur, Bennett, Edens & Bell (2003), skills and professionally relevant behaviors will not translate to an actual job situation if individuals (in this case, hair stylists) are not given the opportunity to perform those skills and behaviors during training. In order to measure the previously mentioned variables, the coorientation approach was chosen as the present study's methodology.

The Coorientation Approach

This study utilized the coorientation approach to reveal the differences and/or similarities of the relative importance of specific communication-based items between hair stylists and clients. The co-orientation approach provides a framework to investigate the relationships between the two groups, hair stylists and clients, in their consultation communication. Research using the coorientation approach has typically focused on an organization-public relationship (Kelly, Thompson & Waters, 2006); the present research is focused on the dyadic communicative experienced between the hair stylist/salon (organization) and the client (public) in the typical salon situation.

The foundational research on the coorientation approach began with McLeod & Chaffee (1973) as a “framework for identifying the relationships between groups in a communication process” (p. 4). In this approach, mental models must be oriented properly for effective communication to occur. In addition to a focus on the communicative messages between groups, this approach considers the problem solving aspect of communication (McLeod & Chaffee, 1973). In order for co-orientation measures to be valid, all members of the group must easily and similarly understand a group’s existence and its issues. Therefore, in this study, survey questionnaires were

tailored towards beauty industry professionals, while remaining easily understood from the clients' perspective.

The adaptive evolution of coorientation occurred as follows: (1) as a psychological measure in mass communication (Newcomb, 1973); (2) as a means to understand the relationship between corporations and publics (Broom & Dozier, 1990); and (3) as a tool to study factors important to non-profit organizations and their publics. The current study utilized Broom and Dozier's (1990) coorientation model to understand both sides of the dyadic relationship between hair stylists and their clients across a series of communication factors. Foundational coorientational research established agreement, accuracy and congruency as three such orientations. However, subsequent research (Steeves, 1984) has limited the orientations to only agreement and accuracy, arguing the definition of agreement overlapped with congruency, making the latter somewhat unclear and ambiguous. The present study included only agreement and accuracy as orientations in developing its hypotheses.

Agreement is defined as "the extent to which the organization and the public hold similar views on the issue" (Steeves, 1984, p. 185). For this study, the organization is represented by hair stylist perceptions and the public is represented by client perceptions.

Accuracy is defined as “the extent to which one side’s estimate of the other side’s views concurs with the actual views of the other side” (Steeves, 1984). In this study, coorientation analysis was used in to compare the perceptions of the hair stylists, their predictions regarding the clients’ perceptions, and the clients’ own perceptions regarding the relative importance of a series of consultation communication variables.

Results from a coorientation analysis will produce one of four coorientation states: “(a) consensus, (b) dissensus, (c) false consensus, and (d) false conflict” (Broom & Dozier, 1990, p. 612). If both the organization and public have the same perceptions [agreement] and each group understands that agreement occurred, there is consensus. The opposite of consensus is dissensus, or when the organization and public do not agree and recognize this difference. When inaccurate perceptions occur, this results in a false consensus (Broom & Dozier, 1990; Dozier & Ehling, 1992). For example, the organization may perceive the public agrees on an issue, yet the public is not in agreement. Additionally, a false conflict may occur when one of the parties mistakenly perceives a disagreement when, in fact, there is none (Kelly, Thompson & Waters, 2006).

Regardless of which coorientation state exists between the two groups, the universal goal is to find agreement with one another (Dozier & Ehling, 1992).

Communicative experiences rely on agreement between all parties involved. Agreement allows individuals to recognize, identify, and evaluate the shared situation. Without agreement, individuals will likely find difficulty in understanding each other's perceptions of an issue. "The fundamental relationship in a communication interaction is that of agreement" (Brønn & Brønn, 2003, p. 13).

Theoretical Framework

Hair stylist-Client Consultation Communication. Consultation communication formally occurs within the first 5-15 minutes of an appointment. However, the consultation informally lasts throughout the entire appointment. Clients use intersubjective language, symbolic actions and service interactions to make sense of the experience (Edvarson, Tronvoll, & Gruber, 2011). During the appointment, hair stylists must demonstrate special knowledge of styling methods consistent with the client's hair type. Research (Gimlin, 1996) suggests stylists must convince their clients to accept hairstyling advice. The hair stylist must convince the client that he or she knows best, or at least more than the client does about what might look best. Through communication, the hair stylist bridges the gap between clients pursuing beauty and an appropriate definition of what beauty might be for that particular client. Given that hair stylists must

build and maintain a client base, customer satisfaction directly impacts the hair stylist's compensation, and the lack of such satisfaction poses significant problems for hair stylists. Research indicates the existence and success of a business hinges on relationship building with customers (Koermer, 2005).

Prior to formal consultation, no services should be initiated. Open-ended questions such as --“If you could change anything about your hair, what would you change?” or, “What do you have in mind?”—are often effective. Determining what a client does not want is also an effective place to start, as it will quickly eliminate possible options. The hair stylist typically is hands-on in noticing the texture, density, length, prior hair services, face shape and possible areas of opportunity. Soulliere (1997) explained that questions are essential tools to uncover what the client is trying to say. Clients are often unable to explain what they want. Frequently they may not say what they mean and questions can help to better understand what they are trying to say. Stylists must not assume the client knows what he or she wants. Questions can both enhance or inhibit the appointment experience. They are an effective way to acquire information from the customer/student/client. However, questions may make collaboration challenging if questions are overused. A few questions designed to elicit quality information may well

result in better consultations as compared to many unfocused questions (Benn, Jones, & Rosenfield, 2008).

First impressions between a client and a hair stylist at the beginning of an appointment are an important consideration. For the hair stylist, personal grooming and appropriate dress are crucial for presenting a professional and fashion-conscious image. Additionally, a professional handshake and introductions by name should occur to exude confidence and expertise. Research indicates first impressions play an important role in establishing a relationship between hair stylist and client; for example, hair stylists can make clients feel welcome and comfortable by hanging up a client's coat or offering a beverage (Soulliere, 1997).

Hair appointment consultations often focus on the desired look of a client. The conversation may include the client desiring an entirely new look, maintaining the current look or a client who is unhappy with a previous style. Research (Gimlin, 1996) suggests clients spend hours and money in the salon without successfully communicating with their hair stylist. As Gimlin (1996) wrote, "You don't want clients sitting in the chair feeling like you are doing what you want. You have to really listen" (Gimlin, 1996, p. 517). If there is disagreement and the hair stylist believes the request is less than ideal

based on a variety of factors (i.e., hair type/texture, face shape, and client lifestyle) the hair stylist may need to cut it according to what the client requests regardless (Gimlin, 1996).

Verbal communication is important, but nonverbal communication may also influence the success of a consultation. A client may well reveal valuable information regarding their wants and needs nonverbally. Hair stylists must be acutely aware of this while interacting with clients. Ford (2003) asserted consultations must involve perceiving nonverbal cues and feedback so clients can fully share their ideas, feelings and past experiences with the hair stylist. For example, if the client reports hair problems that need attention, the hair stylist should provide explanations, suggestions and/or solutions. Nonverbal communication from the hair stylist may include nods and continued contact with the hair as the client discusses his/her needs. Information sharing occurs when the professional spends sufficient time answering a customer's question. Consultation communication may require additional, personalized explanations of some technical concepts in a way that customers can easily grasp.

Utilizing a broad range of communication practices is important for hair stylists. Personalizing these communications is likely to have a positive effect on their clients,

regardless of the clients' gender or age. Personalized communication tailors the service to the unique needs of the individual customer. Research (Ford, 2003) suggests personalized communication includes customer orientation, interaction involvement, information sharing and social support. Customer perceptions of communication performance by the service provider can influence customer satisfaction. Customers have higher expectations for professional service providers such as hair stylists as compared to nonprofessional service providers such as fast food employees. However, contrary to previous studies in this area (Oliver, 1977, 1980; Dabholkar, Shepherd, & Thorpe, 2000; Halstead, Hartman, & Schmidt, 1994; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1994; Patterson, 1993; Spreng & Olshavsky, 1993; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Ford, 2003), customer expectations were not as influential in predicting customer satisfaction and loyalty as compared to the actual communication performance of a service worker. These findings are encouraging because they suggest training may well help prepare stylists to exceed expectations and thus maximize customer satisfaction.

Communicator competence. Communicator competence is explained as the ability to choose a communication behavior that is both appropriate and effective for a given situation (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). To be judged as competent, one must be

able to identify the skills necessary for effective communication in a particular situation, have those skills, and be properly motivated to use those skills. Clearly, for the hair stylist, communicator competence is an important variable and will likely influence the quality of consultation communication. Beyond playing a role in the personal growth of the hair stylist, competence impacts the quality of the dyadic communication interchange between hair stylist and client.

To be competent, a communicator must be able to: (1) recognize what communication practice is appropriate (knowledge); (2) have the ability to perform that practice (skill); and (3) want to communicate in an effective and appropriate manner (motivation) (Spitzberg & Cupach 1984). Research has focused on how a particular dyad creates competency in a given situation rather than whether individuals themselves are generally deemed to be competent.

Competence must be understood as both situational and relational. In this study, the focus is on the relative competence of both stylist and client during the hair appointment consultation. Further, competence is impacted by the relationship of the communication dyad (Adler & Rodman, 2010). How long have those in the dyad known one another? Does one person have more knowledge or expertise in the situation? Is one

person more assertive than the other? Whether competence is situational or relational, the level of communicator competence is also important to explore.

Levels of communicator competence have been shown to affect consultation informational and relational goals. Communication is a learned skill; therefore, an individual's competence is fluid. At one point in time, communicators may be improving their skills in this regard; at another time, they may have turned their attention away from improving and simply "plateaued" in their competency (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984).

Perhaps the latter situation can be easily fixed by reminding the hair stylist of the importance of continuing to develop communication skills; perhaps an emphasis on such skills in a continuing education environment can serve to motivate the hair stylist in this regard once again.

Communication satisfaction. Clampitt and Downs (1987) have revealed communication satisfaction as an important variable in understanding and analyzing organizational communication. Findings from their meta-analysis of communication satisfaction (1987) found communication satisfaction to be a complex construct rather than one-dimensional in nature. Communication satisfaction is best measured on a continuum, rather than dichotomously as either satisfied or dissatisfied (Gray & Laidlaw,

2004). Typically used to evaluate employees in relation to job satisfaction, research shows how employees often build more effective work relationships via communication satisfaction. These results likely translate to hair stylists developing commercial friendships with their clients. Just as importantly, dissatisfaction with communication exchanges can be a strong, negative influence on the relationship between individuals and organizations in particular situations (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004). Previous research suggests satisfaction with the communication exchanges between hair stylist and client directly benefits both individuals in the dyad (Downs & Hazen, 1977; Gray & Laidlaw, 2004).

Originally, the construct of communication satisfaction included eight (8) dimensions: general organizational perspective, organizational integration, personal feedback, relationship with supervisor, horizontal-informal communication, relationship with subordinates, media quality, and communication climate. These eight dimensions encompass the basic functions of an organization and assessing satisfaction with each dimension would appropriately be seen as an assessment of organizational communication satisfaction (Downs & Hazen, 1977; Gray & Laidlaw, 2004). Of these original dimensions, personal feedback and communication climate were deemed most important and most applicable to the present study. The Communication Satisfaction

Questionnaire (CSQ) has been a useful tool for organizations to address issues of communication satisfaction (Downs & Hazen, 1977). Typically used to measure employee satisfaction (Clampitt & Downs, 1987; Gray & Laidlaw, 2004), the present study used items from the CSQ to measure the relative importance of communication satisfaction to both hair stylists and clients.

Strengths, as well as areas of improvement, can be revealed via use of the CSQ, an effective way to compare individuals, and group responses. While there would seem to be few differences in communication satisfaction due to demographics, in manager-non-manager relationships, managers typically report higher communication satisfaction when compared to those who are not in managerial roles. Lastly, the relationship between communication satisfaction and positive, appropriate organizational outcomes is clear: the greater the level of communication satisfaction, the more likely the organization will achieve its goals (Downs & Hazen, 1977).

A hair stylist relies on his or her clients' communication satisfaction for word of mouth (WOM) referrals. With hair services being highly customized, the beauty professional's expertise and judgment play an essential role in meeting or exceeding customer expectations. WOM referrals, defined by Harrison-Walker (2001) as "informal,

person-to-person communication between a perceived noncommercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, an organization or a service” (p. 70) are central to the long-term success of hair stylists. Given the intangible and high-risk nature of cosmetology services, potential clients often seek out WOM recommendations in order to minimize their uncertainty regarding a particular stylist or salon. Service providers, such as hair stylists, rely on these information channels for positive publicity regarding their services. (Harrison-Walker, 2001).

Commercial friendship. Gimlin (1996) asserts there is often a level of trust between hair stylist and client, much as there is one between friends, leading clients to confide their happiness or frustration with aspects of their care or even life in general during a hair salon appointment. Commercial friendship is the name often given to this unique and imbalanced relationship. Hair stylists must take responsibility for clients’ wellbeing and appearance. Oftentimes, clients do not know how to communicate what style they are looking for and need the hair stylist to take complete control of the situation. This deeper connection, similar to the lines of friendship, can open communication channels and leads to discussing personal client information. Unlike traditional friendships, which ideally have a two-way flow of communication, hair stylist-

client relationships are typically dominated by a one-way flow of communication from client to hair stylist. The appointment and relationship should be primarily focused on the client (Gimlin, 1996).

Price and Arnould (1999) provided important foundational research regarding commercial friendship. As explained by Price and Arnould (1999), “both service providers and clients share a general sense of the content and behaviors characteristic of commercial friendships. Participants agree that commercial friendships, similar to other friendships, involve affection, intimacy, social support, loyalty, and reciprocal gift giving” (p. 50). However, there were also different perceptions of commercial friendship between hair stylists and clients. Loyalty was a moderating factor in hair stylists’ perception of client satisfaction. Clients were more likely to consider the relationship a commercial friendship as compared to the hair stylists’ response regarding the relationship (Price & Arnould, 1999). The present study advances these findings by not only measuring each group’s perceptions but also exploring the imbalance of perceived commercial friendship through hair stylist predictions of the importance of these relationships to clients.

Results from Price and Arnould's (1999) study revealed a relationship between commercial friendships and client satisfaction, loyalty and positive word of mouth referrals. Strong and positive correlations were present for the following variables: trust and friendship; how long a client has been patronizing a particular stylist/salon; how much they believe they have in common with the service provider; affection and reciprocal self-disclosure; commercial friendship and satisfaction, and loyalty and positive word of mouth referrals (Price & Arnould, 1999). In summary, commercial friendships naturally occur in a service industry and may be essential for the success of a service provider such as a hair stylist or salon.

Clients typically have greater tolerance for a service failure when they have a solid, working relationship with the service provider (Watson, 2012). However, factors such as degree, regularity and type of service failure, as well as the how the hair stylist attempts to rectify the situation will affect clients' perceptions of and future appointments with a service provider. Service failures often flow from the client's perception of a situation and are impossible to avoid. Understanding what leads to these service failures can help the stylist to better handle the situation and continue to develop trust, loyalty and goodwill despite the perceived failure. Research (Watson, 2012) suggests personal

services, which are grounded in interpersonal interaction, can more easily respond to customer perceptions of failure as compared to non-personal services. Customer tolerance for a first-time service failure may be higher for personal services than for non-personal services. However, when a second service failure occurs, the understanding dramatically decreases (Watson, 2012).

Gaining the trust of the client is important for the hair stylist. They must prove they have the knowledge and experience necessary to provide the best hairstyle for the needs and lifestyle of the client. It is also essential for the hair stylist to explain the plan for the appointment, including the financial and time commitment required to maintain the desired style. Trust develops from the special skills of hair stylists as well as personal information shared between client and stylist during an appointment. When receiving a haircut or coloring services, there is inevitably some risk. Regardless of the hair stylist's experience (from student to long-term professional), less than desirable results can occur when dealing with chemicals. Trust is crucial as clients are knowingly and willingly accepting the chance that results may not be ideal. It is the responsibility of the hair stylist to provide the client with reassurance regarding their ability to correct mistakes (Gimlin, 1996; Soulliere, 1997).

Hypotheses

The study reported herein sought to test the relative perceived importance of communicator competence, communication satisfaction, and commercial friendship for two groups of respondents: hair stylists and clients. For each of the dependent variables (competence, satisfaction, and commercial friendship), the researcher utilized the concepts of agreement and accuracy drawn from the coorientation approach to explore six hypotheses. First, do the two groups (hair stylists and clients) agree on the relative importance of each of these variables in the typical salon situation? And second, to what extent, if any, are hair stylists able to accurately predict the relative importance of these variables to their clients?

Based on the results and conclusions of past literature regarding communicator competence, communication satisfaction, and commercial friendship, as well as the researcher's personal knowledge of the beauty industry, the following hypotheses were generated.

Agreement hypotheses between hair stylists and clients

H1a: Hair stylists will perceive communication competence as more personally important than the clients themselves perceive it to be.

H1a is predicted based on Spitzberg & Cupach's (1984) focus on the communicator choosing communication behavior that is not only appropriate but also effective for a situation. It is predicted that hair stylists will consider communication competence as more personally important than the clients themselves perceive it to be. Research (Braxton, 2001) states that hair stylists are likely lacking an educational background of communication skills. Therefore, this limited knowledge is predicted to result in a lack of alignment between both groups' answers. Hair stylists will likely not consider the situation or relational aspects of communication competence (Adler and Rodman, 2010). The timing of measurement of communication competence may also find hair stylists during a plateau or in process of improving their communication competence skills, which will likely influence their poorly aligned responses. Therefore, hair stylists' communication competence responses are predicted to be more personally important than the clients themselves perceive it to be.

H2a: Hair stylists will perceive communication satisfaction as more personally important than the clients themselves perceive it to be.

H2a is predicted based on Clampitt & Downs (1987) research on communication satisfaction and its importance in understanding and analyzing organization communication. Applied to the salon, communication satisfaction was adapted for this

study to explore the individual responses for hair stylists and clients. It is predicted that hair stylists would perceive communication satisfaction as more personally important than the clients themselves perceive it to be due to the research that uses communication satisfaction to build effective relationships. Hair stylist-client relationships are the foundation for a successful salon business. Research also indicates that the level of communication satisfaction between two parties can benefit both individuals involved (Downs & Hazen, 1977; Gray & Laidlaw, 2004), for example, the hair stylist and client. Hair stylists will predict a higher level of importance because of the service-based atmosphere in which the communication exists.

H3a: Hair stylists will perceive commercial friendship as more important for clients than the clients themselves perceive it to be.

H3a is predicted based on friendship research in the service industry that discusses the similarity of traditional friendship with commercial friendship. Hairstylists were predicted to perceive commercial friendship as more personally important than the clients themselves perceive it to be because of an understanding that there is a natural imbalance for commercial friendships. Hairstylists often understand that consultations and hair appointments should be focused prominently on the clients. This is unique to

commercial friendships as traditional friendships have give-and-take between both individuals. (Gimlin, 1996). Loyalty and trust are also key variables that clients seek from commercial friendships. Successful hairstylists are able to understand the imbalance of the commercial friendship leading to perceptions of greater importance than clients (Price & Arnould, 1999).

Accuracy hypotheses of hair stylists in predicting the relative importance to clients

H1b: Hair stylists will significantly overestimate the importance of communication competence for clients.

H1b is predicted based on the idea that hair stylists consider communication competence as important to consultation communication, resulting in an overestimation of the level of importance as compared to clients' actual responses. Hair stylists also were predicted to overestimate the importance of communication competence due to their concern for choosing communication behavior that is not only appropriate but also effective for a situation, specifically the consultation experience. Similarly to H1a, hair stylists' limited training on communication skills for work-related needs puts them in a position to assume the ideal situation in a salon. (Braxton, 2001). Hair stylists may consider communication competence as more important because of the pressure that hair

stylists feel for being competent during the consultation. Therefore, hair stylists are predicted to report overestimations of the importance of consultation communication.

H2b: Hair stylists will significantly overestimate the importance of communication satisfaction for clients.

H2a was predicted from the hair stylists' focus on providing a satisfying communication experience during consultation communication. Communication satisfaction was suggested as important to building relationships and therefore expands hair salon clientele. Hair stylist-client relationships are the foundation for a successful salon business. Hair stylists will overestimate the importance of communication satisfaction since hair stylists' rely on WOM referrals, which begin with communication satisfaction (Harrison-Walker, 2001). The hair stylists' overestimation will likely come from their desire to gain WOM from clients to increase their clientele. WOM referrals act as publicity for hair stylists, which will also likely cause hair stylists to overestimate the importance of this variable in consultation communication (Harrison-Walker, 2001).

H3b: Hair stylists will significantly overestimate the importance of commercial friendships for clients.

H3b is predicted based on research regarding commercial friendship. Hair stylists are predicted to significantly overestimate the importance of commercial friendships for clients. Although commercial friendship is conceivably different than traditional

friendship, hair stylists understand that imbalance and anticipate that with an overestimation of the level of importance of commercial friendship for clients. Since clients value commercial friendship disproportionately more than hair stylists, hair stylists will consider these findings in their predictions of client responses (Gimlin, 1996). WOM referrals are also impacted by commercial friendships in that WOM referrals are positively correlated with commercial friendships (Price & Arnould, 1999).

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

To address the hypotheses posed in Chapter I, the researcher surveyed both licensed hair stylists and beauty salon clients. The methodology employed for those surveys will be presented in the following sections: (1) respondents, (2) research procedure, (3) survey questionnaires, (4) measuring instruments, and (5) plan for data analysis.

Respondents

Hair stylists. While “cosmetologist” is the technical term used to describe those individuals who have the training and licensure to provide hair, skin and nail services, many cosmetologists choose to identify as hair stylists, hairdressers, hair artists, or the like. For the purposes of this study, the researcher intentionally chose to seek out professional, licensed cosmetologists (hair stylists) as respondents. Cosmetology students were omitted because the researcher wanted to gather data from individuals with professional, real-world experience.

Convenience sampling was utilized to distribute the survey questionnaires to the hair stylists; the first wave of surveys was delivered in-person to be certain the hair stylists met the professional qualifications desired by the researcher. A second wave was sent out via online distribution to professional hair stylists suggested by those who had participated in the first wave; here again, the online survey included specific criteria to define the ideal target for the study. As a final checkpoint to ensure the participant possessed the correct qualifications, the first question on the survey instrument itself addressed the type of licensed possessed by each of the survey respondents.

While all hair stylists contacted in person were located in the state of Wisconsin, the online survey questionnaires may have reached participants outside of Wisconsin. The goal was to reach individuals who are licensed cosmetology practitioners, licensed cosmetology managers, licensed cosmetology instructors, or cosmetology apprentices. Due to the nature of the participant population, all respondents were over the age of 18 and ranged from recent cosmetology graduates to tenured cosmetologists. The hair stylist participants completed a survey voluntarily without compensation. Details on the number of surveys received from licensed cosmetologists and additional demographic information will be presented in Chapter III.

Clients. Many business, service, and marketing researchers refer to clients as customers. When summarizing previous and current research in this area, the term customer has been used. However, hair stylists in the industry often refer to customers as clients or even guests to personalize the service encounter. Therefore, when discussing the present research, the term client will be used to address a hair stylist's customer base.

The requirements to be met by individuals responding to the survey as clients were less rigorous given nearly every individual has experienced being a hair salon client at one time or another. Convenience sampling was utilized in this investigation to distribute in-person surveys. The majority of responses came from within the state of Wisconsin, but as with the hair stylist sample, online responses likely had a larger reach. Respondents in the client sample were also required to be over the age of 18. Details on the number of surveys received from licensed cosmetologists and additional demographic information will be presented in Chapter III.

Research Procedure

Hair stylists. The researcher compiled a list of salons in multiple local markets. Upon arrival, the researcher explained the overall purpose of the survey to the receptionist or hair stylist who had stepped away from a client. To ensure clarity and that

the correct message was passed on to the other hair stylists at the salon, a brief explanation was attached to the survey envelope. Once the researcher secured permission for the voluntary participation of the stylists at a particular salon, she asked how many stylists worked at the salon in question and placed a sufficient number of questionnaires in an envelope left at the front desk. Due to the limited free time hair stylists have during a workday, surveys were left at the salon, to be completed at the convenience of the hair stylists during a one-week period of time. Envelopes were available so participants could seal the hard copy survey for collection by the investigator at a later time.

Alternative methods for distribution were also used to expand the pool of respondents. The first alternative method of distribution was to make announcements in a hair salon staff meeting. For larger salons, this method reached a larger group of hair stylists at one time. Additionally, online surveys were distributed through Qualtrics software. The Qualtrics hyperlink was posted via LinkedIn, Facebook, and to email addresses. Finally, cold calling and cold emailing was helpful in reaching out to salons that were not accessible geographically. For salons reached by this method, the online Qualtrics link was distributed and shared with the stylists at the salon. Informed Consent

document was completed for both the online and hard copy versions of the survey. The Hair stylist Informed Consent document is available to readers in Appendix E.

Clients. Client participants were reached via email, obtained through personal and professional connections, and social media with requests to promote and pass the survey on to others via the snowball technique. Also, the investigator visited salons with hard copies of the survey instrument, which were then distributed and collected from salon clients who agreed to participate in the study. In addition, the investigator visited beauty supply stores and sites to gain additional survey respondents. A recruitment message (Appendix D) and informed consent (Appendix F) were presented for both the online and hard copy versions of the survey. In each procedure, respondents had as much time as they wished to complete the survey instrument. However, for logistical reasons, hard copy surveys had a one-week window of completion. Upon completion, the researcher called the location to schedule and ideal time to pick up the surveys. This step served as a reminder for those who had not yet completed the survey.

Hair stylists. A four-page questionnaire was created for use in surveying the hair stylists (see Appendix A). To begin, the survey sought information regarding current licensure as well as type of current employment -- chair rental or employee status. Second, the survey covered years of experience, years of licensure, number of chairs in the salon, and number of continuing education hours attended annually. Specifics were sought regarding continuing education topics. And third, the survey asked questions about the hair stylist's work schedule, number of clients, and number of services performed.

The survey's next major sections included two matrices for each of the three dependent variables: competency, satisfaction and friendship; the first matrix asked for the hair stylists' personal perceptions of the perceived importance of each variable while the second asked them to predict how their clients would respond to the same questions. 18 items assessed communicator competence while communication satisfaction and commercial friendship were measured via 6 and 16 items respectively. All of these matrices used the same five-point scale ranging from (1) unimportant to (5) important. Details on the items utilized to measure each variable will be presented in the section on measuring instruments.

The final major section of the survey addressed hair stylist likelihood of attending training on eight topics with a ninth option to fill in “other.” A five-point scale of 1=very likely to 5=very unlikely was used to address these training topics. For data analysis, the scale was recoded so that higher scores meant a higher level of likelihood. In addition, the survey instrument requested standard demographic data such as gender identification, race/ethnicity and age.

Clients. The client questionnaire focused on their personal perceptions of the same variables; however, they were not asked to predict the views of the hair stylists. The client survey included the same commercial friendship, communication satisfaction, and communicator competence items as the hair stylist survey. All of the client coorientation matrices used the same five-point scale (1=very likely to 5=very unlikely). The final section of the survey included a question addressing the importance of training topics for a hair stylist, with the same eight items listed for the hair stylist survey with the additional ninth to fill in with an “other” option. The client survey included a follow up question addressing the client’s view on receiving services from a hair stylist who participates in continuing education. To conclude the survey gender identification,

race/ethnicity and age were addressed. The client survey questionnaire is available in Appendix B.

Measuring Instruments

Communication Competence. All 18 items from Spitzberg & Cupach's (1984) Interpersonal Communication Competence Self-Assessment were used for both the Hair stylist and Client surveys. This assessment assisted the researcher in gathering hair stylists' personal perceptions of the importance of communication competence as well as their predictions for the importance of the same items for their clients. To accommodate both hair stylists and clients, minor adjustments were made in the wording. minor adjustments were made in the wording. In order to personalize the questions to the hair stylist sample, items such as "I want to adapt my communication behavior to meet others' expectations" was adapted to state, "I want to adapt my communication behavior to meet clients' expectations." Therefore, for the items that included the word "others", the wording was changed to clients. Another modification, the Likert scale on the original measurement was adjusted from '1=strongly disagree-5=strongly agree' to "1= - 5=important".

Communication Competence Scores were calculated by adding the total responses scores from the 18 Communication Competence items resulting a combined total ranging from 18-90. Higher values suggest more communication competence while lower values suggest less communication competence. Another measurement for communication competence is to add combinations of items together to create three different factors related to competence: motivation, knowledge and skill. Adding items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, and 16 created the motivation variable. Motivation refers to an individual's motivation to participate in social situations. Adding items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, and 17 created the knowledge variable. Knowledge is explained as knowing how to act in social situations, set and achieve social goals, and use of experience to guide future social communication. Adding items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18 created the skill variable. Skill is understood as how communication behaviors are performed. This variable assists in confirming that although an individual may be motivated and knowledgeable but not necessarily possess the skills to execute the chosen communication behavior (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). Refer to either Appendix A or B for all scale items.

Communication Satisfaction. Six questions, taken from the work of Downs and Hazen (1977) to measure communication satisfaction, were used to assess this variable

for both hair stylists and clients in this study. Originally a 41-item survey, their work provided a valuable method to measure satisfaction. As mentioned previously in the literature review, this scale typically measures employee-supervisor relationships. This was evident in the phrasing of many of the questions that did not ideally fit the hair stylist-client relationship. However, the six items chosen covered valuable areas such as trust, responsiveness, feedback, openness, anticipating the need for information, and listening. Phrasing was adjusted from “supervisor” to “hair stylist” and “employee” to “client”. Instead of the original “0-10” point satisfaction scale (0=no satisfaction, 5=average satisfaction and 10= high satisfaction), 1=unimportant-5=important was used for consistency with the coorientation approach. Scores on these six items were summed to yield a cumulative satisfaction score for these analyses.

Commercial Friendship. Price and Arnould’s (1999) research on commercial friendship inspired the 16 commercial friendship items for the hair stylist and client surveys. The 16 items were originally used as interview questions to define “friend” from the hair stylist and client perspective. To remain consistent with the previous scales, a 5-point scale (1=unimportant to 5=important) was used to measure each item. Examples of items for the hair stylist survey are as follows: as “think of client as a friend,” “client goes

out of his or her way for me.” Also, examples of items for the hair stylist survey are as follows: “think of hair stylist as a friend,” “feels like a meeting with one of my friends.” Scores from the 16 items measuring commercial friendship were summed into a scale for analyses in this investigation

Survey Instrument Summary. Two, cross-sectional, survey instruments were created, using a coorientation approach (McLeod & Chaffee, 1973) in order to capture hair stylists’ perceptions of the importance of each item, as well as the hair stylists’ prediction of client response to the importance of the same item. A five-point interval scale was used for the three major sections of the survey for communication satisfaction, communication competence, and commercial friendship (1=unimportant, 5=important).

Modified versions of the Communication Satisfaction Scale (Clampitt-Downs & Hazen, 1977) and Communication Competence Scale (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984) are used for portions for the survey. Specifically, the Communication Satisfaction scale is geared toward employee and organizational communication; therefore only certain items fit the goals of this research. Questions were selected that best fit the communication scenario for hair stylists and clients. Also, to accommodate the coorientation approach, some items on the scale were adjusted to fit the hair stylist’s prediction of client

responses. Modified qualitative and quantitative characteristics inspired the questions for the commercial friendship portion of the survey (Price & Arnould, 1999). Additional questions were created for demographic, and industry-focused information. A 55-item survey was distributed to client participants and a 92-item survey was distributed to hair stylist participants. Qualtrics software was used to create the survey, which provided a hyperlink to send to potential participants. After participants completed the survey, results were exported from Qualtrics to SPSS for further analysis.

Plan for Data Analysis

All surveys completed online via Qualtrics were collected and downloaded into an SPSS file. Once online survey collection was terminated, additional hard copy survey data gathered from hair stylists and clients was also entered into SPSS. Results were subjected to the following tests as appropriate: univariate (ONEWAY) analyses of variance and frequency distributions.

The data obtained from the hair stylists and the clients were also placed into several other data files to allow for correlative analyses central to this study's purpose. One file was set up to measure agreement and another file was created to measure accuracy by comparing the hair stylists' predictions against the actual client responses for

the three communication-related variables (competence, satisfaction and friendship).

Communication competence was analyzed both cumulatively (total score across 18 items) as well as by each of the three factors within it (knowledge, skill, and motivation)

Demographic information (age, gender, and race/ethnicity) was analyzed via frequency distributions. Additional analyses were conducted to consider alternative justifications for the findings such as age of hair stylist; number of hours worked per day and number of clients serviced each day.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

For purposes of presentation, the results and conclusions of this study will be presented in the following major sections: (1) descriptive information on the survey of hair stylists; (2) descriptive information on the client survey; (3) agreement hypotheses; (4) accuracy hypotheses; and (5) summary of results.

The investigator distributed surveys to approximately 450 hair stylist participants predominantly by in-person hair salon visits. As additional outreach, participants were contacted through social media sites via the Qualtrics survey link. For client participants, approximately 400 surveys were distributed via the Qualtrics link and volunteered email addresses. After eliminating incomplete surveys from further analysis, the overall Hair stylist Survey response rate was 24% and the Client Survey response rate was 37%.

Descriptive Information on the Survey of Hair stylists

The research procedure described earlier yielded 109 completed surveys from professional hair stylists. As previously mentioned, the hair stylist response rate was 24%. Of the 109 surveys received, 79 (72.5%) were completed by Licensed Practitioners,

51 (46.5%) Licensed Managers, 4 (3.7%) Licensed Cosmetology Instructor, 0 students, 2 Cosmetology Apprentices, and 5 (4.5%) “Other” (Advertising Manager, Not in a salon at this time, Manufacturer educator, Owner, and Salon Owner). The mean age was 34 with a range from 19 to 72 years, and primarily female; 97 women and 8 men completed surveys (89% vs. 7.4%). Gender results were statistically similar to the distribution by gender of employed hair stylists in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2015), women represent 94.2% of hairdressers, hair stylists, and cosmetologist, with only 5.8% men. 100 Caucasian, 1 African American, 1 Asian, 1 Hispanic or Latino, 2 Native American, and 3 “Other” individuals represented participants’ race/ethnicity. Regarding hair stylist respondents’ employment, the sample had 16 (14.7%) Booth/Chair rental hair stylists, 81 (74.3%) Employee hair stylists, and 8 (7.3%) “Other.”

Hair stylists who responded worked an average of 34.9 hours per week with a range of 0-55 hours per week. The average percentage of clients who book weeks in advance was 50.9% (range = 0-100% who pre-book appointments. Hair stylists reported seeing an average of 8.2 clients per day (range = 0-30 clients serviced daily. The 109 hair stylist respondents have worked in the industry for an average of 12.77 years (range = 1

to 53 years. The average number of chairs in the salon was 10 (range = 0-48 chairs.

Pertaining to the number of continuing education events attended annually, other than state mandated continuing education hours, the sample attended an average of 9.8 events annually (range = 0-250)**.

Possible confusion may have occurred for respondents in stating their employment. Cosmetology managers must be licensed cosmetology practitioners before earning a manager's license. Therefore, participants may have selected either options, or only the manager option, when they technically hold both licenses. Respondents who answered large numbers for continuing education may indicate they answered in "hours of continuing education" rather than events, attended annually. For example, the respondents who answered 40, 48, 100, and 250 likely meant hours of continuing education rather than the attendance of that number of CE events annually. The range of hours worked, clients serviced, and chairs in the salon includes a zero because some of the hair stylists who reported that they are not currently employed. These unemployed hairstylists were considered for the research as they, at one time, fit the requirements for the present study.

Descriptive Information on the Survey of Clients

This study also consisted of 150 surveys completed by clients. As previously mentioned, the client response rate was 37%. The client sample contained 34 (22%) males and 109 (72.7%) females, and 6 (4%) “Other.” The average age of respondents was 35.2 (range = 19-74. There were 132 Caucasians, 4 African Americans, 5 Asians, 3 Hispanics or Latinos, 1 Native American, 1 “Other,” with 4 who “preferred not to answer.”

Agreement Hypotheses

The coorientational concept of agreement was measured in this study by comparing the hair stylists’ own responses for the relative importance of consultation communication behaviors with the actual client responses for the same variables. Similarities and/or differences between the individual responses for hair stylists and clients were evaluated. Agreement, for the purposes of this study, as a coorientational concept was measured by comparing the hair stylist and clients individual responses on communication competence, communication satisfaction, and commercial friendship.

Accuracy Hypotheses

For purposes of this study, accuracy as a coorientational concept was measured by comparing the hair stylists' predictions for the clients on communication competence, communication satisfaction and commercial friendship variables. The importance of specific communication behaviors was explored to reveal the accuracy of hair stylist perceptions of the clients' responses.

Tables 1 through 4 present the results regarding agreement and accuracy of the relative importance of communication competence, communication satisfaction and commercial friendship for hair stylists and clients. Four of the six hypotheses developed by the researcher were supported; however, those related to communication satisfaction were rejected, both via a significant difference in the opposite direction. Details are presented below.

Agreement: Communication Competence. Results were subjected to univariate (ONEWAY) analyses of variance with the Communication Competence factors of Motivation, Knowledge and Skill, as well as overall, by respondent type. All four analyses were significant ($p < .001$) when measuring the level of agreement between hair

stylists and clients. For each analysis, hair stylists rated communication competence as more important than clients.

Hair stylists significantly perceived that communication competence was more personally important to them than it was to the clients themselves ($M=85.7$ vs. 69.7).

Therefore, H1a was supported ($F=135.8$, $p<.001$) (see Table 1).

Table 1

Agreement Coorientational Analysis: ANOVA of Communication Competence Subcategories of Motivation, Knowledge, and Skill by Respondent Type

Variable	Hair stylist Response			Client Response			df	F	Sig.
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.			
Communication Competence:	108	28.6	1.8	149	23.4	4.7	1	119.7	p<.001
Motivation							255		
Communication Competence:	107	28.6	1.9	150	23.7	4.5	1	114.5	p<.001
Knowledge							255		
Communication Competence:	107	28.3	2.2	150	22.5	4.6	1	141.1	p<.001
Skill							255		
Overall	106	85.7	5.4	149	69.7	13.4	1	135.8	p<.001
Communication Competence							253		

Agreement: Commercial Friendship and Communication Satisfaction. To

address the agreement between hair stylist and client individual responses, results were

subjected to individual, univariate (ONEWAY) analyses of variance for commercial

friendship and communication satisfaction by respondent type. Results were significant with one result supporting the predicted hypothesis (commercial friendship) and the other not supporting the predicted hypothesis (communication satisfaction).

H2a was not supported ($F=19.9, p<.001$); results were actually significant in the opposite of the predicted direction. Hair stylists did not perceive communication satisfaction more personally important than the clients themselves perceived it to be ($M=28.6$ vs. 31.4). Clients reported communication satisfaction as more personally important than the hairstylists' personal responses regarding communication satisfaction (see Table 2).

Hair stylists did significantly perceive commercial friendship as more important for clients than the clients themselves perceived it to be ($M=23.7$ vs. 20.2). Therefore, H3a was supported ($F= 41.2, p. p<.001$) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Agreement Coorientational Analyses: ANOVA of Commercial Friendship and Communication Satisfaction by Respondent Type

Variables	Hair stylist Response			Client Response			df	F	Sig.
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.			
Commercial Friendship	109	23.7	3.8	149	20.2	4.7	1 256	41.2	p<.001
Communication Satisfaction	108	28.6	5.4	150	31.4	4.7	1 256	19.9	p<.001

Accuracy: Communication Competence. Results were subjected to univariate (ONEWAY) analyses of variance with the Communication Competence Subcategories of Motivation, Knowledge and Skill and overall by response type. All four analyses were significant ($p<.001$) when comparing the hair stylist predictions with what the clients actually reported. In each instance, hair stylists overestimated the importance of communication competence to the clients.

H1b was supported ($F=30.4$, $p<.001$). Hair stylists significantly overestimated the importance of communication competence for clients, when compared to the clients' own perceived level of importance ($M=79.5$ vs. 69.7) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Accuracy Coorientational Analysis: ANOVA of Overall Communication Competence and Factors of Motivation, Knowledge, and Skill by Respondent Type

Variables	Hair stylist Prediction of Client Response			Client Response			df	F	Sig.
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.			
Communication Competence: Motivation	107	26.5	5.4	149	23.4	4.7	1 254	32.1	p<.001
Communication Competence: Knowledge	107	26.3	5.3	150	23.6	4.5	1 255	25.1	p<.001
Communication Competence: Skill	107	26.7	5.1	150	22.5	4.7	1 255	59.6	p<.001
Overall Communication Competence	107	79.5	15.1	149	69.7	13.4	1 254	30.4	p<.001

Accuracy: Commercial Friendship & Communication Satisfaction. To address the accuracy hypotheses, results were subjected to separate, univariate (ONEWAY) analyses of variance for commercial friendship and communication satisfaction by respondent type. Only commercial friendship was significant, with hair stylists overestimating the importance of such commercial friendship to their clients. While communication satisfaction was statistically significant, the result was in the opposite of the predicted direction. Therefore, Hypothesis H2B was not supported; the Communication Satisfaction scores were significantly higher for the clients than the hair stylists predicted them to be.

Hair stylists did not significantly overestimate the perceived importance of

communication satisfaction for clients ($M=29.5$ vs. 31.4). Instead, Hair stylists underestimated the communication satisfaction for clients. Therefore, H2b was not supported ($F=16.6, p<.001$); results were actually significant in the opposite of the predicted direction (see table 4).

Results concluded that H3b was supported ($F=19.4, p<.001$). Hair stylists significantly overestimated the importance of commercial friendships for clients ($M=22.7$ vs. 20.2) (see table 4).

Table 4. Accuracy Coorientational Analyses: ANOVA of Commercial Friendship and Communication Satisfaction by Respondent Type

Variables	Hair stylist Prediction of Client Response			Client Response			df	F	Sig.
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.			
Commercial Friendship	107	22.7	4.0	149	20.2	.94	1 254	19.4	$p<.001$
Communication Satisfaction	107	29.5	4.7	150	31.4	4.7	1 255	16.6	$p<.001$

Additional analyses were conducted to determine if results would change when looking further at the hair stylist characteristics. The number of hours worked by the hair stylist was divided into under 35 hours and over 35 hours. Hours worked by the hair

stylist also did not alter the results. The number of clients seen by a hair stylist was divided into low (6 clients or less per day) or high (7 clients or more per day).

Significantly different results were found for hair stylists who serviced a high number of clients as they reported a higher Communication Competence score than those who were categorized as having a low number of clients per day. These findings seem logical, as hair stylists who see more clients per day might well perceive themselves to be better communicators.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

This study sought to advance research on consultation communication with respect to the understudied, \$2.5 billion beauty industry. Using foundational communication research regarding the importance of competence, satisfaction, commercial friendship, training needs, and the coorientational methodological approach, the author studied the dyadic relationship between hair stylist and client, focusing on (a) the degree to which they agree on the relative importance of interpersonal communication in their relationship as well as (b) the degree to which hair stylists can predict the perceptions of their clients with respect to these communication-related variables.

Consultations between hair stylists and their clients occur with great frequency in the beauty industry and, as such, warrant the attention of communication scholars in order to understand the customer experience and determine how these interchanges influence client satisfaction, loyalty, and business success.

Using convenience samples of hair stylists and clients, drawn primarily from southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois, the researcher assessed the relative importance of communication competence, communication satisfaction and commercial friendship to

each group, as well as seeking the predictions of hair stylists regarding client perceptions of those same variables.

Results obtained via ANOVA confirmed four of the six hypotheses generated by the researcher, substantiating the belief that hair stylists, for the most part, believed two communication-related variables, communication competence and commercial friendship, were more important to clients than they actually were. In contrast, however, the pattern was reversed with respect to communication satisfaction variable where, in this study, the data showed its importance to be higher for both the reality of the clients' self-reports and the hair stylists' predictions with respect to it. In short, it's not whether the hair stylist is a competent communicator per se, or whether he/she develops a positive commercial friendship with the client, but rather how satisfied the client is with the communication efforts which occur during the salon visit that is of key importance to clients. It would appear fostering conversation with clients and developing a strong business relationship are perceived as less important than significant, satisfying communications as judged by the clients.

One possible explanation for these unpredicted results might be client confusion regarding the satisfaction variable. While the statements used to assess do indeed

measure communication satisfaction, it's at least possible that clients were interpreting them to mean customer satisfaction with their hair care experience. Such a misinterpretation might well lead to higher scores for perceived importance being assigned by the clients and thus account for the observed differences. It would seem only logical for clients to consider their reactions to the quality of their salon experience in reporting how "satisfied" they are, thereby demonstrating the overall importance of quality hair care in their salon experience. While interpersonal communication during an appointment may well be important, it is perhaps at least mediated to a considerable degree by the end result – how good did the client believe the services rendered were? In the end, client satisfaction is related to the quality of the hair care received rather than the quality of the communication experience.

This explanation is consistent with the results of this study across the competence, satisfaction and commercial friendship variables. The concern is not that communication competence, satisfaction, and commercial friendships are unimportant, but rather that they must be viewed in relation to the reason for the client visiting the salon: hair care. Clients may well want a meaningful, interpersonal communication experience throughout their visit to the salon, but such communication success is ultimately insufficient as

justification for future visits; quality hair care may well be the dominant factor which determines future visits and client loyalty to a particular stylist or salon.

A second possible explanation for the results regarding the communication satisfaction variable lies in the fact that the six statements used to assess satisfactions did not transfer well to the hair salon situation. The statements developed by Downs and Hazen (1977) were drawn from a much larger pool of 41 statements and, in the process, may have been insufficient to measure the importance of factors such as trust, responsiveness, feedback, openness, anticipating the need for information, and listening in determining client satisfaction with the salon experience.

And finally, perhaps the data are simply correct and should be accepted for what they suggest: these hair stylists did not assign as much importance to the satisfaction variable because they did not think trust, openness, etc. are nearly as important during a salon visit as their clients did. Such a view would argue strongly for improving the sensitivities of hair stylists regarding the role of communication in their relationship with clients during both their initial training and subsequent continuing education.

Limitations

While participants reported no challenges with completing the survey as they were only asked to provide their own perceptions of relative importance for each item, length of the survey instrument for the hair stylists (four pages) may have negatively influenced both initial willingness to participate and subsequent completion of the survey for the hair stylist respondents. Future researchers should keep length of the survey questionnaire to a minimum when seeking to gather data with hair stylists while working at a salon. For data collection, specifically again related to the hair stylist surveys, timing appears to be very crucial. Hair stylists and hair salons have unique hours of operation. Some attempts at dropping off surveys were poorly timed, resulting in limited access to hair salons and hair stylists.

Three hair stylists failed to answer the survey items related to predicting client perceptions. This may have been due to participant assumptions that it did not apply to them as hair stylists. More detailed verbal and written instructions may have helped to avoid this difficulty.

Finally, readers should keep in mind the standard cautions regarding convenience sampling as used in this study and the pitfalls associated with using self-reports to

measure communication-related variables. While the data generated herein is both reliable and valid, these samples may well not be representative of either hair stylists or clients in general and, in particular, did not appropriately represent the cultural diversity of either group of respondents. Just as importantly, self-reports of the relative importance of these variables may have inflated the scores assigned to communication competence, satisfaction, or commercial friendship. It would seem only logical for respondents to believe they should be interested in these variables given they are being asked about them and perhaps as a result seek to make themselves look better by reporting greater importance than actually exists; in effect, a type of Hawthorne effect leading to higher scores.

Suggestions for Future Research

This research was considered to be a pilot study in exploring the relative importance of consultation communication behaviors for hair stylists, clients and the hair stylists' predictions of the clients' responses. Thus, the presented results are not generalizable to every hair salon in the country. Future researchers should carefully research and schedule survey distribution to best maximize logistic efficiency. Also, it is crucial to overestimate the amount of survey attempts will be needed to achieve the ideal

respondent sample. These adjustments could help to increase generalizability of future findings.

Although four of six hypotheses were supported stating that hair stylists are extremely conscious of the importance of variables such as communication competence and commercial friendship during consultation communication, hair stylists' perceptions are neither accurate nor in agreement with the views of their clients with respect to the importance of communication satisfaction. In both cases, hair stylists are underestimating its importance to clients.

Hair stylists may have felt the pressure of social desirability (Van de Mortel, 2008) when completing the survey regarding the importance of communication in their careers. Of course, these results, in which hair stylists report both overestimates and underestimates of the importance of these communication variables, do not yet address how well they are executing these important behaviors. The data collected herein only demonstrate that both groups deem them to be of considerable importance to the beauty salon experience.

The present study focused on perceived importance of communication behaviors yet does not necessarily consider the actual performance. Future studies should consider

looking at performance-based items to advance these findings. One option for measuring communication performance may be the use of qualitative interviews or observations in addition to a survey instrument at the salons, which are participating. Results could then be crosschecked across methodologies. Interviews or observations may also be effective supplemental methods for future studies in order to avoid the bias of self-report measures. Interestingly, such a multi-methodological approach would be relatively novel; too often, quantitative and qualitative scholars seek to disparage one another's work rather than using their respective advantages to improve the quality of the research effort.

The study reported here advanced consultation communication research to include an understudied industry. By relying on the foundational research of communication competence, communication satisfaction, commercial friendships, and training needs, this study filled a communication need in the beauty industry. Important areas of consultation communication were established as areas needing addition focus in research and potentially continuing education. Continued research in this area will help to establish a deeper understanding of the hair salon communicative experience. Hair stylist consultations occur so frequently that they warrant further attention so that scholars can

understand the experience and how it affects the customer experience and hair stylists'

ultimate professional and business success.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Hair stylist Survey

Current Occupation (Select all that apply)	
Licensed Cosmetology Practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Licensed Cosmetology Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Licensed Cosmetology Instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cosmetology student	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cosmetology apprentice	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Fill in the blank) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Which best describes your current employment	
Booth/Chair Rental Hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Fill in the blank) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Estimate the number of years you have you held a cosmetology license of any kind.	
Estimate the number of years you have been employed as a cosmetologist.	
Number of chairs in the salon where you work.	
Other than the state mandated continuing education hours, how many additional continuing education events do you attend annually?	

For those who attend continuing education events, what skills does the continuing education address? (Select all that apply)					
Haircuts					<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair color					<input type="checkbox"/>
Business					<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Fill in the blank)_____					<input type="checkbox"/>
Estimate the percentage (%) of your clients who book appointments weeks in advance					
Estimate the number of your clients you provide hair services to each work day					
Estimate the number of hours per week you work at the salon					
Indicate the level of importance of each item for you					
	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
To have clients recommend me as a hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To have clients give positive reviews about me as a hair stylist to other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To have clients desire to continue seeing me as a hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To have clients intend to make an appointment with me as a hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To have clients continue to do business with me as a hair stylist even if my prices increase somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicate the level of importance of each item for your clients					
	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
Being able to recommend a hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Giving positive reviews about a hair stylist to other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Desire to continue seeing a hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intent to make an appointment with a hair stylist again	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuing to do business with a hair stylist even if prices increase somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indicate the level of importance of each item for you					
	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
My clients trust me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My clients are responsive to my communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My clients are receptive to evaluation, suggestions and criticism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My clients are open to ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My clients anticipate my need for information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My clients listen and pay attention to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicate the level of importance of each item for your clients					
	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
Hair stylist trustworthiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist responsiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist receptiveness to evaluation, suggestions and criticism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist openness to ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist anticipation toward client needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist listening and attentiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indicate the level of importance of each item for you					
	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
I want to adapt my communication behavior to meet clients' expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have enough knowledge and experiences to adapt to clients' expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I use a wide range of behaviors, including self-disclosure and wit, to adapt to clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to be involved in the conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know how to respond because I am perceptive and attentive to clients' behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I show my involvement in conversation both nonverbally and verbally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to make my conversations with clients go smoothly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know how to change topics and control the tone of my conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is easy for me to manage conversations the way I want them to proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to understand clients' viewpoints and emotions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know that empathy means to try to see it through clients eyes and feel what they feel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I show my understanding of clients by reflecting their thoughts and feelings to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once I set an interpersonal goal for myself, I know the steps to take to achieve it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am motivated to obtain the conversational goals I set for myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I successfully achieve my interpersonal goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to communicate with clients in an appropriate manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware of the rules that guide social behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I act in ways that meet situational demands for appropriateness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indicate the level of importance of each item for your clients					
	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
Hair stylist adaptability in his/her communication behavior to meet clients' expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist knowledge and experiences to adapt to clients' expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hair stylist use of a wide range of behaviors, including self-disclosure and wit, to adapt to clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist involvement in the conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist responsiveness due to being perceptive and attentive to clients' behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist involvement in conversations nonverbally and verbally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to make conversations with clients go smoothly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to change topics and control the tone of the conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist easily manages conversations the way he or she wants them to proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist understands clients' viewpoints and emotions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylists know that empathy means to try to see it through their clients' eyes and feel what they feel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist understanding of clients by reflecting their thoughts and feelings to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist motivation to obtain the conversational goals he or she sets for him/herself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to set an interpersonal goal for his/herself and knows the steps to take to achieve it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist successfully achieves interpersonal goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to communicate with clients in an appropriate manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist awareness of the rules that guide social behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to meet situational demands for appropriateness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicate the level of importance of each item for you					
	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
I think of my clients as a friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appointments feel like a meeting with one of my friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel like I know my clients well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am able to share my true thoughts and feelings with my clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel close to my clients during the service interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My clients seem to care about me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to give something back to my clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like doing little things to please my clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If something out of the ordinary occurs, I generally respond to it as a special situation and accommodate my clients' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My clients go out of his or her way for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indicate the level of importance of each item for your clients					
	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
Hair stylist thinks of his/her clients as friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appointments feel like a meeting with one of my hair stylist's friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist feels like he/she knows his/her clients well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist is able to share his/her true thoughts and feelings with his/her clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist feels close to his/her clients during the service interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist's clients seem to care about him/her	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hair stylist wants to give something back to his/her clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist likes doing little things to please his/her clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If something out of the ordinary occurs, the hair stylist generally responds to it as a special situation and accommodated his/her clients' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist goes out of his or her way for his/her clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rate your likelihood of attending training on the following topics					
	Very Likely	Likely	Undecided	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Hair color techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Haircutting techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salon/Station organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Client communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflict resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening to clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Client retention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Client referrals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With which gender do you most identify?					
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Prefer not to identify	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Which of the following best describes you?	
African American	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caucasian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hispanic or Latino	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to Answer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your age in years	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B Client Survey

The following questions concern your communication experiences as a client in a hair salon. Please indicate the level of importance of each characteristic for you.	Unimportant to Me	Somewhat Unimportant to Me	Neither Unimportant nor Important to Me	Somewhat Important to Me	Important to Me
Being able to recommend a hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Giving positive reviews about a hair stylist to other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Desire to continue seeing a hair stylist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intent to make an appointment with a hair stylist again	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuing to do business with a hair stylist even if prices increase somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the level of importance of each characteristic for you.	Unimportant to Me	Somewhat Unimportant to Me	Neither Unimportant nor Important to Me	Somewhat Important to Me	Important to Me
Hair stylist trustworthiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist responsiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist receptiveness to evaluation, suggestions and criticism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist openness to ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist anticipation toward client needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist listening and attentiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the level of importance of each characteristic for you.	Unimportant to Me	Somewhat Unimportant to Me	Neither Unimportant nor Important to Me	Somewhat Important to Me	Important to Me
Hair stylist adaptability in his/her communication behavior to meet clients' expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist knowledge and experiences to adapt to clients' expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist use of a wide range of behaviors, including self-disclosure and wit, to adapt to clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist involvement in the conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hair stylist responsiveness due to being perceptive and attentive to clients' behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist involvement in conversations nonverbally and verbally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to make conversations with clients go smoothly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to change topics and control the tone of the conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist easily manages conversations the way he or she wants them to proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist understands clients' viewpoints and emotions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist knows that empathy means to try to see it through their clients' eyes and feel what they feel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist understanding of clients by reflecting their thoughts and feelings to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist motivation to obtain the conversational goals he or she sets for him/herself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to set an interpersonal goal for his/herself and knows the steps to take to achieve it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist successfully achieves interpersonal goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to communicate with clients in an appropriate manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist awareness of the rules that guide social behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair stylist ability to meet situational demands for appropriateness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the level of importance of each characteristic for you.	Unimportant to Me	Somewhat Unimportant to Me	Neither Unimportant nor Important to Me	Somewhat Important to Me	Important to Me
My hair stylist thinks of his/her clients as friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appointments feel like a meeting with a friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My hair stylist feels like he/she knows his/her clients well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My hair stylist is able to share his/her true thoughts and feelings with his/her clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My hair stylist feels close to his/her clients during the service interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My hair stylist's clients seem to care about him/her	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My hair stylist wants to give something back to his/her clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My hair stylist likes doing little things to please his/her clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If something out of the ordinary occurs, my hair stylist generally responds to it as a special situation and accommodates his/her clients' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My hair stylist's clients go out of his/her way for him/her	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rate the level of importance of each as a potential training program topic for your hair stylist. If you have an additional training program topic suggestion, use the option "other" to fill in the blank and then select your level of importance.	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neither Unimportant nor Important	Somewhat Important	Important
Hair color techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Haircutting techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salon/Station organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Client communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflict resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening to clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Client retention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Client referrals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rate your preference on the following statement	No Preference	Slightly Prefer	Prefer	Strongly Prefer	Very Strongly Prefer
Receiving services from a hair stylist who participates in continuing education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With which gender do you most identify?					
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Which of the following best describes you?	
African American	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caucasian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hispanic or Latino	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to Answer	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write your age in years	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix C: Hair stylist Recruitment Email

Dear _____,

As a fellow hair stylist and Corporate Communication graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, I am conducting a study on hair stylist-client consultation communication for my thesis. I would appreciate if you could help me by sharing your beauty industry experiences on this survey. As you know, consultation communication is an ongoing experience for hair stylists that impacts clients' hair salon experiences. This study's goal is to better understand the nature of this essential occurrence of organizational communication.

The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

This study is intended to benefit hair stylists through an advanced understanding of hair stylist-client consultation communication experiences. To share the findings of the study, the student researcher intends to share the completed thesis with participants.

I truly appreciate your time and consideration with helping me in my research. Please share the survey link with any other industry professionals who could also provide their experiences for my survey.

Survey Link: http://uwwhitewater.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4SgF6tqKiaWRHz7

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erica Ritchie, Graduate Student
Department of Communication
UW-Whitewater
Email: RitchieEK19@uww.edu

Appendix D: Client Recruitment Email

Dear _____,

As a corporate communication graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater I am conducting a study on hair stylist-client consultation communication for my thesis. Consultation communication is an ongoing experience for hair stylists that impacts clients' hair salon experiences. This study's goal is to better understand the nature of this essential occurrence of organizational communication.

This study is comprised of participant surveys both online and in hard copy. The online version is completed through the Qualtrics program. Also, a hard copy version is available if preferred. The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

This study is intended to benefit hair stylists through an advanced understanding of hair stylist-client consultation communication experiences. To share the findings of the study, the student researcher intends to share the completed thesis with participants.

Insert: http://uwwhitewater.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3mIVSy5lu9hCRV3

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erica Ritchie, Graduate Student
Department of Communication
UW-Whitewater
Email: RitchieEK19@uww.edu

Appendix E: Informed Consent Form: Hair stylist

Hair stylist-Client Consultation Communication Survey

You have been selected to participate in this study because you have career experience as a hair stylist. In an effort to gather accurate information on hair stylist-client consultations at salons, I invite you to share your perceptions of hair appointment consultation communication and various aspects of your job. I will use the results of this survey to: (a) inform beauty industry goals and policies, (b) enhance communication between hair stylists and clients, and (c) advocate for hair stylists. **The survey should take you approximately 5 minutes to complete.** Online communications are considered public, and electronic records may be subject to open record requests. As an online participant in this study, there is the risk of intrusion by outside agents (i.e., hacking), and therefore the possibility of being identified. However, every effort will be made and safeguard your identity and any information you provide from unauthorized access. At no time will any member of the administration have access to the information you provide or to the raw data. Participants' names will not be used in any reports or presentations, as only aggregated data will be shared publicly. All information you provide will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Participation in this survey is fully voluntary and there is no penalty should you choose not to participate. You may also discontinue your participation at any time. Responding to this survey constitutes participation consent.

The present study was approved by the Internal Review Board of UW-Whitewater (Protocol #K15601079Q). For questions, please contact Carol Katch at Research and Sponsored Programs, UW-Whitewater, 800 West Main Street, 2023 Roseman, Whitewater, WI, 53190-1790, or e-mail: katchc@uww.edu or phone at 262-472-5288. The investigators are Erica Ritchie and Dr. Ksobiech.

Sincerely,

Erica Ritchie, Graduate Student
Department of Communication
UW-Whitewater
Email: RitchieEK19@uww.edu

Appendix F: Informed Consent Form

Hair stylist-Client Consultation Communication Survey

You have been selected to participate in this study because of your experience as a client in a hair salon. In an effort to gather accurate information on hair stylist-client consultations at salons, I invite you to share your perceptions of hair appointment consultation communication and various aspects of your hair salon experiences. I will use the results of this survey to: (a) inform beauty industry goals and policies, (b) enhance communication between hair stylists and clients, and (c) advocate for hair stylists. **The survey should take you approximately 5 minutes to complete.** Online communications are considered public, and electronic records may be subject to open record requests. As an online participant in this study, there is the risk of intrusion by outside agents (i.e., hacking), and therefore the possibility of being identified. However, every effort will be made and safeguard your identity and any information you provide from unauthorized access. At no time will any member of the administration have access to the information you provide or to the raw data. Participants' names will not be used in any reports or presentations, as only aggregated data will be shared publicly. All information you provide will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Participation in this survey is fully voluntary and there is no penalty should you choose not to participate. You may also discontinue your participation at any time. Responding to this survey constitutes participation consent.

The present study was approved by the Internal Review Board of UW-Whitewater (Protocol # K15601079Q). For questions, please contact Carol Katch at Research and Sponsored Programs, UW-Whitewater, 800 West Main Street, 2023 Roseman, Whitewater, WI, 53190-1790, or e-mail: katchc@uww.edu or phone at 262-472-5288. The investigators are Erica Ritchie and Dr. Ksobiech.

Sincerely,

Erica Ritchie, Graduate Student
Department of Communication
UW-Whitewater
Email: RitchieEK19@uww.edu