
The Role of Interactional Justice in Academic Advising

Erin C. Froman
University of North Alabama

Karly A. Cochran
University of North Alabama

Abstract: This study merges literature on supervisor-employee relationships and adviser-student relationships to examine interactional justice as a common feature of high-quality advising. We conducted a survey of 396 undergraduate students at a regional university in the United States and developed a new measure of interactional justice in advising that predicted two indicators of student success: college students' intent to persist to graduation and their satisfaction with advising. Interactional justice explained 15% of variability in students' intent to persist and 44% of variability in students' satisfaction with advising. Interactional justice also accounted for positive associations between intent to persist and incidence of developmental as well as prescriptive advising ($\beta = .84$ and $.37$). Additionally, interactional justice explained positive associations between these significantly different advising styles and students' satisfaction, reducing the shared variance between satisfaction and developmental advising from 53% to 8%—and reducing the shared variance between satisfaction and prescriptive advising from 13% to 0.00%. We propose the concept of *justified advising* and discuss ways interactional justice can be incorporated into a variety of different advising styles.

Keywords: interactional justice; academic advising; student satisfaction; intent to persist

The success of any university depends on the success of its students, but many students leave before earning a degree, despite investing their time and accumulating large amounts of student debt. In his 2017 blog post, Bill Gates (a college dropout) expressed concern for American students and universities: “Based on the latest college completion trends, only about half [of students] (54.8%) will leave college with a diploma...” (Hess, 2017). This is problematic, as retention rates are one indicator of student success. They are also one measure of a

Direct correspondence to Karly A. Cochran. E-mail: kacochran1@una.edu



DOI: 10.26209/MJ2462418

The Mentor: Innovative Scholarship on Academic Advising Volume 24 (2022), 38-71

ISSN: 1521-2211

journals.psu.edu/mentor

university's success and its ability to support the educational missions of the institution as well as academia at large. While universities, prospective students, parents, and the public continue to prioritize graduation rates, academic advising has become central in designing plans to increase retention. As such, the current study evaluated the quality of academic advising in terms of interactional justice and its relationship to two, primary predictors of retention: students' *intent to persist* until graduation and students' *satisfaction* with academic advising.

Students' Intent to Persist and Satisfaction with Advising

The best predictor of retention is a student's intent to persist until graduation (Kimball & Campbell, 2013). Persistence is characterized by students who continuously pursue their degree from their first year in college until they graduate. Although the term *persistence* is often used interchangeably with *retention*, persistence is a student-initiated decision, whereas retention refers to the ability of an institution to retain a student from admission through graduation (Seidman, 2005). Academic advisers are in a unique position to influence intention to persist (and therefore retention rates) by: leading students to resources for success; facilitating behavioral awareness in students; aiding students' development of problem-solving, decision-making, and evaluation skills; encouraging students to develop short-term and long-term goals; and making students feel like they matter (NACADA, 2013).

Student satisfaction with advising is also a strong predictor of graduation (Teasley & Buchanan, 2013). However, surveys indicate that students are often dissatisfied with their academic advising experiences (Keup & Stolzenberg, 2004; Allen & Smith, 2008; Kuhn, 2008). Low-quality relationships between students and advisers have been linked to student attrition (Trinker, 2014). On the other hand, retention has been linked to high-quality advising (Coll, 2009; Noel, 1976; Tinto, 2006).

This study extends literature on different advising styles (e.g., developmental advising, prescriptive advising) to examine interactional justice as a common theme of high-quality advising. From a research perspective, the predictive utility of advising style for persistence and satisfaction varies, likely because students connect with their advisers in a way that eludes existing theoretical constructs (Yarbrough, 2010). To bridge this gap between existing advising theory and a student's reality, we draw on organizational theory to examine whether student-adviser interactions are better understood by the student's sense of interactional justice with their adviser. We argue that a variety of advising methods may increase students' satisfaction and intent to persist to the extent that the adviser's approach enhances interactional justice. To support this claim empirically, we used survey data to examine whether positive associations between different advising styles, student satisfaction, and students' intent to persist could be accounted for by interactional justice between the student and adviser.

Defining Interactional Justice in Academic Advising

Interactional justice originated as a dimension of organizational justice theory and includes two components: interpersonal justice—being treated fairly (e.g., with dignity, courtesy, and respect) by authority figures—and informational justice—receiving relevant information from authority figures (Bies & Moag, 1986; Greenberg, 1993; Usmani & Jamal, 2013). Existing literature hints at the relevance of interactional justice to advising by highlighting advisers' responsibility to both respect and inform students. For example, regarding the informational component of interactional justice theory, Tinto's (2012) guidelines suggest academic advisers can increase the likelihood of students' persistence by (1) communicating expectations often and informing students about the rules, regulations, and requirements for completing the degree; and (2) informing students about opportunities to engage with faculty members, peers, and the broader campus community (e.g., study abroad, volunteerism, and student organizations). Similarly, regarding the interpersonal justice component of interactional justice, advisers can increase the likelihood of students' persistence by (1) incorporating personalized information about the student into their advising approach (e.g., students' personal preferences and experiences); and (2) reinforcing students' self-perceptions as respected and valued members of the university community (Tinto, 2012; Tinto, 2017).

In advising interactions, students' perceptions of interactional justice are based on the following informational and interpersonal characteristics:

1. Justification for the adviser's approach and its underlying information or lessons (e.g., "My adviser offers adequate justification," or "My adviser offers sensible explanations").
2. The quality of interpersonal treatment during the interaction (e.g., "My adviser is encouraging," or "My adviser shows concerns for my rights as a student").

Informational justice involves students perceiving that the information they receive (such as instructions, feedback, or facts) is accurate and pertinent to their own goals, values, or needs. This may include the adviser explaining or communicating with the student about their advising approach. Interpersonal justice involves students being treated with integrity and dignity—which naturally includes an adviser's respect for the student's own wishes and goals for the interaction (including the type of information or support they expect to receive from their adviser). It is important to consider both aspects of interactional justice (the informational and interpersonal conditions), meaning that interactions with one's adviser must not only be appraised as positive or respectful, but the interactions must also be deemed reasonable, useful, and informative. The informational and interactional aspects are strongly correlated, meaning interactional justice manifests as a result of both conditions being met—not just one or the other. In order for the student to

experience interactional justice, it is key that they be treated fairly—in addition to perceiving justifiable outcomes from advising.

In the advising context, interactional justice is based on a student's appraisal of interactions with their adviser and whether those interactions are justifiable given the student's needs. By comparison, in organizational research, interactional justice is based on a subordinate employee's appraisal of interactions with their supervisor and whether those interactions are justifiable given the employee's needs. There is a difference in the power dynamics of a student-adviser relationship compared to an employee-supervisor relationship. Specifically, we do not need to consider the student to be subordinate when applying the construct (even though some advisers may assume this depending on their personal philosophy)—rather the student is in a relatively junior position within the university compared to their adviser. The adviser holds a higher degree of experience, knowledge, and influence in the university setting and often in the student's field of study. As such, advisers assume responsibility for guiding students as a result of their higher status in academia—as supervisors assume responsibility for guiding their employees as a result of their higher status in the organizational setting.

Our proposal for incorporating interactional justice into academic advising gives power to the student's perception of advising in ways that past theories have not. Interactional justice is influenced by both the student's and adviser's roles in the interaction. However, we focus on the student's experience and their *reaction* to the student-adviser exchange. It is important that interactional justice capture the *student's experience* of the interaction—as the adviser often establishes many other aspects of the interaction based on their expertise, philosophies, and style of advising. The exchange itself may entail different kinds of protocols for advising (which are determined by the adviser's style or approach), but the student's experience of those protocols or procedures is unique from the advising procedures themselves and deserves recognition.

Interactional Justice as a Framework for Applying Different Advising Styles

Scholars have already extended the concept of interactional justice to academic settings by examining the role of interactional justice in improving student-teacher interactions (Chory, 2007) and in mitigating teacher-targeted aggression (Chory-Assad & Paulsel, 2004). Low levels of interactional justice have been linked to withdrawal, anger, and resentment (Zoghbi Manrique de Lara, 2008). Interactional justice is relevant to a variety of social exchange relationships in professional contexts (Bies, 2015) and we are extending the concept to the student-adviser relationship based on the prediction that it likely explains important satisfaction and retention indicators in the university setting, just as it has in the organizational setting. In organizational settings outside of academia, high levels of interactional justice have been linked to employee commitment and trust in supervisors and management (Barling & Phillips, 1993). Interactional justice has also explained employee reactions to feedback and evaluation (Baron, 1990) and their job

satisfaction (Almansour, 2012; Laschinger, 2004). Based on these findings, we would expect interactional justice to explain students' reactions to academic advising, such as their satisfaction with the adviser's approach, their trust in the adviser's guidance, and persistence on their educational path by extension.

Particularly, we consider interactional justice to be an important mediating variable in advising because of its potential to explain variation in students' preferences for different advising approaches (Crockett & Crawford, 1989). Existing studies on students' advising preferences suggest that students differ in their preferences for prescriptive versus developmental advising. According to Fielstein (1989), a majority of students prefer that advisers focus most on explaining graduation requirements (86.7%), discussing course selections (78.9%), planning a course of study (66.7%), discussing educational goals (55.6%), exploring career options (53.3%), and explaining course registration (51.1%). Students were least concerned with more personal aspects of advising, such as talking about their personal lives (76.6%), making contacts (72.2%), and discussing interpersonal skills (71.1%). None of the characteristics of a developmental advising style were rated as students' top priority—even though some were a moderate priority. On the other hand, another study by Fielstein, Scoles, and Webb (1992) suggests the developmental style of advising is more important to traditional students compared to non-traditional students. All students need their advisers to provide accurate and timely information (a priority of many different advising approaches). However, some students need—and expect—their adviser to go beyond basic course planning and registration information (a characteristic of prescriptive advising) to explore the students' career goals and extracurricular interests (a characteristic of developmental advising) (Drake, Jordan, & Miller, 2013). Overall, students prefer a variety of advising styles depending on their specific needs at a particular time. Interactional justice incorporates a respect for those needs, as the student sees them.

Interactional justice focuses on the student's expectations and experience of an adviser's approach—and thus, may be assessed across different approaches to advising. Rather than simply committing to a specific advising style and applying it to all students, we propose measuring interactional justice as a means of identifying and implementing appropriate advising styles with different students. Attention to interactional justice can help us make sense of discrepancies between students' preferences and advisers' philosophies. The process through which advisers consider and choose their approach needs evidenced-based assessment of what the student perceives about the approach, particularly as prior scholarship suggests a bias among advisers toward the developmental style.¹ Although

¹ According to Grites and Gordon (2000), “Student development has consumed the process of academic advising” (p. 119). Hemwall and Trachte (1999)—citing Bloland, Stamatakos, and Rogers (1994)—say that academic advising “has lost sight of the principal mission of higher education” (p. 114). Hemwall and Trachte describe how the construct of developmental advising has assumed many different meanings since its introduction in the 1970s, because researchers have molded the term “developmental” to

developmental advising can certainly be useful, we propose assessing interactional justice as a way of identifying when the use of that widely-respected model—or other models—might best facilitate the student’s experience of advising.

To explain how interactional justice could be used to identify the best approach to advising a particular student, we describe how interactional justice can manifest during the use of different advising styles. Specifically, we highlight the characteristics of interactional justice and the potential alignment (or misalignment) between those characteristics and the goals of two significantly different advising styles: developmental and prescriptive advising. As previously discussed, we define interactional justice as an indicator of the student’s perception of being treated fairly by their adviser and receiving fair outcomes as a result of advising. We argue that select advising styles may facilitate these perceptions of fairness (relative to other styles) for some students—but we also argue that those same advising styles may mitigate perceptions of fairness for other students. To understand how different styles of advising could vary with either above- or below-average levels of interactional justice, we revisited research on the constructs of developmental advising and prescriptive advising and the types of needs and goals those styles aim to address. Measures of interactional justice were originally designed to capture whether employees felt a supervisor’s form of leadership was adequately meeting their needs. Thus, to understand how students’ perceptions of interactional justice might vary within the use of certain advising styles, we must consider the needs and goals that are emphasized by that style and whether those aims actually align with the student’s needs and goals in all cases.

Interactional Justice and Developmental Advising

The developmental style of advising focuses on facilitating broad aims of the students’ education and preparing them for life beyond their degree. To this end, the adviser emphasizes the students’ needs for professional, academic, and personal growth. The adviser may work with the student in each of these areas, by helping them develop problem-solving and decision-making skills, find purpose in their coursework and academics, and maintain their own progress independently, emphasizing the student’s personal responsibility. By definition, this style of advising establishes a close, working relationship with the student, and the adviser intentionally integrates each of these elements into their interactions. The outcomes of this approach often require significant effort and participation on the student’s part and a thorough knowledge of the student’s career goals and extra-curricular interests—as well as other personal aspects of the student’s life—on the adviser’s

fit and justify the use of other styles of advising. Thus, effective advising has become synonymous with developmental advising, under the assumption that if another advising style (e.g., prescriptive) is effective, then it must be developmental in nature. Although we generally agree with these critiques of developmental advising, we disagree with Hemwall and Trachte’s (1999) assertion that the traditional developmental model should be abandoned entirely.

part. In using this approach, the adviser inherently prioritizes certain goals over others. For example, developmental advisers tend to deemphasize students' test scores and simplistic indicators of progress, while emphasizing other life lessons that promote growth and self-actualization. Indeed, this approach includes multiple, lofty goals, which have been correlated with predictors of student success (e.g., student satisfaction and intent to persist). Even so, whether a student sees those advising goals as being justified and reasonable is another question entirely.

For context, we describe how developmental advising could co-occur with both high and low levels of perceived interactional justice. High levels of interactional justice would indicate the student perceives strong justification for the adviser's approach and its underlying lessons, while also experiencing positive interpersonal treatment from the adviser. Such perceptions would likely occur in interactions with a developmental adviser if the student aims to enhance their own professional, academic, and personal growth through a close, working relationship with their adviser. If the student appreciates an adviser's focus on finding purpose through academic work and skill development, they would likely see the developmental approach to advising as reasonable—and they may also view the increased effort and responsibility on their part to be quite fair and appropriate, given the goals and standards shared with their adviser. Even further, if they find these interactions to be respectful of their time and interests, then we would predict strong perceptions of interactional justice through the experience of this advising style.

For comparison, we consider a student with different aims, in whom we might observe low levels of interactional justice based on interactions with the same developmental adviser we just described. Low levels of interactional justice would indicate the student perceives weak justification for the adviser's approach and underlying lessons, while also experiencing an unpleasant interpersonal component of the interaction—potentially due to a perceived lack of connection at best, or at the worst, a perceived lack of respect and consideration for the student's own goals and desires. This type of reaction to developmental advising would most likely manifest in a few conditions: if the student views aspects of personal growth—or other non-academic concerns—to be outside the realm of advising conversations (e.g., Fielstein (1989) found that many students were not concerned with these aspects of advising at all); if the student does not desire a close, working relationship with their adviser; if the student prefers to avoid high levels of personal responsibility in charting their plans; if the student wants their adviser to accept more responsibility for their own progress, or similarly, if they rely heavily on the adviser's precise instruction for their own academic progress; if simplistic indicators of academic progress, like test scores and GPA, appear more important to the student and their future goals (e.g., graduate school admissions or scholarship eligibility) than they appear to the adviser; or if the adviser is forced to deemphasize focus on key pieces of information in order to prioritize other academic, professional, and personal conversations in the limited time allotted for advising sessions. In any of these cases, the student would likely see the developmental approach to advising as unreasonable—or even counter-productive to their personal

goals for the session—and they may also view the increased effort and responsibility on their part to be unfair or inconvenient. Even further, if they find these interactions to be disrespectful of their time and interests, then we would predict weak perceptions of interactional justice through the experience of this advising style.

Interactional Justice and Prescriptive Advising

Because we argue that interactional justice may coincide with a range of different advising styles, we also revisited the prescriptive style of advising, which is considered to be a significantly different form of advising from developmental, and we examined how its use might also vary with levels of perceived interactional justice. The prescriptive style of advising focuses on helping students identify and meet their degree requirements. To this end, the adviser evaluates the student's progress toward the degree by referencing important deadlines and timelines for the degree and directly communicating relevant instructions and expectations to the student. The adviser facilitates this work by staying task-oriented, which may include guiding the student's course selection and registration procedures, answering the student's questions, and using the student's test scores and academic records to assess their prospects. The outcomes of this approach do not require a close working relationship between the student and adviser—and the dynamics of the interaction suggest the student may tend to yield to the adviser as an authority figure, who has little involvement in the student's life outside of offering academic guidance. Relative to the developmental advising style, the prescriptive style of advising de-emphasizes the importance of building a relationship with the student—but this does not negate an interpersonal aspect to the interaction. The style can still incorporate respect for the student and consideration for their success through other means of helping. For example, prescriptive advisers tend to prioritize efficient use of the student's time, minimize difficult workloads for the student, and alleviate some of the student's responsibility for decision-making by accepting more responsibility themselves—all characteristics that may be more or less appreciated, depending on the type of student.

We now describe contexts in which prescriptive advising could co-occur with both high and low levels of perceived interactional justice. For example, a student might perceive strong justification for a prescriptive approach, and the information and attention to detail that it provides, while also experiencing the aspect of positive interpersonal treatment from the adviser. Such perceptions would likely occur in interactions with a prescriptive adviser if the student needs additional time and help identifying degree requirements and the best ways to meet them. (For example, this could be due to a difference in the student's personality or capabilities, but also due to a difference in the type of degree(s) they are pursuing. Some academic paths are more complicated than others.) A prescriptive adviser would likely also strengthen perceptions of interactional justice in students who prefer clear instructions, direct communication, and short meetings. Other outcomes of a prescriptive approach that

could align with a student's goals (particularly more so than other approaches) include a desire to share responsibility in course planning (Fielstein, 1989) or to minimize the student's workload. Even though the prescriptive approach does not require a close working relationship with the student, it is still a fair approach to other aims, which may in turn facilitate the student's appreciation of the more basic interpersonal aspects of the interaction—especially if they experience the prescriptive approach as most respectful of their time and personal preferences for the interaction (Fielstein, 1992).

By comparison, if a student's aims for the interaction misalign with the aims of the prescriptive style, then we might observe low levels of interactional justice based on the same type of interactions we just described. For example, the student might see a prescriptive approach as unreasonable—or at least, less reasonable than alternative approaches—if they seek additional professional or personal guidance beyond basic academic planning. Some students may prefer to include other aspects of their lives in advising discussions—and may even interpret boundaries around such discussions as their adviser taking less interest in their welfare or as lacking consideration for other aspects of their educational and personal lives (regardless of the adviser's intentions). Such interpretations would especially harm the interpersonal aspect of the interaction, if not the informational aspect. Furthermore, if certain students prefer to work and plan their coursework independently, they may not require as much basic instruction and assistance as the prescriptive style entails. As such, they may not appreciate in-depth discussion of instructions and timelines and may prefer to prioritize their session time in other ways (e.g., discussing career and professional concerns). These are a few conditions in which a student may feel certain interests are overlooked or dismissed, thus contributing to weakened perceptions of interactional justice.

THE CURRENT STUDY

Our proposed framework for assessing interactional justice in advising does not dictate a single style of advising, but can help organize an adviser's approach to each student by considering which advising styles are most likely to facilitate interpersonal interactions with each student while also respecting their goals for the session and needs for certain information. Traditionally, an adviser's approach has come from their philosophy of advising, based on an interpretation of theory and literature (Kimball & Campbell, 2013). Strict advising styles differ, however, in that they are utilized to address different kinds of student needs (e.g., developmental, emotional, educational, and social needs) at different points in the student's matriculation. Thus, effective advisers utilize a variety of approaches in an effort to influence student outcomes, decisions, and behaviors, including the student's decision to remain enrolled until graduation. And prioritizing one approach may limit an adviser's ability to guide a student successfully (Mottarella, Fritzsche, & Cerabino, 2004). Thus, the common understanding of student perceptions about advising sessions needs to be re-examined to respect the

complexity of academic advising (Hagen & Jordan, 2008; Teasley & Buchanan, 2013) and the fact that a variety of approaches may be important to retaining any particular student (Coll, 2009; Noel 1976; Glenen, 1976; Tinto, 2006). For example, appreciative advising has been effective in improving retention rates and GPAs among students on probation (Bloom, Hutson, & He, 2013; Kamphoff et al., 2007) and first-year students (Hutson, 2010); strengths-based advising has been linked to greater satisfaction with advising, higher GPAs, and increased likelihood of persistence (Schreiner, 2004); proactive advising combined the good qualities of prescriptive advising (experience, needs assessment, structured programs) and developmental advising (relationship building, addressing student needs holistically) (Varney, 2013) into one intervention that helped 74% of failing students pass their classes (Glennen, 1975). Such interventions would have been unnecessary for many students, but they were critical to students who were failing academically.

Academic advisers are in a unique position to influence students' success (Drake, 2011; Kuh, 2005). We argue that multiple advising approaches may be effective depending on the student's needs, but propose that the underlying commonality to all effective approaches is interactional justice. That is, an academic adviser who is committed to interactional justice can vary in advising approach while incorporating each of Tinto's (2012) advising elements, which align with interactional justice (expectations, support, assessment and feedback, and involvement), into their advising practice. The current study is the first, to our knowledge, to measure interactional justice in the student-adviser relationship and to examine it as a commonality of different advising styles by modelling interactional justice as a mediator and examining its validity in the advising context.

Using a non-experimental design, we developed a measure of interactional justice in student-adviser relationships and examined three components of its validity: (1) First, we assessed the predictive validity of interactional justice by examining whether the construct explained students' satisfaction with advising and their intent to persist; (2) Second, we expected interactional justice would be positively associated with unique advising styles as an effective component of those styles, but we also specified that interactional justice—as a critical component of advising—would mediate the relationships between these advising styles and students' satisfaction and intent to persist; (3) Last, we examined evidence of discriminant validity between interactional justice and the advising styles—simply because our argument dictated that interactional justice may converge as an important component of different styles, but it does not define those styles per se.

Hypotheses

To examine the predictive validity of interactional justice, we tested the following hypotheses:

H₁: Interactional justice is positively associated with student satisfaction with advising.

H₂: Interactional justice is positively associated with students' intent to persist.

Because we proposed interactional justice to be an important component of different advising styles, we predicted it is positively correlated with both developmental and prescriptive advising—two unique advising styles that emphasize different student needs and positively predict student satisfaction and intent to persist. Given the proposed commonalities between interactional justice theory and traditional advising styles, we expected evidence of convergent validity between interactional justice and both styles of advising:

H₃: Interactional justice is positively associated with characteristics of a developmental advising style.

H₄: Interactional justice is positively associated with characteristics of a prescriptive advising style.

We also hypothesized that interactional justice is a critical component of different advising styles, meaning it is not limited to a particular style and also explains—or mediates—the benefits of different advising styles. By extension, we hypothesized that interactional justice uniquely explains student outcomes, when controlling for other advising predictors, thereby establishing evidence of incremental validity as well. Specifically, we hypothesized:

H₅: Higher levels of interactional justice explain (i.e., mediate) a positive association between student satisfaction and developmental advising: meaning, the positive association between student satisfaction and developmental advising will become weaker, or non-significant, after accounting for interactional justice.

H₆: Similar to Hypothesis 5, higher levels of interactional justice explain a positive association between student satisfaction and *prescriptive* advising: meaning, the positive association between student satisfaction and prescriptive advising will become weaker, or non-significant, after accounting for interactional justice.

H₇: Higher levels of interactional justice explain the positive association between *students' intent to persist* and developmental advising: specifically, the positive association between intent to persist and developmental advising will become weaker, or non-significant, after accounting for interactional justice.

H₈: Similar to Hypothesis 7, higher levels of interactional justice explain the positive association between students' intent to persist and *prescriptive* advising: specifically, the positive association between intent to persist and prescriptive advising will become weaker, or non-significant, after accounting for interactional justice.

We also expected evidence of discriminant validity between interactional justice and other advising styles because we proposed that interactional justice can be a component of multiple advising styles (e.g., including developmental and prescriptive advising), but even so, interactional justice does not define those styles. In other words, the characteristics of those styles can co-occur with low or high levels of interactional justice in the student-adviser relationship. No particular advising style is synonymous with interactional justice—rather, it is a unique construct that can be incorporated into a variety of advising approaches. To evaluate this claim, we tested the following hypotheses:

H₉: Because interactional justice is a unique construct, a confirmatory three-factor model will show evidence of discriminant validity in that the items assessing three constructs—interactional justice, developmental advising style, and prescriptive advising style—will collectively account for unique variability in students' perceptions of their adviser's approach.

H_{9a}: Specifically, scale items will be more strongly associated with their respective construct than with the other two model constructs—as indicated by strong factor loadings (λ) and model fit (measured as a Root Mean Squared Error of Estimation, or RMSEA, near zero, but no greater than the standard .08).

H_{9b}: Additionally, the association between interactional justice and developmental and prescriptive advising scales will not exceed .71 (or 50% of shared variance).

METHODS

Participants

We recruited 396 undergraduate students, via email, from a small, regional university in the southeastern United States (302 women, 92 men). Participants were predominantly White (75.8%) or Black (11.9%), with a smaller percentage representing Asian (3.9%), Hispanic or Latino (2.9%), and other identities (2.4%) (Note: 3.1% declined to answer). The sample included 129 freshmen, 78 sophomores, 92 juniors, and 93 seniors, ranging from 18 to 61 years old ($M = 22.38$, $SD = 7.54$). Thirty-five percent of respondents were first-generation college students.

Design and Procedures

The current study employed a non-experimental, cross-sectional research design to examine the role of interactional justice in student-adviser relationships. Participants completed the following series of questionnaires through an online survey in Qualtrics: demographic information, students' satisfaction with advising, their advisers' developmental and prescriptive advising style, their perceptions of interactional justice in their student-adviser relationship, and their intent to persist

to graduation. Each scale had high levels of internal consistency as determined by Cronbach's Alpha (α).

Measures

Student Satisfaction with Advising Scale

We assessed students' satisfaction with advising using 17 items from Teasley and Buchanan's (2013) Advising Scale. This scale measured the degree to which students are satisfied with their academic, social, and professional guidance (e.g., securing internships, contributing to the broader community, participating in student organizations, and obtaining leadership experiences on campus). Participants ranked their agreement with each item on a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Higher scores indicated higher levels of satisfaction ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.68$; $\alpha = .98$). Note: The original scale included 21 items, but a principal components analysis suggested the number of items could be reduced. The analysis supported one latent factor of advising satisfaction, but the percentage of variance explained per item suggested that the majority of shared variance in the scale items was accounted for by 11 to 12 items. Beyond that, the addition of more items did not result in a substantial increase in variance explained, suggesting that some items could be removed. Further analysis of the scale's reliability (examining Cronbach's Alpha if items were deleted), suggested removing items 18 through 21 would increase the alpha from .97 to .98. Furthermore, the inter-item correlations between those four items (items 18–21) and the other items in the scale (items one–17) were notably smaller compared to the other inter-item correlations. As such, we removed items 18 through 21 and kept items one through 17. The final list of items is available in Table 1.

Developmental Advising Scale

We used six items from Winston and Sandor's (1984) Academic Advising Inventory and Yarbrough's (2010) Developmental Preference Scale to measure the degree to which students perceived their adviser to use a developmental advising style (e.g., "My adviser and I talk about my future goals"). The items are listed in Appendix A. Participants rated their agreement with each statement on a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Higher scores indicated the students perceived their adviser to approach advising with a higher level of developmental style qualities ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.76$; $\alpha = .94$).

Table 1
*Items Assessing Student Satisfaction with Advising (Teasley & Buchanon, 2013),
 with Correlations between Each Scale Item and Scale Total Score*

Satisfaction with Advising	Item-Total Correlation
1. Advising appointments are worth my time	.69
2. My advisor is knowledgeable about course offerings	.79
3. My advisor has helped me develop a long-term educational plan	.78
4. My advisor is prepared for my advising appointments	.82
5. My advisor is concerned about my overall development as a student	.83
6. After my advising appointments, I feel that every course in my new schedule has a purpose	.80
7. My advisor is knowledgeable about graduation requirements	.78
8. If my advisor does not know the answer to my question, s/he connects me to someone who does	.80
9. My advisor encourages me to speak freely in our appointments	.83
10. I am given the time I need during my academic advising appointments	.83
11. My advisor and I work together as a team	.89
12. My advisor acts in a professional manner	.86
13. I can trust my advisor	.87
14. I feel like I will graduate in a reasonable amount of time thanks to my advisor's planning	.88
15. I would recommend my advisor to a friend	.88
16. My advisor is ethical	.84
17. I find academic advising appointments to be a positive experience	.90
18. I learn about different student organizations during my advising appointments*	.69
19. My advisor lets me know how I can obtain leadership experience on campus*	.70
20. My advisor and I discuss how I can contribute to the surrounding community*	.67
21. My advisor and I discuss internships and service learning opportunities in preparing for my future profession*	.73

Note: Items with an asterisk were removed to improve overall reliability based on Cronbach's alpha if the item were deleted from the scale.

Prescriptive Advising Scale

Similar to our measure of developmental advising, we assessed prescriptive advising using four items from Winston & Sandor's (1984) Academic Advising

Inventory and Yarbrough's (2010) Prescriptive Preference Scale. Each item measured the degree to which students perceived their adviser to use a prescriptive advising style (e.g., "My adviser chooses my electives for me"). Participants rated their agreement with the items on a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Higher scores indicated that students perceived their adviser to approach advising with a higher level of prescriptive style qualities ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 0.74$; $\alpha = .83$). The items are listed in Appendix A.

Interactional Justice Scale

We modified 12 items from Usmani and Jamal (2013) to measure interactional justice between student and adviser. Originally, these items measured employees' perceptions of interactional justice with their superiors. We revised the items to measure students' perceptions of interactional justice with their adviser (e.g., "During our advising sessions, my adviser treats me with kindness"). Participants rated their agreement with each item on a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Higher scores indicated a higher level of Interactional justice ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 0.66$; $\alpha = .98$). The full scale is presented in Appendix B.

Intent to Persist Scale

We created five items to measure students' intent to persist to graduation (e.g., "I expect I will graduate from this institution"). Participants rated each item on a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Higher scores indicated stronger levels of intent to graduate ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 0.55$; $\alpha = .84$). The full scale is presented in Appendix C.

RESULTS

The descriptive statistics for our survey responses and bivariate correlations between all of our measures are presented in Table 2.

A Note on Possible Covariates and Exploratory Analyses

Prior to testing our hypothesized models, we examined four exploratory mediation models that included several covariates: students' age, GPA, status as a first-generation college student, race, and gender. However, modelling the potential impacts of these covariates did not change support for our primary hypotheses—particularly Hypotheses 1 through 8—meaning, the following results remained, even after accounting for individual differences in possible covariates. Therefore, there was no evidence to suggest that other hypothetical samples with different distributions for age, GPA, first-generation students, or gender would not replicate the claims made in our results. As such, we neither qualified nor disqualified any

observations from the sample based on these covariates, and we presented results from the simpler models that focus on our primary hypotheses and exclude extraneous variables.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations for Each Measure

	Interactional Justice	Satisfaction with Advising	Intent to Persist	Developmental Advising	Prescriptive Advising
Satisfaction with Advising	.89**				
Intent to Persist	.37**	.35**			
Developmental Advising	.84**	.82**	.29**		
Prescriptive Advising	.37**	.36**	.12*	.55**	
	<i>M</i> = 3.36 <i>SD</i> = 0.66	<i>M</i> = 3.34 <i>SD</i> = 0.68	<i>M</i> = 3.57 <i>SD</i> = 0.55	<i>M</i> = 3.06 <i>SD</i> = 0.76	<i>M</i> = 2.45 <i>SD</i> = 0.74

Note: ** indicates an observed significance level at or below .01; * indicates an observed significance level at or below .05.

Hypotheses 1 and 2: Evidence of Predictive Validity

We analyzed the predictive validity of interactional justice (Hypotheses 1 and 2) by examining the percentage of total shared variance (r^2) and uniquely shared variance (β^2) between interactional justice and the two outcomes that predict student retention: students' satisfaction with advising and students' intent to persist to graduation. If interactional justice is useful to explain (and potentially enhance) students' satisfaction and intent to persist, then analyses should show a significant amount of positively shared variance between interactional justice, student satisfaction, and intent to persist ($r^2 > 0$) even after accounting for other advising variables in a multiple regression framework ($\beta^2 > 0$).

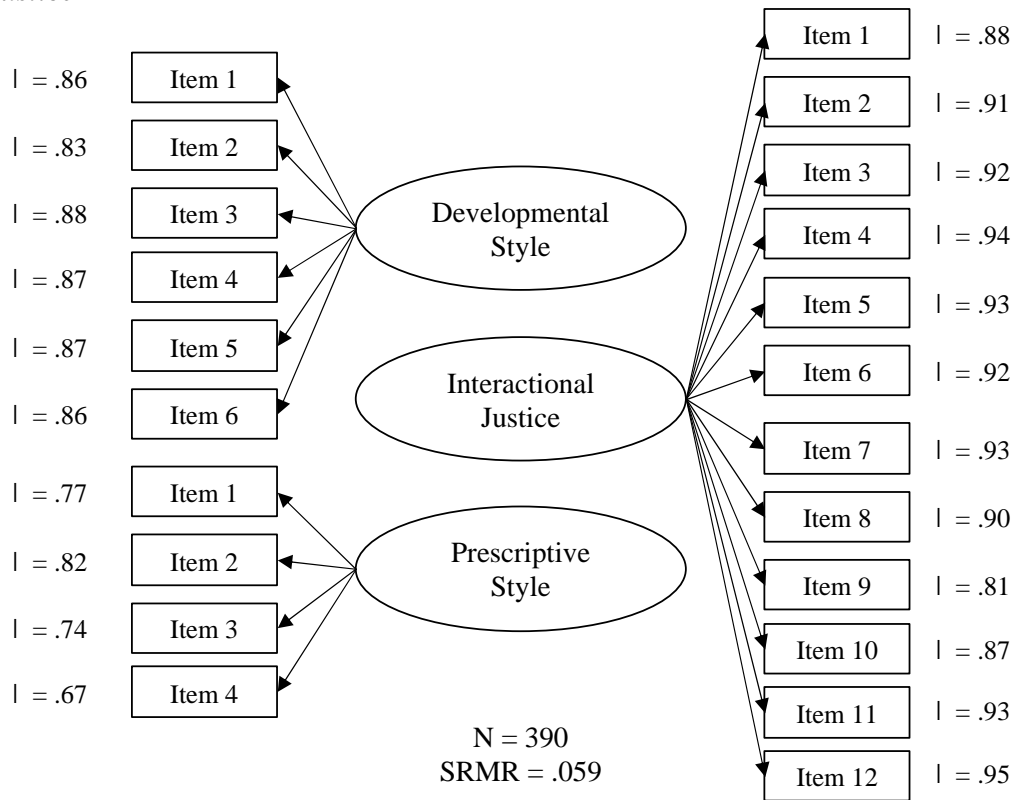
Results indicated predictive validity of interactional justice based on support for Hypothesis 1: higher levels of interactional justice predicted higher levels of students' satisfaction with advising. Specifically, we observed a total shared variance between interactional justice and students' satisfaction with advising ($r^2 = .79$) and uniquely shared variance between interactional justice and students' satisfaction with advising, controlling for different advising styles ($\beta^2 = .44$, $p < .001$, controlling for developmental style, and $\beta^2 = .76$, $p < .001$, controlling for prescriptive style).

Results also indicated predictive validity of interactional justice based on support for Hypothesis 2: higher levels of interactional justice predicted stronger intent to persist. Specifically, we observed an overall shared variance between interactional justice and students' intent to persist ($r^2 = .14$) and uniquely shared variance between interactional justice and students' intent to persist, controlling for different advising styles ($\beta^2 = .15, p < .001$, controlling for developmental style, and $\beta^2 = .14, p < .001$, controlling for prescriptive style).

Hypotheses 3 and 4: Evidence of Convergent Validity

We analyzed the convergence of interactional justice and different advising styles (Hypotheses 3 and 4) by examining the percentage of shared variance (r^2) between interactional justice and developmental and prescriptive advising styles. Results supported our hypotheses that above-average levels of interactional justice can co-occur across significantly different advising styles, based on positively shared variance between interactional justice and developmental advising ($r^2 = .71$) and prescriptive advising ($r^2 = .14$).

Figure 1
The 3-Factor Advising Model Supporting Discriminant Validity of Interactional Justice



Furthermore, results from a confirmatory factor analysis supported our assumptions that developmental and prescriptive advising are significantly different styles (see Figure 1). Results suggested the proposed scales closely modelled observed responses to the scale items. The SRMR measure of model fit was less than the standard cut-off of .08 (observed SRMR = .05), suggesting that the average residual deviation between our observed associations and the parameters predicted by our proposed factor model was sufficiently close to zero. Furthermore, we observed strong factor loadings (λ) between each scale item and that item's respective latent factor (λ ranging from .68 to .81 for the prescriptive advising scale; λ ranging from .83 to .89 for the developmental advising scale). In other words, these loadings offer additional evidence of discriminant validity between the two measures of advising style. Each of the scale items that were hypothesized to measure developmental advising were correlated more strongly with each other than they were correlated with the scale items that were hypothesized to measure prescriptive advising (and vice versa).

Hypotheses 5 – 8: Evidence of Mediation and Incremental Validity

We tested our hypothesis that interactional justice functions as a key component of different advising styles by examining interactional justice as a mediator of the associations between students' satisfaction, intent to persist, and advising styles (Hypotheses 5 to 8). Specifically, we tested four mediation models, using the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Hayes, 2013) to examine whether interactional justice mediated the association between student satisfaction and developmental advising (Hypothesis 5) and prescriptive advising (Hypothesis 6), and to examine whether interactional justice mediated the association between students' intent to persist and developmental advising (Hypothesis 7) and prescriptive advising (Hypothesis 8). Unlike the classic approach to testing mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986), the PROCESS model reduces the number of hypothesis tests by testing one indirect effect (i.e., mediating effect) of the primary predictor, through the hypothesized mediator—thus, reducing Type 1 error. Like the classic approach to testing mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986), PROCESS analyzes the association between all proposed predictors in a regression model (including the mediator: interactional justice)—controlling for levels of the other predictor (e.g., either developmental or prescriptive advising).

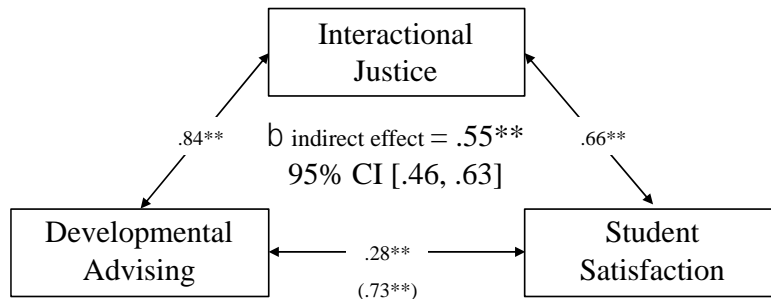
The following four conditions supported evidence of mediation and, by extension, the incremental validity of the interactional justice measure: (1) Results supported evidence of *full* mediation if the association between the outcome—student satisfaction—and either developmental or prescriptive advising became *non-significant* when controlling for levels of interactional justice in the model. (2) Results supported evidence of partial mediation if the associations between student satisfaction and either developmental or prescriptive advising became significantly weaker when controlling for levels of interactional justice. (3) We also considered the strength of the proposed mediating effects by examining the change in the

percentage of uniquely shared variance (β^2) between advising approach and the outcome when controlling for interactional justice. (If controlling for interactional justice yielded a significantly smaller percentage of uniquely shared variance between the predictor and outcome, then results supported mediation). And finally, (4) we examined the strength of the hypothesized mediating effect directly, which accounts for individual differences in the proposed indirect effect and examined bootstrapped confidence intervals for the indirect effect, estimated from 1,000 simulated samples.

Mediating Student Satisfaction

Interactional justice explained 44% of variability in student satisfaction ($\beta = .66, p < .001$). Consistent with Hypothesis 5, interactional justice also explained a significant portion of shared variance between student satisfaction and developmental advising. There was a significant indirect effect ($\beta = .55, p < .001$), meaning the association between student satisfaction and developmental advising ($\beta = .73, p < .001$) was significantly smaller ($\beta = .28, p < .001$) after accounting for the positive association between developmental advising and interactional justice ($\beta = .84, p < .001$). Although the direct association between developmental advising and student satisfaction was still statistically significant ($\beta = .28$), the association was small in terms of practical significance—especially when considering the strength of the indirect effect ($\beta = .55$). Specifically, accounting for the indirect effect of interactional justice reduced the percentage of shared variance between developmental advising and student satisfaction from 53% to approximately 8%. See Figure 2.

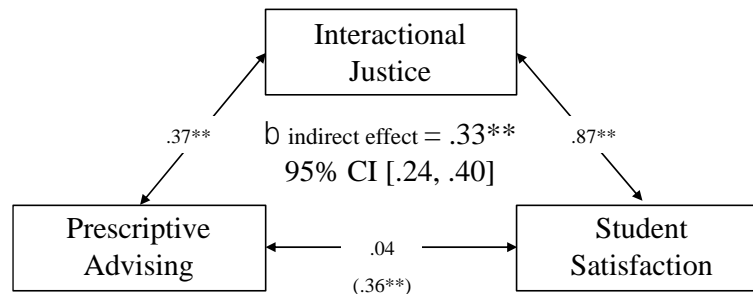
Figure 2
Results for Hypothesis 5, Showing Interactional Justice Mediated the Association between Developmental Advising and Student Satisfaction



By comparison, there was also a significant indirect effect of interactional justice on the shared variance between student satisfaction and prescriptive advising style (Hypothesis 6). In this model, interactional justice *fully* mediated the association between prescriptive advising and student satisfaction (there was a significant indirect effect, $\beta = .33, p < .001$). That is, the total shared variance

between student satisfaction and prescriptive advising ($\beta = .36, p < .001$) was fully explained by the association between prescriptive advising and interactional justice ($\beta = .37, p < .001$). Accounting for the indirect effect of interactional justice reduced the percentage of shared variance between prescriptive advising and student satisfaction from 13% to less than 0.00%. See Figure 3.

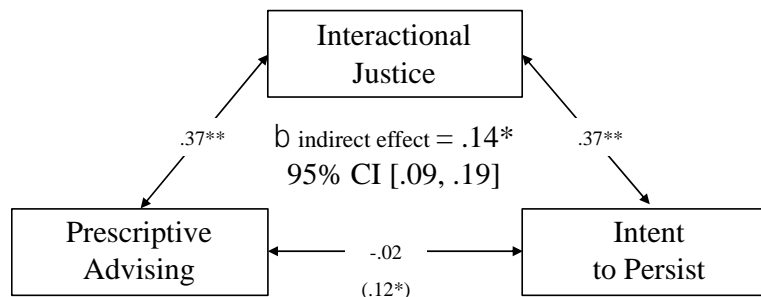
Figure 3
Results for Hypothesis 6, Showing Interactional Justice Mediated the Association between Prescriptive Advising and Student Satisfaction



Mediating Students' Intent to Persist

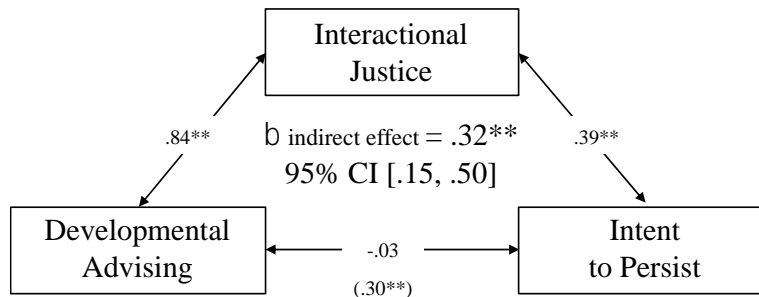
Interactional justice explained approximately 15% of variance in students' intent to persist ($\beta = .39, p < .001$). Consistent with Hypothesis 7, there was a significant indirect effect ($\beta = .32, p < .001$) of interactional justice on the association between developmental advising and intent to persist. The association between intent to persist and developmental advising ($\beta = .30, p < .001$) was near zero ($\beta = -.03, p = .765$) after accounting for the positive association between developmental advising and interactional justice ($\beta = .84, p < .001$). Specifically, accounting for the indirect effect of interactional justice reduced the percentage of shared variance between developmental advising and intent to persist from 9% to less than 0.00%. See Figure 4.

Figure 4
Results for Hypothesis 7, Showing Interactional Justice Mediated the Association between Developmental Advising and Intent to Persist



Consistent with Hypothesis 8, there was also a significant indirect effect of interactional justice ($\beta = .14, p < .05$) on the association between intent to persist and prescriptive advising ($\beta = .12, p = .019$), which was a small association regardless of interactional justice. After accounting for the association between prescriptive advising and interactional justice ($\beta = .37, p < .001$), the percentage of shared variance between prescriptive advising and intent to persist was less than 0.00%. See Figure 5.

Figure 5
Results for Hypothesis 8, Showing Interactional Justice Mediated the Association between Prescriptive Advising and Intent to Persist



Hypothesis 9: Evidence of Discriminant Validity

To test our claims that interactional justice represents a unique construct in the student-adviser relationship that can be incorporated into different advising styles (Hypothesis 9), we analyzed a confirmatory three-factor advising model, modeling interactional justice and developmental and prescriptive advising styles. Precisely, the model specified the associations between individual scale items and their respective construct (e.g., interactional justice). Observations supported the proposed model, partly because scale items correlated more strongly with their predicted underlying construct (i.e., interactional justice, prescriptive, or developmental advising) than with the other two advising constructs in the model. We considered factor loadings (λ) greater than .64 to be sufficiently strong, because loadings of .64 suggest that a latent factor explains at least 40% of variability in that particular scale item (λ^2). See Figure 1 for observed factor loadings (ranging from .67 to .95).

Observations also supported the proposed model, and specifically distinguished interactional justice from both advising styles, because model fit significantly *worsened* when the three advising constructs were fixed to be synonymous with each other (i.e., an alternative model in which the parameter correlations between the three advising factors were fixed at 1.00, $\chi^2\Delta = 1,201.99$ ($df = 6$), $p < .001$), SRMR = .355). We evaluated the hypothesized factor model, shown in Figure 1, by referencing the SRMR measure of model fit (Standardized Root Mean Residual), because that measure indicates absolute fit between the parameters

predicted by the model and the associations observed in the sample. We also consulted this measure of fit because it does not penalize for model complexity (i.e., models that include more than one latent factor with more than three item indicators per factor). Acceptable model fit is indicated when SRMR < .08 (the model fits the data perfectly when SRMR = 0). The observed SRMR was .059 for our proposed model (in Figure 1). As predicted, all three latent factors were positively correlated: interactional justice was correlated with developmental advising ($r = .87$) and prescriptive advising ($r = .38$), and prescriptive and developmental advising were correlated with each other ($r = .59$). Even so, the model results indicated that each latent variable, including interactional justice, accounted for unique patterns of responses—and therefore explained distinct advising experiences.

DISCUSSION

The current study extended the literature on different advising styles to examine interactional justice as a common theme of high-quality advising. To our knowledge, the current study was the first to measure interactional justice in the student-adviser relationship. This was also the first study to offer robust evidence of interactional justice as a potentially effective commonality of different advising styles. Interactional justice emerged as an effective commonality based on evidence of its predictive, convergent, and discriminant validity in the advising context. Specifically, interactional justice explained two predictors of student success: student satisfaction with advising and students' intent to persist to graduation. Interactional justice also appeared to be an important component of advising, partly because there was strong convergence with two different styles of advising, but also because it explained the associations between these advising styles and students' satisfaction and intent to persist. Interactional justice uniquely accounted for positive associations between two significantly different advising styles and students' satisfaction and intent to persist. Based on these findings, we argue that a variety of advising methods may enhance students' satisfaction and intent to persist to the extent that their adviser's approach enhances interactional justice. Without interactional justice, even application of the most revered advising styles will likely be less effective in promoting a student's success. Likewise, with high levels of interactional justice, even historically questionable styles could be effectively applied to promote a student's success.

Our results support previous work but use interactional justice to offer a new explanation as to why different advising styles can be effective. The academic advising literature already implies a commitment to interactional justice by highlighting advisers' responsibility to respect and inform students while also remaining sensitive to their unique needs and individual differences (Tinto, 2012; NACADA, 2017a; NACADA, 2017b). Our study offers an explicit measure of this commitment to interactional justice that can be applied when using different advising approaches. Consistent with our hypotheses, students were positively inclined toward both developmental and prescriptive approaches, in that both

developmental and prescriptive advising styles were positively associated with students' satisfaction (albeit the association was stronger for developmental advising). These results are similar to studies found throughout the academic advising literature, indicating a positive inclination toward both advising styles (Yarbrough, 2010; Teasley & Buchanan, 2013). However, the current study was the first to explain students' satisfaction with both styles in terms of interactional justice. We consider interactional justice to be an important mediating variable in advising because our results suggested it likely explains why and when some students prefer different advising approaches (e.g., developmental versus prescriptive advising in the current study).

Prior research has indicated that the relational variables most important to student satisfaction exist across advising styles (Mottarella, Fritzsche, & Cerabino, 2004). Our findings suggest that one of these essential variables can be characterized as interactional justice, which was evident across two significantly different styles. Our results also reinforce prior claims (Fielstein, 1989; Yarbrough, 2010) that students prefer a variety of advising styles depending on their specific needs at a particular time. Students' perceptions of interactional justice are likely a good indicator of their advising preferences because interactional justice incorporates a respect for their needs and for advisers to adapt their approaches to those needs. The positive association between interactional justice and developmental advising was especially strong, suggesting that students who viewed their adviser as highly developmental were also more likely to experience a greater (rather than less) sense of interactional justice with their adviser. However, ultimately, if an adviser is perceived to be informed, considerate, respectful, and understanding, the student is likely to be satisfied with the advising, regardless of the approach. We considered two traditional approaches to advising in the current study because they entailed significantly different qualities from each other, thereby allowing us to examine whether interactional justice not only predicts indicators of student success, but whether it could exist across two advising styles that are potentially very different. Furthermore, the simultaneous measurement of advising style and interactional justice allowed us to examine whether interactional justice could explain the effectiveness of different styles—and potentially other styles that include similar qualities. Our findings suggested that multiple advising approaches may be effective depending on the student's needs, but we propose that the underlying commonality to all effective approaches may be interactional justice.

Although our study was the first to examine interactional justice as a key element to different advising styles, other advising approaches have incorporated themes of interactional justice in the past, without explicitly observing it. For example, advising as teaching (Drake, 2013), learning-centered advising (Reynolds, 2013), and proactive-advising (Varney, 2013) incorporated the interpersonal component of interactional justice by treating students as individual learners with their own unique goals. Most notably, developmental advising and prescriptive advising styles incorporated the interpersonal and informational

dimensions of interactional justice—despite being unique approaches in themselves. Qualitatively, developmental advising incorporates several indicators of the interpersonal dimension of interactional justice by focusing on advising as a shared activity and the adviser’s holistic understanding of different aspects in the students’ personal and academic life (Appleby, 2001). In our study, the degree of overlap between the qualities of a developmental approach and high qualities of interactional justice manifested as a strong correlation between interactional justice and that particular style. Even given this strong convergence between the two advising constructs, findings confirmed that developmental advising and interactional justice are not a single style of advising—rather, both constructs explained unique perceptions of the adviser and their interactions. This clarification supported our conceptualization of interactional justice as an element that may be perceived, but not guaranteed through developmental advising. By comparison, some students perceived the use of prescriptive advising to be justified—based on a positive correlation between prescriptive advising qualities and interactional justice—and in those observations, high levels of prescriptive advising typically coincided with high levels of student satisfaction and students’ intent to persist until graduation—just as with the different, developmental advising approach. In summary, some students may require, or prefer, one approach to the other—and accounting for that characteristic in academic advising is likely key to impacting their perceptions in ways that keep them satisfied and enrolled.

Applying Interactional Justice in Practice

Our intended audience would be academic advisers, in the hopes that interactional justice might offer them a simpler framework for identifying and incorporating an array of advising styles depending on the unique student and interactions they have with them. Interactional justice also supports the NACADA guidelines for advising practice, as there are obvious similarities between their recommended practices and the qualities of interactional justice. For example, NACADA’s statements of core values and competencies highlight advisers’ responsibility to respect, to inform, and to remain sensitive to students’ competing demands, unique needs, and developmental differences (NACADA, 2017a; NACADA, 2017b). These values, we believe, echo a commitment to interactional justice, which likely reflects the adviser’s ability to adapt to these different characteristics in students.

In line with NACADA’s core values and the observations in the current study, we offer two vehicles for promoting interactional justice in academic advising: (1) intentional conversations between adviser and student; and (2) respect for inclusive programs that offer support to students based on their unique needs. These vehicles can be used to influence the likelihood that students perceive interactional justice and, simultaneously, establish Tinto’s (2012) conditions for student persistence (expectations, support, assessment and feedback, and involvement).

Intentional Conversations

Unlike organic conversations, intentional conversations are well-thought-out, guided conversations that are used as an educational strategy (Brown, 2017). This strategy is often used in Residential Education Programs but could be easily modified for academic adviser training programs. Brown (2017) provides a list of 100 intentional, developmentally-appropriate conversations that university staff can have with students. For example, the conversation guides for a first-year student in the first month of their college career might focus on homesickness, adjustments to the rigors of college academics, and navigating a new culture. In contrast, the conversation guide for a rising sophomore might focus on choosing an academic major or becoming more intentional about campus involvement.

While some intentional conversations are relevant to all college students (i.e. the transition from one classification to the next), advising research and experience must inform the development of an intentional conversation list for often marginalized student groups (i.e. international students, veteran students, adult learners, LGBTQ students, students of color, first generation students). For example, intentional conversations regarding university norms and policies are essential for first-generation students, as they often rely heavily on their adviser for accurate and timely information. Further, intentional conversations regarding rights and well-being with racial minorities and those who identify as LGBTQ are essential, as these students are at risk of facing discrimination and harassment.

Inclusive Programs

Academic advisers, being in unique positions to influence students' sense of belonging, can use *intentional conversations* to communicate to students that the university is a place where they will be treated with dignity, courtesy, and respect. Therefore, advisers can influence students' sense of mattering by incorporating inclusive programs that offer support for their students. For example, with an understanding that not all students come to campus aware of college cultural norms, advisers can systematically provide timely information to first generation students by advocating for (or teaching) a first-year experience course that focuses on the "hidden curriculum" (i.e. university norms, policies, processes). While the specific programs developed will vary, advisers might aid in the coordination of creating a "Safe Zone" for students that identify as LGBTQ, a student veteran's support group, a student food pantry, a drop-in childcare center for adult students, or a weekly luncheon to bring together domestic and international student groups. The specific programs will vary, but advisers must be front-and-center in promoting their campus' culture of care.

Limitations

The current study was conducted at a regional university in Alabama with a student population of 7,600. As this paper introduces a new conceptualization of measurement for important student outcomes, future studies should be conducted to replicate our findings—especially from community college, private, and R1 Universities, where different resources are allocated to academic advising. Consistent with the university’s demographics, 75% of our sample consisted of White students, which is more than the typical 52% rate for college students across the nation. Relative to some college samples, people of color were under-represented—even more so than is usual (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Consistent with recent national trends, female students outnumbered men, albeit to a greater rate (approximately 10 to three) than expected. (A typical rate would be five to three, according to Belkin (2021)). Currently, we are not aware of any evidence to suggest that observations of interactional justice would manifest differently based on gender or ethnicity, but future studies could expand representation of these groups to examine the generalizability of the relationships modeled in the current study.

Additionally, this study includes methodological limitations that prevent us from making causal claims: these findings highlight non-experimental associations between students’ satisfaction with advising, intent to persist, and advising approaches. The current methodology, however, was sufficient to synthesize prior claims by examining interactional justice as a key component of different approaches to advising and predicting student outcomes in those different advising contexts.

Future Directions

Our measure of interactional justice was also sufficient to explain previously discrepant associations between different advising styles and student outcomes. Consequently, we highlight the theme of interactional justice in student–adviser relationships to propose a new conceptualization of effective advising that acknowledges the overlapping qualities of various advising approaches. This reconceptualization of advising is an empirically-driven call to merge and consider the best parts of various advising approaches—namely, indicators of interactional justice that persist across approaches.

We describe this flexible way of advising as *justified advising*—student–adviser interactions that are qualified by high levels of interactional justice and can manifest as a result of different advising styles. Ultimately, we borrowed this conceptualization from research in the business sector, but its application to academic advising is overdue and also empirically highlights the false dichotomy between developmental and prescriptive advising—a well-documented shortcoming in advising research (Teasley & Buchanan, 2013; Yarbrough, 2010). Historically, a significant amount of literature on advising has been devoted to determining which advising approach best explains students’ satisfaction and intent to persist; however, like many experts (Teasley & Buchanan, 2013), the current

findings suggest a variety of methods of advising could be utilized to influence student success. Our findings supported this claim and further explained why certain methods are effective—by way of interactional justice. Future work can further establish whether interactional justice can also explain the effectiveness of different advising styles that were not assessed in the current study.

Finally, we argue that interactional justice principles can be taught. Adviser training sessions should include activities and readings to ensure advisers understand their responsibilities to respect, to inform, and to remain sensitive to students' competing demands, unique needs, and developmental differences. While there might be other ways to enhance students' satisfaction and persistence, interactional justice might just be the foundation upon which we should build our practice.

Conclusions

To conclude, we circle back to one main point: Interactional justice can be incorporated across different approaches to advising—making it a more versatile framework for identifying effective advising approaches on an as needed basis. We discourage advisers from simply committing to a specific advising style, based on one's personal philosophy, and then applying it to all students—or applying it to one type of student across all sessions. Instead, we offer different types of evidence, from a simple methodology, that support interactional justice as a critical adjustment tool for advisers and describe ways interactional justice may be observed and implemented in different types of advising sessions. Overall, our findings suggest that students are sensitive to the differences in an adviser's approach as it relates to interactional justice—and because of this, they can simultaneously have an appreciation for two significantly different styles, depending on how those styles respect their journey at that point in time.

REFERENCES

- Allen, J. M., & Smith, C. L. (2008). Faculty and student perspectives on advising: Implications for student dissatisfaction. *Journal of College Student Development, 49*(6), 609–624. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.0.0042>
- Almansour, Y. (2012). The mediating role of organizational justice components in the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research, 12*(20), 74–80. <https://journalofbusiness.org/index.php/GJMBR/article/view/865>
- Appleby, D. (2001). The teaching-advising connection. *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal, 3*. <https://doi.org/10.26209/mj362934>
- Barling, J., & Phillips, M. (1993). Interactional, formal, and distributive justice in the workplace: An exploratory study. *Journal of Psychology, 127*, 649–656. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1993.9914904>

- Baron, R. (1990) Countering the effects of destructive criticism: The relative efficacy of four interventions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75(3), 235–245. [10.1037/0021-9010.75.3.235](https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.75.3.235)
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1173–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173>
- Belkin, D. (2021, Sep 07). 'I just feel lost.' young men abandon college --- the higher education gap between men and women hits record levels. *Wall Street Journal*. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/college-university-fall-higher-education-men-women-enrollment-admissions-back-to-school-11630948233>
- Bies, R. J., and Moag, J. F. (1986) Interactional justice: Communication criteria of fairness. In R. J. Lewicki, B. H. Sheppard, & M. H. Bazerman (Eds.), *Research on negotiation in organizations* (pp. 43–55). JAI Press.
- Bies, R. (2015). Interactional justice: Looking backward and looking forward. In R. S. Cropanzano & M. L. Ambrose (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of justice in the workplace*. (pp. 89–107). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199981410.013.4>
- Bloom, J. L, Hutson, B. L., & He, Y. (2008). *The appreciative advising revolution*. Stipes.
- Bloland, P., Stamatakos, L., & Rogers, R. (1994). *Reform in student affairs: A critique of student development*. University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
- Broadbridge, A. (1996). Academic advising—traditional or developmental approaches?: Student perspectives. *British Journal of Guidance & Counseling*, 24(1), 97–111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069889608253711>
- Brown, G. (2017, June 27). *100 questions you can use for intentional conversations in the residence halls*. Paul Gordon Brown. <https://paulgordonbrown.com/2017/06/27/100-questions-you-can-use-for-intentional-conversations-in-the-residence-halls/>
- Chory, R. (2007). Enhancing student perceptions of fairness: The relationship between instructor credibility and classroom justice. *Communication Education*, 56(1), 89–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634520600994300>
- Chory-Assad, R., & Paulsel, M. (2004). Classroom justice: Student aggression and resistance as reactions to perceived unfairness. *Communication Education*, 53(3), 253–273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0363452042000265189>
- Coll, J., & Draves, P. (2009). Traditional age students: Worldviews and satisfaction with advising; A homogeneous study of student and advisors. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 27(2), 215–223.
- Crockett, J. B., & Crawford, R. L. (1989). The relationship between Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Scale scores and advising style preferences of

- college freshmen. *Journal of College Student Development*, 30(2), 154–161.
- Crookston, B. B. (1972). A developmental view of academic advising as teaching. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 13(1), 12–17. <https://doi.org/10.12930/0271-9517-29.1.78>
- Drake, J. (2011). The role of academic advising in student retention and persistence. *About Campus*, 16(3), 8–12. <https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.20062>
- Drake, J. (2013). Advising as teaching and the adviser as teacher in theory and in practice. In Drake, J., Jordan, P., & Miller, M. *Academic Advising Approaches: Strategies that teach students to make the most of college*. (pp. 17–32). Jossey-Bass.
- Drake, J., Jordan, P., & Miller, M. (2013) *Academic advising approaches: Strategies that teach students to make the most of college*. Jossey-Bass.
- Fielstein, L. L. (1989). Student priorities for academic advising: Do they want a personal relationship? *NACADA Journal*, 9(1), 33–38. <https://doi.org/10.12930/0271-9517-9.1.33>
- Fielstein, L. L., Scoles, M. T., & Webb, K. J. (1992). Differences in traditional and nontraditional students' preferences for advising services and perceptions of services received. *NACADA Journal*, 12(2), 5–12. <https://doi.org/10.12930/0271-9517-12.2.5>
- Glennen, R. E. (1975). Intrusive college counseling, *College Student Journal*, 9(1), 2–4.
- Greenberg, J. (1993). The social side of fairness: Interpersonal and informational classes of organizational justice. In R. Cropanzano (Ed.), *Justice in the workplace: Approaching fairness in human resource management* (pp. 79–103). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Grites, T., & Gordon, V. N. (2000). Developmental academic advising revisited. *NACADA Journal*, 20, 119–122. <https://doi.org/10.12930/0271-9517-20.1.12>
- Hagen, P., & Jordan, P. (2008). Theoretical foundations of academic advising. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, & T. J. Grites (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook* (2nd ed., pp. 17–35). Jossey-Bass.
- Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Process for SPSS and SAS Model 4*. <http://www.afhayes.com/>
- Hemwall, M. K., & Trachte, K. C. (1999). Learning at the core: Toward a new understanding of academic advising. *NACADA Journal*, 19, 113–118. <https://doi.org/10.12930/0271-9517-19.1.5>
- Hess, A. (2017, October 10). *Bill Gates: US College Drop Out Rates are 'tragic.'* CNBC. <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/10/10/bill-gates-us-college-dropout-rates-are-tragic.html>
- Hutson, B. L. (2010). The impact of an appreciative advising-based university studies course on college student first-year experience. *Journal of Applied*

- Research in Higher Education*, 2(1), 3–13.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/17581184201000001>
- Kamphoff, C. S., Hutson, B. L., Amundsen, S. A., & Atwood, J. A. (2007). A motivational/ empowerment model applied to students on academic probation. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 8(4) 397–412. <https://doi.org/10.2190/9652-8543-3428-1J06>
- Keup, J. R., & Stolzenberg, E. B. (2004). *The 2003 your first college year (YFCY) survey: Exploring the academic and personal experiences of first-year students*. University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experiences and Students in Transition.
- Kimball, E., & Campbell, S. (2013). Advising strategies to support student learning success: Linking theory and philosophy with intentional practice. In J. K. Drake, P. Jordan, & M. A. Miller (Eds.), *Academic advising approaches: Strategies that teach students to make the most of college* (pp. 3–16). Jossey-Bass.
- Kuhn, T. (2008). Historical foundations of academic advising. In V. N. Gordon, W. R. Habley, & T. J. Grites (Eds.), *Academic advising: A comprehensive handbook* (2nd ed., pp. 3–16). Jossey-Bass.
- Laschinger, H. (2004). Hospital nurses' perceptions of respect and organizational justice. *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 34(7/8), 354–364.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26818119>
- Mottarella, K., Fritzsche, B., & Cerabino, K. (2004). What do students want in advising? A policy capturing study. *NACADA Journal*, 24(1/2), 48–61.
<https://doi.org/10.12930/0271-9517-24.1-2.48>
- NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising. (2013, July 9). Advising and retention [course lecture]. Kansas State University.
- NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising. (2017a). NACADA academic advising core competencies model.
<https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreCompetencies.aspx>
- NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising. (2017b). NACADA core values of academic advising. Retrieved from
<https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreValues.aspx>
- Noel, L. (1976). College student retention: A campus wide responsibility. *Journal of the National Association of College Admission Counselors*, 21(1), 33–36.
- Reynolds, M. (2013). Learning-centered advising. In Drake, J., Jordan, P., & Miller, M. (Eds.), *Academic advising approaches: Strategies that teach students to make the most of college* (pp. 33–44). Jossey-Bass.
- Schreiner, L. (2004). *Affirming students' strengths: A campus-wide approach to student success and retention* (Report to the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education P116B00306). U.S. Department of Education.
- Seidman, A. (2005). Where we go from here: A retention formula for student success. In A. Seidman (Ed.), *College student retention: Formula for Student Success* (pp. 295–316). Prager Publishers.

- U.S. Census Bureau (2018, December 11). *More than 76 Million Students Enrolled in U.S. Schools, Census Bureau Reports*. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2018/school-enrollment.html>
- Teasley, M., & Buchanan, E. (2013). Capturing the student perspective: A new instrument for measuring advising satisfaction. *NACADA Journal*, 33(2), 4–15. <https://doi.org/10.12930/NACADA-12-132>
- Tinto, V. (2006). Research and practice of college student retention: What next? *Journal of College Student Retention*, 8(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.2190/4YNU-4TMB-22DJ-AN4W>
- Tinto, V. (2012). *Completing college: Rethinking institutional action*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Tinto, V. (2017). Through the eyes of students. *Journal of College Student Retention*, 19(3), 254–269. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1521025115621917>
- Trinkner, R. (2014). Procedural justice and the advisor-advisee relationship in graduate education. *Journal of Online Doctoral Education*, 1(1), 23–40.
- Usmani, S., & Jamal, S. (2013). Impact of distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice, temporal justice, spatial justice, and job satisfaction of banking employees. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, 2(1), 351–383.
- Varney, J. (2013). Proactive advising. In J. Drake, P. Jordan, & M. Miller (Eds.), *Academic advising approaches: Strategies that teach students to make the most of college* (pp. 137–154). Jossey-Bass.
- Winston, R. B., & Sandor, J. A. (1984). Developmental academic advising: What do students want? *NACADA Journal*, 4(1), 5–13. <https://doi.org/10.12930/0271-9517-4.1.5>
- Yarbrough, E. (2010). *An examination of academic advising style preference in undergraduate students* (Publication No. 3430631) [Doctoral Dissertation, Auburn University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Zoghbi Manrique de Lara, P. (2008). Fairness, teachers' non-task behavior and alumni satisfaction. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 46(4), 514–538. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09578230810882036>

Erin Froman is the Career Development Manager for students in the College of Business and Technology at the University of North Alabama. She also serves as an instructor and an adviser for the College Ambassadors. She has a Master's in Professional Studies from the University of North Alabama and a Professional Certificate in Academic Advising from Kansas State University.

Karly Cochran is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of North Alabama. She has a Ph.D. in Psychological Science and specializes in quantitative methodology and instrument development. In addition to teaching, she serves as an academic adviser and mentors student research on interpersonal relationships.

APPENDIX A: DEVELOPMENTAL AND PRESCRIPTIVE ADVISING ITEMS

Prescriptive Advising

1. My advisor plans my course schedule for me.
2. My advisor chooses my electives for me.
3. My advisor registers me for my courses.
4. When I am facing a difficult decision, my advisor tells me what I need to do.

Developmental Advising

1. My advisor talks to me about my interests and career goals to help me choose electives.
2. My advisor and I discuss the skills I will develop in each of my courses.
3. My advisor teaches me how to plan my academic schedule for myself.
4. My advisor teaches me how to keep up with important deadlines myself.
5. My advisor and I talk about my future goals.
6. When I am facing a difficult decision, my advisor and I discuss potential solutions.

APPENDIX B: INTERACTIONAL JUSTICE SCALE (MODIFIED FROM USMANI & JAMAL, 2013)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by selecting Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree

1. During our advising sessions, my adviser treats me with kindness.
2. When decisions must be made about my course schedule, my adviser is considerate about my responsibilities outside of school.
3. When discussing my GPA and academic progress, my adviser treats me with respect.
4. When discussing my academic weaknesses, my adviser treats me with dignity.
5. When I come to my adviser with questions, s/he is patient.
6. When discussing future options such as graduate school or employment opportunities, my adviser deals with me in a truthful manner.
7. I trust that if a problem were to arise, my adviser would show concern for my rights as a student.
8. When I have a decision to make, my adviser discusses with me the implications of each option.
9. My adviser offers adequate justification when s/he denies a request (such as a letter of recommendation or course substitution request).
10. When discussing what courses I should take, my adviser offers explanations that make sense to me.
11. When discussing what skills I need to better develop, my adviser is encouraging.
12. When I come to my adviser with a problem, s/he is understanding.

APPENDIX C: MEASURE OF INTENT TO PERSIST

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by selecting Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree.

1. I expect I will enroll at this institution next semester.
2. I expect I will graduate from this institution.
3. I expect to be enrolled at this institution each semester, without take any breaks, until I graduate.
4. Despite experiencing some problems at this institution, I intend to complete my degree here.
5. Despite experiencing some problems outside of this institution, I intend to complete my degree here.