

The Lecture Contains:

- ☰ Social perception
- ☰ Nonverbal Communication
- ☰ Basic channels of nonverbal communication
- ☰ Facial expressions
- ☰ Universality of facial expressions?
- ☰ Eye Contact
- ☰ Touch

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Social perception

- The process through which one knows and understands other people. In the three lectures to follow, we will focus on the following elements of social perception :
 - Nonverbal communication,
 - Attribution, and
 - Impression formation and management

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Nonverbal Communication

- Nonverbal communication involves the processes such as unspoken language of facial expressions, eye contact, or body language to know and understand other people.
- Social psychologist Irrepressible, often difficult to control

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Basic channels of nonverbal communication

– The basic channels through which nonverbal communication occurs:

- Facial expressions: These help know the current feelings or emotions of the other person.
- Eye contact: These helps to know positive or negative mood of the other person.
- Body language (gestures, posture, movements): These help understand positive or hostile emotions of the other persons.
- Touch: These help understand positive emotions as well as anxiety and anger.



Facial expressions

- With the help of several decades of the research, social psychologists have identified six different basic emotions that may be represented on human face since an early age. These different emotions are:
 - Happiness
 - Sadness
 - Fear
 - Anger
 - Surprise
 - Disgust
- Figure 3.1 illustrates such emotions on human face.





HAPPINESS



FEAR



DISGUST



ANGER



SURPRISE



SADNESS

Universality of facial expressions?

- Several experiments have been conducted by social psychologists, especially Paul Ekman and his colleagues, that have strongly indicated the universality of facial expressions associated with emotion :
 - Cacioppo et al. (1988) noticed that when the facial movements associated with emotions were voluntarily created by the participants in their experiment, they not only underwent physiological changes but also felt those emotions (e.g., high heart rate and faster breathing rate associated with fear and slower breathing rate associated with happiness).
 - In another attempt to show the universality of facial expressions, Rosenberg and Ekman (1995) did not find any significant difference in the recognition of expressions of anger, happiness and surprise irrespective of the ways in which these were recognized (choosing a label, choosing a story or providing one's own description).
- It is, however, also noted by the researchers that there are 'display rules' of every culture as far as emotional expression go. For example, in some non-Western cultures, disproving of others' arguments may not be done in public as it may be termed as rude. Furthermore, happiness associated with victories may not be highly celebrated as it may be termed as impolite in some cultures.

Eye Contact

- Generally, an eye contact with another person is taken as a sign of liking. However, staring or a prolonged gaze at another person without any other response to his/her responses is taken to be a sign of anger or hostility. Social psychologists have also found out that the target persons of staring tend to minimize their exposure to it and also terminate the social interaction with that person.

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Body language

- Social psychologists have found out that a rounded body posture is indicative of positive emotions, whereas an angular or non-rounded posture is a sign of non-friendly emotions. For example, Lynn and Mynier (1993) reported through their experimental study that the 'squatted down' posture of the waiters or waitresses while taking initial orders for drinks to the customers in a restaurants resulted in more tip from the customers than for those who took initial orders while standing.

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Touch

- A gentle brief touch is taken to be a sign of positive emotion. Crusco and Wetzel (1983) conducted an experiment where they arranged for the waitresses to either (a) refrain from touching the customers, (b) touch the customers briefly on the hand, or (c) touch the customers on the shoulder for a longer duration while giving them their change after they paid for their meals. Conditions (b) and (c) reported significantly more amount of tip received by the waitresses.
- Touch, however, can also evoke a negative feelings such as anxiety or anger if it is not culturally desirable.