Don’t Judge a Book by its Cover: Assessment of Nonverbal Impressions

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Social Psychology: Theories and Applications

01. INTRODUCTION

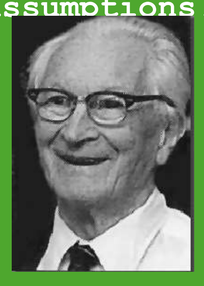
What is Nonverbal Behavior?

Nonverbal communication is a form of expression through dynamic cues like body, face, tone and even appearance.

There are 4 types:
1. Appearance
2. Facial Expression
3. Body Language (Gestures)
4. Paralanguage (Changes in pitch and volume)

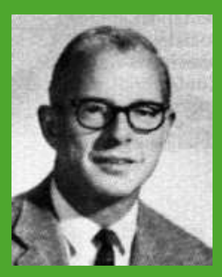
How do we form impressions?

There are three attribution theories which claim that we try to understand the behavior of others by making assumptions.









1. Fritz Heider
2. Jones & Davis
3. Kelly

Attribution Theory

Theory of Correspondence

Covariation theory

QUESTION: Are these impressions accurate?

02. IMPRESSION FORMATION

According to the theorists:
- Fritz Heider (1958) proposed that people try to make sense of the world by attributing causes to events.
- Edward Jones and Keith Davis (1965) described the conditions under which people infer that a person's behavior corresponds to their disposition.
- Harold Kelley (1967) proposed that people use a covariation principle to make attributions.

A Meta-Analysis of experimental evidence suggest that these attributions are accurate (Ambadi & Rosenthal, 1992).

Why are these impressions accurate?

1. We can attribute certain traits easily for Survival purposes.

2. We adapt our Behavior to Stereotypes others have about us thus making Attributions Accurate.

3. Some tra…an be more eas…

Accuracy of Judgments for Different Channels

Channel	*n*	*Z*	*r*
Body	2	2.32	.28
Face	5	7.32	.40
Speech	8	8.20	.36
Tone of voice	12	7.66	.26
Transcripts	6	4.75	.29
Body + speech	2	2.92	.33
Face + body	12	16.24	.54
Face + speech	3	9.17	.41
Face, body, and speech	15	9.54	.28

(Ambadi & Rosenthal, 1992)

03. Gender and Culture

Findings on Gender:

- Men with higher emotional control are perceived more positively
- Women that express more emotions are seen more positively
- Women score higher on hostility when they have angry-looking faces.

Research suggests the accuracy of these results attributions are mixed (Zebrowitz & Montepare, 2008).

Findings on Culture:

Attributions are mostly accurate in cultures when it comes to facial expressions and understanding emotions.

The rest have …n it comes to accuracy.



04. Conclusions

Overall, although generally these impressions seem accurate, results on Gender and Culture are mixed thus more research is required.

Accuracy on Nonverbal behavior and attributions is highest when it comes to emotions. However, the majority still struggle with understanding the intensity of emotions.



Attributions are context specific, and for the sake of studies they are oversimplified thus causing the low external validity of th…ndings.



05. References

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