

# Expression of emotions through facial expression



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## **Abstract**

Do you believe that our facial expressions can express our emotions through silence? Facial expressions are of the forms of nonverbal communication that help individuals understand the basic emotions of sadness, happiness, fear, disgust, anger, and tiredness, etc. Facial expressions are often misunderstood. The misunderstanding of facial expressions often occurs by the facial expression gestures that are being presented by an individual.

Throughout the years, the psychology department has studied the facial expressions of individuals, attempting to understand if certain factors could make an impact of determining an individual's emotion through their facial expression. Legal scholars have emerged in different factors that could make an impact on determining a facial expression and also have emerged into the Basic Emotion Theory (BET). Factors such as cross-cultural, ages, gender have been the most factors that are presented in studies regarding facial expressions. (Yan, Andrews, & Young, 2016). Throughout studies, scholars have explained how Ekman's Basic Emotion Theory (1992) has made an impact regarding observing, and understanding facial expressions. (Ekman, 1992).

Facial expressions is the gaining of knowledge regarding emotion development. Facial expression is a process where an individual gains specific understanding of how emotion is expressed through facial expressions. It involves different understanding of factors such as; age, gender, culture, and basic emotions developing a role in expressing an emotion though facial expression. In other words, emotions can be evaluated

based on specific facial gestures being presented (Crivelli, Jarillo, Russell, & Fernandez-Dols, 2016).

In contrast, looking at the differences of basic emotions and complex emotions leads to better understand that basic emotions is a better choice in terms of understanding the commonly well-known emotions. Basic emotions such as sadness, happiness, fear, disgust, anger, and tiredness. Scholars have studied the idea that basic emotions and facial expression both work well in representing the simply emotions (Wiggers & Lieshout, 1985). With everything that is known from studying facial expression, and emotions, legal scholars have examined the connection of basic emotions, facial expression, and been able to pinpoint several commonly facial gestures that connect with the basic emotions.

Moreover, complex emotions focuses on the idea of the emotions that occurs at the moment. Complex emotions such as joy, embarrassed, jealousy, surprised, and grief. Legal scholars have been able to discover that basic emotions are more recognized than complex emotions (Wigger & Lieshout, 1985). So, all in all, while both basic and complex emotions can both be used to better have an understanding of an individual's facial expression and emotions, the basic emotions is better way to understand because facial expression mostly expresses the basic emotions.

In other words, facial expression is considered a form of nonverbal communication. Facial expression is a way to provide a clear and concise understanding to explain an individual's emotions without the need to verbally speaking. In other words, facial expressions allows scholars to

further develop an understanding of an individual being able to express and control their emotions. (Schneider, Hempel & Thomas, 2013). Facial expression clearly expresses an individual's understanding of the basic emotions such as; sadness, happiness, fear, disgust, anger and tiredness. Each basic emotions illustrates the different facial gestures that clarify which emotion the individual is expressing.

### *Sadness*

The description for sadness is often known as a frowning smile, sad puppy's eyes, and tears. The facial expression for eyebrows also follow sadness is angled, quivering lips, cheeks are raised in a U angle, and small wrinkles are formed around the nose. The facial expression of sadness could be different depending on race, age, and gender.

### *Happiness*

The description for happiness is often known as smiling, wrinkles forming around the eyes, and teeth are presented. The facial expression for cheeks also follow happiness is raised, wrinkles are formed around the nose, and eyes become wider. The facial expression of happiness could be different depending on race, age, and gender.

### *Fear*

The description for fear is often known as eyes become wider, brow lines are formed on the forehead, and face color would turn a slightly reddish color.

The facial expression for a few tears also follow fear, open mouth, and

sometimes followed by a scream. The facial expression of fear could be different depending on race, age, and gender.

### *Disgust*

The description for disgust is often known as lips are formed in a U angle, eyes look narrow, nose wrinkles. The facial expression for disgust is also followed by mouth being wide open, eyebrows formed a straight line, and tongue is often present. The facial expression of disgust could be different depending on race, age, and gender.

### *Anger*

The description for anger is often known as eyebrows are formed in a downward angle, nose wrinkles, and eyes appear either small or big appearance. The facial expression for lips also follow anger are presented in a form of a duck, teeth are pressed against each other, and followed by a vocal form such as yelling, screaming, sadness. The facial expression of anger could be different depending on race, age, and gender.

### *Tiredness*

The description of tiredness is often known as eyes are down narrow, lips are presented in a frown or still. The facial expression of tiredness is often followed by eye lips are drooping, appearing to feel either downcast, doleful, absent, followed by a vocal form such as; yawning small scream, and also followed by a physical form such as; stretching, or holding their face up. The facial expression of tiredness could be different depending on race, age, and gender.

## Suppressing Emotions

It is important to note however, that emotions can also be suppressed. Legal scholars have examined how an individual is able to choose not to express their emotions through facial expression. Suppressing emotion is the gaining of knowledge regarding failing to express emotions. Suppressing emotions is a process where an individual gains specific understanding on how one can fail or hide emotions. It involves different understanding of situations such as; funerals, business conferences, school presentation developing a role in suppressing emotions through facial expression. The fact is that suppressing emotions is commonly used during social interaction, and helps one develop a way to hide one's emotions. (Cameron & Overall, 2018).

Suppressing emotions often had hidden double meanings. On one level, suppressing emotions references to hiding or expressing one's emotions. For example, according to Cameron & Overall spoke of a woman being able to express her emotions towards her boss, yet suppress her emotions about the fear of losing her job. (Cameron & Overall, 2018). This negatively affects a person's ability to reach an understanding with the emotions given to them.

Furthermore, suppressing emotions focuses on the idea of an emotion being able to be hidden at the moment. Events that would requires to suppress an emotion would be funerals, business conferences, presentations. Legal scholars have been able to discover that suppressing an emotion can either be identify as a high facial affect sensitivity or a low sensitivity. (Schneider, Hempel, & Lynch, 2013). The stricken evidence poses another kind of problem. When an individual suppresses an emotion, it is assumed that the

emotion is essentially erased from the individuals' mind at the moment, yet react at a different setting. (Cameron & Overall, 2018). The fact is, however, that an individual's hides their emotions during a social interaction, can often be expressed towards a love one that is away from the social interaction.

Although, suppressing emotions is considered a form of reducing emotional behavior, regarding both positive and negative emotions. (Schneider, Hempel, & Lynch, 2013). Suppressing emotions is a way to provide a clear and concise understanding to explain an individual's emotions leading to different emotions factors. Legal scholars have examined that if an individual suppress the emotion of anger, it often leads to more negativity emotion such as; depression, development of eating disorders. (Schneider, Hempel, & Lynch, 2013). This negatively effects on a person's ability to reach an understanding of emotions, but an effect of dealing with the different emotion factors that are linked to suppressing emotions.

### Factors affecting Facial Expression

Legal scholars have examined the different factors that affect determining a facial expression. There are four factors that an individual needs to analyze in order to develop an understanding of facial expression. Those factor are cultural, body positions, gender, and age. Each one of these factors has been proven to have a connection to the facial expression. By, systematically implementing one or more factors into understanding facial expression, a person can have a better understanding how the different factors develop a role in facial expressions.

### *Cultural*

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The first of the four factors is cultural. Studies reveal that basic emotions have a connection with cross-cultural. (Yan, Andrews, & Young, 2016).

Cultural and facial expression develops a connection because it focuses on the idea of how facial expression is considered universal. For some cultural, it is an easy task to recognize the basic emotions from the facial expression that are being presented. Certain facial expressions such as; eye movements, eyebrows movements, and nose twitches are often misinterpreted in other cultural. Scholars have examined that certain facial expressions such as; eye movements are one method that has helped Western and Eastern Asian determine the emotion being expressed. (Yan, Andrews, & Young, 2016). The fact is, however, that cultural as in Western and Eastern Asian have certain aspects to focus more regarding facial expression compared to other cultural as in British that focuses more on the general idea of facial expression as in smiles, and tears.

### *Body Postures*

The second of the four factors is body postures. Studies have shown that mimicking and body postures have an effect on facial expression because our body postures could portray the wrong emotion. (Carr, Winkielman & Oveis, 2014). Often body postures can portray the emotion we feel, yet sometimes can often mislead to other individuals that we are associating with. However, mimicking and body postures have helped individuals develop an understanding of the different emotions being portrayed at the moment. Yet, this could affect the ability to understand the emotions that are being portrayed at the moment. For example, an individual could portray the posture of pinching bridge of the eyes; another individual will believe <https://assignbuster.com/expression-of-emotions-through-facial-expression/>



that they are tried. In fact, that it could also results as a sign of disappointment.

### *Gender*

The third of the four factors is gender. Studies reveled that women have more ability to identify the basic emotions faster than males. (Schneider, Hempen, & Lynch, 2013) Gender and facial expression develop an understanding to express which gender is more likely to identify emotions. Women are more likely to identify emotions than men because of the fact that women are able to recognize the facial expression quicker than men. Women can identify the basic emotions of happiness, yet were not able to identify the emotion of anger and sadness. (Schneider, Hempel, & Lynch, 2013). Women can point out the emotions that are positive rather than the negative.

### *Age*

The fourth factor is age. Studies reveled that children have a better ability to identify the basic emotions from photographs of facial expressions. (Carr, Winkielman & Oveis, 2014). Age and facial expression develop an understanding to show children the ability to understand each other's emotions. Children are able to understand the different emotions by mimic the emotion of another individual. Children understand the six basic emotions from simple performing themselves, yet regarding the complex emotions children need to mimic the emotions in order to understand. Studies have shown that mimicking the emotions has helped children understand the different muscle movements, eye movements, and other

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aspect to develop an understanding of the basic and complex emotion expressions. (Carr, Winkielman & Oveis, 2014).

### Basic Emotion Theory and Facial Expression

Despite the focus on facial expressions, it appears that one of the biggest theory of understanding facial expression and emotions is Basic Emotion Theory (BET). The benefit of understanding the theory is not necessarily understand what the six basic emotions are, but also understanding the idea why these basic emotions were focused on more than others. Basic emotions is the study of how the relationship between facial expressions and emotions viewing from different cultures.

Paul Ekman's (1992) basic emotions theory views of the six basic emotions such as; sadness, happiness, fear, disgust, anger, and tiredness and how certain cultural can identify facial expression and the emotions. (Izard, 1992). This theory asserts that different cultures could have tendency to develop the understanding how one certain culture expresses the basic emotions. Ekman focuses on the idea of how a person can express different facial expressions regarding the six basic emotions, and how it also it differs from the complex emotions.

The concept of the Basic Emotion theory was developed after Ekman's mother develop a mental illness, and later committed suicide. (Taught in AP Psy, 2015). Paul Ekam's wanted to understand the concept of nonverbal communication. Ekman's concept expanded more when he develop a study focusing on facial expression while focusing in different cultures such as;

Papua New Guinea. (Ortony & Turner, 1990). Ekman's study resulted in that facial expression is universal.

Researching the Basic Emotions theory and facial expressions. There were a few connections when researching these topics. The Basic Emotions Theory focuses on the six basic emotions are considered universal, because of the idea that gender, age is able to identify the six basic emotions. The factors can also help identify the emotions even through suppressing emotions based on the body postures, and facial expressions being presented at the moment. Suppressing emotions are often presented in serious interactions, yet can be often identify with the facial expression that are being presented.

Another connection I found was that Paul Ekman was able to explain how the basic emotions can also help develop the understanding of complex emotions. Cultural plays a role in developing the complex emotions from understanding the basic emotions facial expression. Based on Ekman's research, expressing or suppressing emotions will be easily identify through the common six basic emotions that a person knows.

## Discussion

Facial expressions constitute a very important aspect of understanding emotions, and as such, have been an easy aspect to help identify the common emotions a person could be presenting. The subjects of many research studies regarding facial expressions and suppressing emotions have helped understand that identifying the emotions could be affected through different factors such as; cultural, body postures, gender, and age. These studies have shown that, although a person can suppress an

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emotions, these factors could help identify the emotions quicker than expected.

Suppressing emotions can be identify easily throughout some cultures, and gender. Often cultural can identify the emotions based on the body postures that is being presented, In past research studies, in order to identify facial expression, participants would analyzing photos of different emotions and being able to identify them. Theses studies has benefits the psychology department from develop an understanding on the different factors can interfere with the expression emotions or suppressing emotions.

The Basic Emotion theory is just one of the concept that has an understanding on the cultural factor obverted in identify the common emotions. This theory has paired with other psychology researchers on understanding the development of complex emotions, how the factors affect in expressing and suppressing emotions. This information is used to have a better understanding on gender, age, and body postures affects the suppressing and expressing emotions.

The question is now Do you believe that our facial expressions can express our emotions through silence? The answers is yes, in this case, is yes, a person's facial expression can express our emotions through suppressing emotions. With the factors such as; age, gender and body postures can help identity the suppressing emotions during an interactions.

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