

# Miscommunication of the sexes:

The relationship of how men and women perceive nonverbal communication as flirtatious



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## Objective:

- Examine the communication differences between sexes.
- Distinguish the differences between how males and females perceive nonverbal communication as flirtatious.

A study by Briton and Hall calls for further investigation in this area.

## Hypotheses:

- Primary hypothesis: There is a significant difference between sex and perceiving nonverbal communication (*eye contact*, *physical contact*, *gestures*, and *facial expressions*) as flirtatious.
- Secondary hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between relationship status and perceived flirtatious nonverbal communication.

## Data Collection Method:

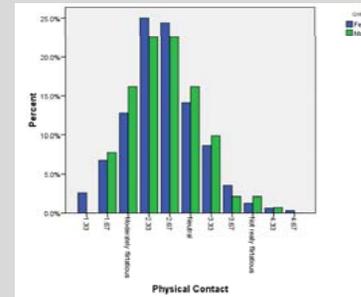
- Nonrandom snowball and convenience sampling
  - Departmental emails and Facebook 'event'
- Subjects: heterosexual females and males between 18-25
- Electronic survey depicting hypothetical situations
  - Participants asked to rate degree of flirtation in given situation
- 454 usable respondents

## Data Analysis Method:

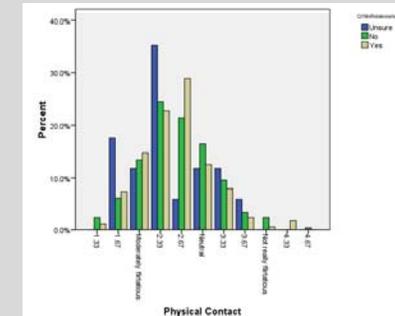
- Two-variable chi-square to examine differences between independent and dependent nominal variables (Cross tabulation)
- Cronbach's alpha to measure internal reliability among variables
- Sex compared to the degree of flirtation perceived

## Results:

- Primary hypothesis: Sex of the subject was not significantly related with how s/he perceives non-verbal flirtation under four categories: physical touch ( $n = 454$ ,  $p > .05$ ), eye contact ( $n = 454$ ,  $p > .05$ ), gestures ( $n = 454$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and facial expressions ( $n = 454$ ,  $p > .05$ ).
- Cronbach's alpha of the four categories; physical touch (.248), eye contact (.345), gestures (.520), and facial expressions (.470)



- Secondary hypothesis: There was also a significant correlation between the relationship statuses of a person and if he/she interpreted non-verbal gestures as flirtatious under four separate categories: physical touch ( $n = 454$ ,  $p > .05$ ), eye contact ( $n = 454$ ,  $p > .05$ ), gestures ( $n = 454$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and facial expressions ( $n = 454$ ,  $p > .05$ ).



## Implications:

- Although the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the variables did not establish reliability, there was still statistical significance within the findings.
- According to the findings of the study's variables, men viewed physical contact and hand gestures as more flirtatious non-verbal communication than women.
- On the other hand, women viewed eye contact and facial expressions as more flirtatious non-verbal communication than men.
- This implies that women should be cautious about physical contact and spatial awareness when communicating with men, while men should be aware of their eye contact and facial expressions while communicating with women.