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978-0-521-41783-9 - Interpersonal Expectations: Theory, Research, and Applications

Edited by Peter David Blanck

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This volume examines the phenomenon of interpersonal expectations – how the expectations of one person affect the behavior of another in an interactive setting – from theoretical, applied, and basic research perspectives. Since Robert Rosenthal, author of *Pygmalion in the Classroom*, first began the systematic study of interpersonal and experimenter expectancy effects some 35 years ago, scores of published studies of interpersonal expectations have appeared. Peter Blanck's book brings together these efforts for the first time in a comprehensive review of the field, assessing the future directions for and implications of the research.

The volume is divided into three parts that review real-world applications, such as the courtroom, the classroom, and the operating room; the mediation of interpersonal expectations through verbal and nonverbal behavior; and the emerging methodological and statistical techniques for understanding the implications of interpersonal expectations. In each part, critical commentary and analysis by leading scholars in the field are presented.

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Studies in Emotion and Social Interaction

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Interpersonal expectations

Theory, research, and applications

Edited by

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for
Robert Rosenthal
friend, colleague, mentor, teacher; in
each, enabler of our own best self-fulfilling
prophecies.

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Preface

The systematic study of interpersonal expectations took root in 1956, when Robert Rosenthal set forth a hypothesis in his doctoral dissertation regarding a phenomenon he labeled *unconscious experimenter bias*. Rosenthal realized that prior discussions of experimenter bias had dealt with only the theoretical impact such biases may have on the designs of research questions and on the interpretation of results (Rosenthal, 1956, pp. 69–70; referenced in chapter 1, this volume). He wrote: “It is almost as though the E[xperimenters] were considered another [separate] instrument in his [*sic*] actual conduct of the research. . . . [I]t behooves us to check his calibration” (p. 70).

Now some 37 years later, this volume seeks to examine the “calibration” of interpersonal expectations in basic and applied research and in theory. Rosenthal’s then-controversial research on the unintended interpersonal expectancy biases of psychological researchers was first presented formally at the meeting of the American Psychological Association in 1959. Since that time, published studies of interpersonal expectations, though increasing in number and scope, have heretofore not been brought together systematically in a single volume.

This volume provides innovative and critical reviews of the study of interpersonal expectations in three basic areas: (1) real-world applications of research on interpersonal expectations, (2) exploration of the mediation of interpersonal expectations through verbal and nonverbal behavior, and (3) discussion of emerging statistical and methodological techniques for understanding and studying interpersonal expectations.

In chapter 1, Robert Rosenthal provides a rich overview of the development of theory, research, and application of the study of interpersonal expectations. Rosenthal describes the historical development of research on interpersonal expectations. He also discusses the substan-

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tive and methodological antecedents and consequences of the study of the subject.

In chapter 2, Donald Campbell provides additional insight into the historical development of the study of interpersonal expectations. Campbell clarifies the importance of the topic and then provides a previously unpublished 1959 symposium paper on experimenter bias that set the stage for the study of interpersonal expectations.

This book is next divided into three parts. Each part is preceded by an introduction, which places the chapters into the larger context, and is followed with a commentary.

Part I

Part I contains a discussion of research on interpersonal expectations in several applied contexts. In chapter 3, John Darley and Kathryn Oleson introduce the part, providing a discussion of the relevance of the study of interpersonal expectations in various contexts. They examine the psychological components of interpersonal expectations and the possible mechanisms (verbal and nonverbal) for the transference of expectancy effects, and set forth a general social interaction sequence that may be useful for understanding interpersonal expectations.

In chapter 4, I review the relevance of interpersonal expectations in the courtroom, provide a model for the study of interpersonal expectations, and report the results of the preliminary empirical tests of the model. I then describe the central importance of understanding in this area to our system of justice.

In chapter 5, Marylee Taylor explores interpersonal expectancies and the perpetuation of racial inequity. Several important questions are addressed, including the following: Is there evidence that the psychological mediators linking the job applicant's or student's race to the interviewer's or teacher's behavior are interpersonal expectations? What are the remedies for expectations that may aggravate racial inequality in education and employment?

In chapter 6, Elisha Babad explores the role of interpersonal expectations in the classroom. The chapter illuminates the central issues in teacher expectancy research and examines the development of the field since Rosenthal and Jacobson's seminal work *Pygmalion in the Classroom*.

In chapter 7, Dov Eden outlines the importance of interpersonal expectations in organizations. The chapter presents a review of research on interpersonal expectancy effects in nonschool organizations and some

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ideas for practical applications designed to improve organizational effectiveness.

In chapter 8, Howard Friedman deals with the role of interpersonal expectations and the maintenance of health. Friedman addresses whether people's expectations about their health, derived from others, have a meaningful effect on their psychobiological functioning. The concept of the *self-healing personality* and the link between health outcomes and interpersonal expectations are examined.

In chapter 9, Miron Zuckerman, Holley Hodgins, and Kunitate Miyake describe the variables related to interpersonal impressions that act as precursors to interpersonal expectations. The central question explored is whether physical and vocal attractiveness may act as a self-fulfilling prophecy in everyday life.

In his commentary in chapter 10, Harris Cooper argues that no single hypothesis better captures the spirit of social psychology than does the concept of interpersonal expectations. Cooper considers the reasons why the interpersonal expectations hypothesis has generated an enormous amount of research in the various applied settings set forth in Part I. Finally, he contends that the expectancy hypothesis is more than a hypothesis; rather, it is a "social fact."

Part II

Part II deals with research on the mediation of interpersonal expectations through nonverbal behavior. In chapter 11, Ross Buck introduces the part, discussing the mediation of interpersonal expectations by nonverbal behavior. Buck explores the "covert" communication process and argues that it is in fact a biologically based process involving the spontaneous communication of motivational and emotional states.

In chapter 12, Dane Archer, Robin Akert, and Mark Costanzo present the design alternatives that confront researchers interested in the ways that nonverbal behavior mediates interpersonal expectations. For each design alternative, the chapter attempts to show the theoretical and methodological consequences.

In chapter 13, Bella DePaulo discusses the central importance of nonverbal behavior as a mediator of interpersonal expectations. DePaulo explores whether people can behave at will in nonverbally "warm" ways that reap positive outcomes as a consequence.

In chapter 14, Judy Hall and Nancy Briton document the expectations for male and female nonverbal behavior styles, showing that there is a

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good correspondence between gender-style expectations and actual gender differences in behavior. They then discuss possible causal connections between gender expectations and male and female differences in nonverbal communication. Finally, Hall and Briton examine the role of gender in determining the magnitude of expectancy effects in randomized experiments.

In chapter 15, Robin DiMatteo is concerned with the important relationship between physician rapport, nonverbal communication, and the mediation of interpersonal expectations. DiMatteo analyzes the importance of expectations in the physician–patient relationship and their implications for patient adherence to medical treatment recommendations.

Klaus Scherer provides commentary in chapter 16 that highlights the relation between interpersonal expectations, social influence, and emotion transfer. Scherer argues for the need to set forth an integrative theory of interpersonal expectations that considers cultural, applied, interdisciplinary, and other factors.

Part III

Part III consists of chapters that underscore recent innovations in the study and analysis of interpersonal expectations. The chapters in this part explore a number of methodological implications. Chapter 17, by Dane Archer, opens the part with a provocative analysis of “insoluble problems versus investigable questions” in the development of new procedures, methods, and statistical tools to study interpersonal expectations.

In chapter 18, Monica Harris outlines a model and method of study for the development of a taxonomy of the mediation of interpersonal expectations. The result is a first step toward understanding the processes underlying expectancy effects, as well as methodological guidance for how to choose mediating behaviors to study in expectancy research.

In chapter 19, Frank Bernieri offers an overview of the importance of various statistical and methodological decisions in the study of interpersonal expectations. Several issues regarding the optimal application of ANOVA techniques as they pertain to research on interpersonal expectations are discussed.

In chapter 20, Donald Rubin analyzes recent meta-analytic techniques

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that have been employed in the analysis of interpersonal expectation research. Rubin then proposes the *effect size surface* perspective as a superior means for statistical literature synthesis.

In chapter 21, Ralph Rosnow reviews the importance of the concept of the volunteer subject to the study of interpersonal expectations. Rosnow focuses on the characteristics of subjects who volunteer for research participation and the effects associated with their perception of the experimenter's expectations.

In chapter 22, Mary Amanda Dew deals with applications, methodological issues, and dilemmas in the study of interpersonal expectations. Dew takes up the issue of experimenter expectancy effects in the context of applied mental health research that uses primarily nonlaboratory and field research methods.

Marylee Taylor's commentary in chapter 23 considers *moderating* and *mediating* forces in the study of interpersonal expectations. Taylor suggests ways in which the study of such intervening forces help in the analysis of the notion of *expectancy confirmation*, providing parallels for her arguments from other lines of social psychological research. Taylor points out how similar variables under study may serve as either moderating or mediating functions in the transmission of interpersonal expectancy effects.

Taken together, the chapters and commentary in this volume offer a view of the issues facing scholars concerned with understanding the theory, applications, and research on interpersonal expectations. The authors report on the current state of the field and suggest important directions for future research.

The volume is addressed primarily to behavioral and social scientists, health and organizational psychologists, and methodologists. I believe, however, that physicians, lawyers, anthropologists, sociologists, and statisticians may be equally interested. The text may also prove useful for graduate and advanced undergraduate classes in many of the previously mentioned disciplines.

This volume is a collaborative effort. I am grateful to the contributors for the time and energy they put into its development. I gratefully acknowledge support from the University of Iowa, College of Law Foundation during the preparation of this book and from the Annenberg Foundation Washington Program.

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