



THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL AROUSAL ON COMMUNICATION: A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT: *Emotional arousal, a state of heightened physiological activity, significantly influences communication processes. This paper examines the effects of emotional arousal on communication, exploring its psychological and physiological underpinnings. We discuss how emotional arousal can both facilitate and hinder effective communication and provide insights into strategies for managing arousal to optimize communication outcomes. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining surveys, interviews, and physiological measures to assess emotional arousal and communication effectiveness. Results indicate that emotional arousal can enhance communication by increasing attention and motivation, but can also impede effective communication by impairing cognitive processing and increasing conflict. The findings have implications for communication theory, practice, and future research.*

KEYWORDS: Emotional Arousal, Emotional Expression, Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, Digital Communication, Communication, Conflict Resolution, Technology.



INTRODUCTION

Emotional arousal is a fundamental aspect of human experience (Smith, Woodard, & Pollak, 2024), arising from a range of stimuli, including social interactions, emotional events, and environmental factors. Social interactions, such as conflicts or intimate conversations, can elicit strong emotional responses (Van Kleef & Côté, 2022), influencing communication patterns. Emotional events, like personal achievements or traumatic experiences, can also trigger emotional arousal, shaping communication styles (Karkala, 2025). Environmental factors, including noise, temperature, or crowding, can contribute to emotional arousal (Zhang, Qi, & Zhan, 2023), impacting communication effectiveness.

As a key component of emotional response, arousal plays a crucial role in shaping communication processes. Emotional arousal can influence attention, motivation, and engagement, affecting communication outcomes (Aksaray & Ozcelik, 2023). Arousal can enhance communication by increasing attention to emotional cues, leading to more empathetic and responsive interactions (Karkala, 2025). Conversely, high levels of emotional arousal can impede effective communication by impairing cognitive processing, leading to decreased message clarity and increased conflict (Yang, Wang, Wang, Jiang, & Li, 2025).

Despite its importance, the impact of emotional arousal on communication remains underexplored. Research has primarily focused on the cognitive and behavioral aspects of communication, neglecting the emotional and physiological dimensions. This paper aims to investigate the complex relationship between emotional arousal and communication, highlighting its implications for effective communication. By examining the interplay between emotional arousal and communication, this study seeks to provide insights into strategies for managing arousal to optimize communication outcomes.

The investigation of emotional arousal and communication has significant implications for various fields, including psychology, communication studies, and organizational behavior. Understanding the role of emotional arousal in communication can inform the development of effective communication strategies, improve conflict resolution, and enhance interpersonal relationships (Karkala, 2025). This study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on emotional arousal and communication, providing a foundation for future studies and practical applications.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on emotional arousal and communication has yielded mixed findings, highlighting the complex and multifaceted nature of this relationship. On one hand, some studies suggest that emotional arousal can enhance communication by increasing attention and motivation (Guzel, Ilker, & Ryan, 2020). For instance, it was found that individuals experiencing high levels of emotional arousal were more attentive to emotional cues and exhibited more empathetic behaviors (Liu, Sun, & Zhang, 2022). This increased attention and empathy can lead to more effective communication, as individuals are better able to understand and respond to the emotional needs of others (Tripathy, 2021; Karkala, 2025).

Similarly, found that individuals with high levels of emotional arousal were more likely to engage in prosocial behaviors, such as helping and cooperation (Brethel-Haurwitz, Stoinova,



& Marsh, 2020). This suggests that emotional arousal can motivate individuals to communicate in a more supportive and collaborative manner (Huang & Lajoie, 2023). Furthermore, research has shown that emotional arousal can increase the intensity and authenticity of emotional expressions, leading to more genuine and engaging communication (Zloteanu & Kruhumba, 2021).

On the other hand, other studies indicate that high levels of emotional arousal can impede effective communication by impairing cognitive processing and increasing conflict. For example, Smeijers, Benbouriche, and Garofalo (2020) found that high levels of emotional arousal can lead to decreased cognitive processing, resulting in impulsive and aggressive communication. Similarly, Din and Ahmad (2020) found that emotional arousal can increase aggression and conflict, particularly in situations where individuals feel threatened or frustrated.

These mixed findings highlight the importance of considering the context and intensity of emotional arousal in communication. While moderate levels of emotional arousal may enhance communication, high levels can impede effective communication and lead to conflict. Furthermore, individual differences in emotional regulation and communication style can influence the impact of emotional arousal on communication.

Overall, the research suggests that emotional arousal is a complex and multifaceted factor in communication, influencing both positive and negative outcomes. By understanding the role of emotional arousal in communication, individuals can develop strategies to manage their emotions and communicate more effectively.

Theoretical Review

Several theories inform our understanding of emotional arousal and communication, providing a foundation for exploring the complex interplay between emotions, cognition, and behavior. One of the most influential theories is the Schachter-Singer theory, which posits that emotional arousal is a key component of emotional experience, influencing cognitive appraisal and behavioral responses (Ying, Michal, & Zhang, 2024). According to this theory, emotional arousal is a non-specific state that is cognitively appraised and labeled, leading to the experience of a specific emotion. This theory suggests that emotional arousal plays a crucial role in shaping communication, as individuals appraise and respond to emotional stimuli in their environment.

The cognitive-neoassociationistic model, proposed by Berkowitz, provides further insight into the relationship between emotional arousal and communication. This model suggests that emotional arousal can activate associative networks, influencing cognitive processing and behavioral responses. According to this theory, emotional arousal can prime associated thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, leading to a cascade of cognitive and emotional processes that shape communication (Berkowitz, 1990). For example, if an individual experiences emotional arousal in response to a perceived threat, this arousal can activate associated thoughts and feelings of anger, leading to aggressive communication.

Other theories, such as the excitation transfer theory, also inform our understanding of emotional arousal and communication. This theory suggests that emotional arousal can be transferred from one situation to another, influencing emotional experiences and behavioral responses (Zillman, 2003). For example, if an individual experiences emotional arousal in



response to a stressful situation, this arousal can be transferred to a subsequent communication interaction, leading to increased emotional intensity and conflict.

These theories provide a framework for understanding the complex relationship between emotional arousal and communication, highlighting the interplay between emotions, cognition, and behavior. By considering these theories, researchers and practitioners can better understand how emotional arousal influences communication and develop strategies to manage emotions and communicate effectively.

In addition to these theories, research has also explored the role of emotional intelligence in communication (Karkala, 2025). Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and regulate one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. This research suggests that individuals with high emotional intelligence are better able to manage their emotions and communicate effectively, even in challenging situations.

Overall, the theories and research discussed above provide a foundation for understanding the complex relationship between emotional arousal and communication. By considering these theories and research, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of the role of emotions in communication and develop strategies to manage emotions and communicate effectively.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed-methods approach was employed to assess emotional arousal and communication effectiveness. Surveys, interviews, and physiological measures (heart rate, skin conductance) were used to collect data from 100 participants. The survey assessed emotional arousal, communication style, and conflict resolution strategies. Interviews explored participants' experiences of emotional arousal and communication. Physiological measures were used to assess emotional arousal during communication tasks.

Results indicate that emotional arousal can enhance communication by increasing attention and motivation. Participants experiencing high levels of emotional arousal reported increased attention to emotional cues and exhibited more empathetic behaviors. However, high levels of emotional arousal also impede effective communication by impairing cognitive processing and increasing conflict. Physiological measures revealed increased heart rate and skin conductance during communication tasks, indicating heightened emotional arousal.

The results suggest that emotional arousal plays a complex role in communication, influencing both facilitating and hindering effects. Emotional arousal can enhance communication by increasing attention and motivation but can also impede effective communication by impairing cognitive processing and increasing conflict. The findings have implications for communication theory, practice, and future research, highlighting the importance of considering emotional arousal in communication contexts.

The study's results are consistent with previous research, which suggests that emotional arousal can have both positive and negative effects on communication (Zillman, 2003; Brethel-Haurwitz, Stoinova, & Marsh, 2020). The findings also highlight the importance of considering individual differences in emotional regulation and communication style, as these factors can influence the impact of emotional arousal on communication.



Overall, the study provides insights into the complex relationship between emotional arousal and communication, highlighting the need for further research and practical applications.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study suggest that emotional arousal plays a complex role in communication, influencing both facilitating and hindering effects. On one hand, emotional arousal can enhance communication by increasing attention and motivation (Guzel, Ilker, & Ryan, 2020). When individuals experience emotional arousal, they are more likely to be attentive to emotional cues and exhibit empathetic behaviors (Liu, Sun, & Zhang, 2022). This increased attention and empathy can lead to more effective communication, as individuals are better able to understand and respond to the emotional needs of others.

On the other hand, high levels of emotional arousal can impede effective communication by impairing cognitive processing and increasing conflict (Aloia & Solomon, 2015). When individuals experience high levels of emotional arousal, they may become overwhelmed and struggle to process information effectively (Storbeck & Clore, 2008). This can lead to impulsive and aggressive communication, which can escalate conflicts and damage relationships.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research, which suggests that emotional arousal can have both positive and negative effects on communication (Zillman, 2003; Brethel-Haurwitz, Stoinova, & Marsh, 2020). The study's results also highlight the importance of considering individual differences in emotional regulation and communication style, as these factors can influence the impact of emotional arousal on communication.

Strategies for managing emotional arousal, such as self-awareness, emotion regulation, and empathy, can optimize communication outcomes (Brethel-Haurwitz, Stoinova, & Marsh, 2020). Self-awareness involves recognizing and understanding one's own emotions, which can help individuals to manage their emotional arousal and communicate more effectively. Emotion regulation involves using techniques such as deep breathing, relaxation, and cognitive reappraisal to manage emotional arousal and reduce stress. Empathy involves understanding and responding to the emotional needs of others, which can help to build trust and improve communication (Tripathy, 2021).

The implications of this study are significant, highlighting the importance of considering emotional arousal in communication contexts. The study's findings suggest that individuals can improve their communication skills by learning to manage their emotional arousal and respond to the emotional needs of others. This can be particularly important in high-stakes communication situations, such as conflict resolution, negotiation, and public speaking (Aloia & Solomon, 2015).

In addition to these practical implications, the study's findings also have theoretical implications for our understanding of emotional arousal and communication. The study's results suggest that emotional arousal is a complex and multifaceted factor in communication, influencing both facilitating and hindering effects. This highlights the need for further research into the role of emotional arousal in communication and the development of more nuanced theories of emotional arousal and communication.



One potential direction for future research is to explore the role of emotional intelligence in communication. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and regulate one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. Research has shown that individuals with high emotional intelligence are better able to manage their emotions and communicate effectively, even in challenging situations (Karkala, 2025).

Another potential direction for future research is to explore the impact of technology on emotional arousal and communication. With the increasing use of digital communication technologies, emotional arousal may be influencing communication in new and complex ways. For example, research has shown that digital communication can lead to increased emotional arousal and conflict, particularly in situations where individuals are communicating anonymously or with strangers (Aksaray & Ozcelik, 2023).

In conclusion, the findings of this study suggest that emotional arousal plays a complex role in communication, influencing both facilitating and hindering effects. Strategies for managing emotional arousal, such as self-awareness, emotion regulation, and empathy, can optimize communication outcomes. The study's results have significant implications for communication theory, practice, and future research, highlighting the importance of considering emotional arousal in communication contexts.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study suggest that emotional arousal plays a complex and multifaceted role in communication, influencing both facilitating and hindering effects. On one hand, emotional arousal can enhance communication by increasing attention and motivation, leading to more empathetic and responsive interactions. On the other hand, high levels of emotional arousal can impede effective communication by impairing cognitive processing and increasing conflict (Aloia & Solomon, 2015).

As we navigate the complexities of human communication, it is essential to recognize the significant impact of emotional arousal on our interactions with others. Emotional arousal is an inherent aspect of the human experience (Brethel-Haurwitz, Stoinova, & Marsh, 2020), and it can manifest in various ways, from the excitement of a new relationship to the anxiety of a high-stakes presentation (Huang & Lajoie, 2023).

The study's results highlight the importance of considering emotional arousal in communication contexts and the need for individuals to develop strategies for managing their emotions and responding to the emotional needs of others. By cultivating self-awareness, emotion regulation, and empathy, individuals can optimize communication outcomes and build stronger, more resilient relationships.

Moreover, the study's findings have significant implications for communication theory, practice, and future research. The results suggest that emotional arousal is a critical factor in communication (Smith, Woodard, & Pollak, 2024), influencing both positive and negative outcomes. As such, researchers and practitioners must prioritize the study of emotional arousal and its impact on communication and develop more nuanced theories and models that account for the complex interplay between emotions, cognition, and behavior.



In addition, the study's results underscore the importance of emotional intelligence in communication. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and regulate one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others (Karkala, 2025). Research has shown that individuals with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage their emotions and communicate effectively, even in challenging situations.

As we move forward in our understanding of emotional arousal and communication, it is essential to recognize the cultural and contextual factors that influence emotional experiences and communication styles. Emotional arousal is a universal human experience, but its expression and interpretation can vary significantly across cultures and contexts (Din, 2020).

In conclusion, the study's findings suggest that emotional arousal plays a complex and multifaceted role in communication, influencing both facilitating and hindering effects. By recognizing the significance of emotional arousal in communication and developing strategies for managing emotions and responding to the emotional needs of others, individuals can optimize communication outcomes and build stronger, more resilient relationships. As researchers and practitioners, we must prioritize the study of emotional arousal and its impact on communication and develop more nuanced theories and models that account for the complex interplay between emotions, cognition, and behavior.

Ultimately, the study of emotional arousal and communication has the potential to transform our understanding of human interaction and to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to communicate effectively in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

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