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# **UNIT 1 INTRODUCTION TO EMOTION, BASIC EMOTIONS AND CONCEPT OF EMOTIONS**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

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All of us at some point of time or the other in our everyday life feel happy, sad, angry, love, pity, jealousy, hatred, fear, agony etc. What are these feelings which we experience in our lives? What makes us feel these? Imagine our lives without these feelings or experiences? These are actually emotions. Our life would have been absolutely boring and meaningless without emotions. Our emotions and how we feel about certain things most often influences our thinking. Even our perception is not always determined by the outside stimulus but by our internal feelings, emotions, desires, and aversions. Thus feelings and emotions are dynamics of our behaviour, and thus are very important. In our practical life, feelings and outside behaviour are closely related. It is therefore very essential to know the difference between emotions and feelings which are highly inter related and both together and individually affect our behaviours. Emotions and feelings often appear just as different stages of one phenomenon.

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## **1.1 OBJECTIVES**

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After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain about the feelings and emotions;
- Discriminate between feelings and emotions;
- Identify the characteristics of emotions;

- Enumerate the types of emotions; and
- Explain about the components of emotions.

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## 1.2 FEELINGS

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Feelings is a term which is always used for various kinds of experiences. This term is generally used when we are not sure of the answer to a particular question. For instance, when we talk about feelings of pleasure, familiarity, we say I feel fine. These feelings can be put into various categories. Feelings like displeasure, grief, discontent, sadness etc. can be categorised under one category characterised by a tone of unpleasantness and avoidance. Similarly feelings like pleasure, happiness, joy, delight etc., will come under one category characterised by desirable pleasant feeling tone. In this manner we can enumerate many more experiences of feelings coming under various categories. Having known a little about what feelings are, now let us look at the dimensions of feelings.

### 1.2.1 Dimensions of Feelings

It has been stated by psychologists that each experience of feelings has three main characteristics. For instance, each feeling whether anger, pleasure, desire or sadness can be said to have a certain pleasantness-unpleasantness dimension.

Secondly, all feelings have a certain tone of excitement or numbness. For instance, pleasure has a tone of excitement. Similarly anger also has a tone of excitement. Sadness has a tone of numbness. Thus any feeling state has its position on excitement-numbness dimension.

Thirdly it is also noticed that most feelings have a tone of tenseness also referred as tone of expectancy or a tone of relaxation. All feelings connected with our waiting for something to happen or all feelings with anticipation will be characterised by the expectancy tone. In the same way when our feelings refer to something that has already happened, then there is a tone of relief or release. The feelings like anxiety and longing will have expectancy tone and feeling of sadness will have a tone of release since the sad event has already happened. Thus it can be stated that any feeling has a position on tension relaxation dimension.

### 1.2.2 Distinction between Feelings and Emotions

A feeling has also has some characteristics of its own, distinguishing it from experiences like sensations and emotions. Feeling is an internal experience and not felt in any one particular part. One may sometimes say that he/she experiences pain in the back of his leg. Here the individual uses the term feeling in a different sense. It is actually directed towards perception of part where the pain is sensed.

A pain may be unpleasant but the unpleasant feeling connected with it has no definite location in any part of the body. In this matter, it is different from sensations.

A visual sensation is experienced at the retina of the eye. It means that the sensation is localised but the whole organism is involved in feelings.

The feelings need not be strong always, sometimes they are very mild or as dull background states. This acts as discrimination between feelings and emotions.

The most important difference between a feeling and an emotion is one of degree or strength. The term invariably refers to a very strong and stirred up feelings or experiences.

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## 1.3 EMOTIONS

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Emotions not only give colour but also meaning to our lives and experiences. The crimes and even inhuman acts are all because of emotions. Emotions play a very important role in human behaviour and life. In fact, even moral behaviour is based on emotion to some extent (Daniel Goleman 1995).

The emotion is defined as ‘a strong mental or instinctive feeling such as love or fear’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 1996) involving many bodily processes, and mental states. An emotion combines cognition, bodily arousal and behaviour in a ready made formula for responding in line with the way the situation has been interpreted. There is a huge difference in the ways of feeling emotions by human beings and animals although both of them experience anger, fear, sadness, and joy.

Emotion can be defined as the “feeling” aspect of consciousness, characterised by certain physical arousal, a certain behaviour that reveals the feeling to the outside world, and an inner awareness of feelings. Emotion is associated with mood, temperament, personality and disposition and motivation. The English word ‘emotion’ is derived from the French word *émouvoir*. This is based on the Latin *emovere*, where *e-* (variant of *ex-*) means ‘out’ and *movere* means ‘move’. The related term “motivation” is also derived from *movere*. No aspect of our mental life is more important to the quality and meaning of our existence than emotions. They are what make life worth living, or sometimes ending. So it is not surprising that most of the great classical philosophers—Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, Descartes, Hobbes, Hume—had recognisable theories of emotion, conceived as responses to certain sorts of events of concern to a subject, triggering bodily changes and typically motivating characteristic behaviour.

### 1.3.1 Basic Emotions

Energy in motion is an emotion and is a way of expressing oneself in life. Emotions cannot be considered as good and bad as each emotion has a specific role to play in colouring our life. Emotions expressed by humans can be divided into two broad categories and are called as positive and negative emotions. In positive emotions an attempt or an intention to include is expressed. They are fueled by an underlying desire for enjoyment and unity. Interest, enthusiasm, boredom, laughter, empathy, action, curiosity are the examples of positive emotions.

In negative emotions an attempt or intention to exclude is expressed. They are fueled by an underlying fear of the unknown, a fear of the actions of others, and a need to control them or stop them to avoid being harassed. Apathy, grief, fear, hatred, shame, blame, regret, resentment, anger, hostility are examples of negative emotions. The negative emotions are helpful and act as a motive in moving away from what one doesn’t want and positive emotions are useful for moving towards what one wants.

According to McDougall’s concept of emotions instincts and emotions were both innate patterns. This view was supported to some extent by James-Lange theory. Thus for a long time, it was believed that emotional behaviour was inherited. John Watson who is considered as leader of behaviourism examined this belief and concluded that there are three basic emotional patterns which are found even in infants and therefore can be regarded that emotions are inherited. Watson identified fear, anger and love as the three basic emotions. Paul Ekman has dedicated his career to researching emotions, focusing primarily on the following seven basic emotions.

Fear — Danger lurks
Sadness— Impending loss
Anger — Nonspecific threat, trespass, thwarted goals, plea for justice
Joy — Impending gain
Surprise— Unexpected event
Disgust — Contamination, toxic contact
Contempt — Substandard behaviour or being

There are hundreds of emotions along with their blends. The basic members and families of emotions, though not all agree on them, which are proposed by some theorists are as follows:

According to Daniel Goleman, the basic families of emotions are:

**Fear:** (Safety) anxiety, apprehension, nervousness, concern, consternation, misgiving, wariness, qualm, edginess, dread, fright, terror and in the extreme cases phobia and panic.

**Anger:** (Justice) fury, outrage, resentment, wrath, exasperation, indignation, vexation, acrimony, animosity, annoyance, irritability, hostility, and perhaps these are manifest in the extreme as hatred and violence.

**Sadness:** (Loss) grief, sorrow, cheerlessness, gloom, melancholy, self-pity, loneliness, dejection, despair, and depression in the extreme case.

**Enjoyment:** (Gain) happiness, joy, relief, contentment, bliss, delight, amusement, pride, sensual pleasure, thrill, rapture, gratification, satisfaction, euphoria, whimsy, ecstasy, and at the far edge, mania.

**Love:** (Attraction) acceptance, friendliness, trust, kindness, affinity, devotion, adoration, infatuation, and agape.

**Disgust:** (Repulsion) contempt, disdain, scorn, abhorrence, aversion, distaste, and revulsion.

**Surprise:** (Attention) shock, astonishment, amazement, and wonder.

**Shame:** (Self-control) guilt, embarrassment, chagrin, remorse, humiliation, regret, mortification, and contrition.

Daniel Goleman and Paul Ekman (1992) do not agree with the categorisation of emotions instead they think emotions in terms of families or dimensions, the main families' being-anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment, love, shame and so on.

Each of this family is considered to have a basic emotional nucleus at its core and its relatives rippling out from there in countless mutations. These outer ripples are moods which last longer than an emotion.

Beyond moods are temperaments, making people melancholy, timid or cheery. And still beyond such emotional dispositions are the outright disorders of emotions such as clinical depression or unremitting anxiety (Daniel Goleman 1995).

### 1.3.2 Concept of Emotions

Emotions expressed by humans can be divided into two broad categories and are called as positive and negative emotions. Examples of positive emotions include the following: Interest, enthusiasm, boredom, laughter, empathy, action, curiosity.

An attempt or intention to exclude is expressed by Negative emotions. Apathy, grief, fear, hatred, shame, blame, regret, resentment, anger, hostility are examples of negative emotions.

Emotions are accompanied by activation or an aroused state in the organism. They are normally accompanied by both physiological and psychological changes. The physiological changes normally include changes in gestures, muscular movements, facial expression, changes in physiological reactions like blood-pressure, pulse rate, heartbeat, respiration, etc. and psychological changes include blurring or clouding of consciousness, blocking of memory, confusion in perception etc.

### 1.3.3 General Characteristics of Emotions

All emotions have certain definite characteristics. Different emotions also have their own characteristics and behavioural patterns. Some of the general characteristics of emotions are as follows:

- i) **Emotions and biological drives:** Emotions mostly occur when any basic need is thwarted or challenged or when such a need is satisfied. Emotion is said to occur as a reaction when some basic drive is frustrated or properly satisfied. For example, fear is a response associated with expected danger. Anger is a response when some activity is blocked. Similarly joy is felt when the need is satisfied.

The other way in which emotions are related to biological needs is that they not only occur as a reaction to the thwarting of a need, but also, as experiences that help and direct the organism towards the satisfaction of the needs. To cite an example, in anger we are able to use more energy in fighting the obstructing situation.

Thus emotions serve the organism in a helpful manner in the satisfaction of basic needs.

- ii) **Emotions and reasoning:** Emotion does not surge up in the most challenging or disturbing situation in facing the problem by reasoning and thinking. An emotional response is always weakened by the application of our reasoning process. Logical reasoning locks emotions and strong emotions block logical thinking. These two phenomena seem to be opposed to each other. It is known that emotion is a primitive form of reaction than reasoning. Emotions have their own biological value in helping the organism to meet an emergency situation. In critical situations immediate and vigorous action is called for and there may not be much time for thinking and reasoning.
- iii) **Emotion and overt behaviour:** Each emotion has certain definite muscular and overt behaviour. Generally, each emotion is said to have its own expressive behaviour. But many emotions have common expressive signs. Certain strong emotions have their own characteristic behaviour patterns. For instance in anger, there is typical behaviour of attacking and all activities connected with it. In fear, there is the activity of fight or escape. Several other forms of overt behaviours such as smiling, laughing and crying are also expressions of emotions.
- iv) **Emotions and internal response:** When we experience emotions there are certain internal activities and disturbances in the autonomic nervous system, ductless glands and visceral organs.
- v) **Emotions and mood:** Unlike feelings emotions are very strong in intensity. So any emotional experience even after it ceases, leaves behind a kind of 'after feeling' called as mood. We all might have had experienced these moods at some point of time or the other in our lives. For example, after we had an outburst of anger, for a much longer time we would be in an angry mood. When we are in this mood we

are liable to become angry even with a slight provocation. After an experience of intense fear, we would be in a frightened mood for much longer time and unexpected sound or event will make us afraid again.

### 1.3.4 Changes in Emotions

We all have been experiencing various emotions in our day to day life. Have you ever noticed what changes happen in you when you experience an emotion? Let us understand more about the changes which happen in us due to emotions. As mentioned earlier emotions are characterised by definite overt behaviour patterns. Emotions when experienced cause certain overt changes and also disturbances of visceral patterns. Here we enumerate some of the important changes. These changes are produced because of the activities of ductless glands and the autonomic nervous system.

### 1.3.5 The Physiological Changes in Emotions

- i) **Facial expressions:** Various muscles of the face including the eye, the lips, the nose and the forehead undergo changes by way of twisting and taking different poses. Most of the emotions have their facial expressions but it may not always be easy to judge the emotion from these expressions. Some facial expressions are universal.
- ii) **Muscular adjustment:** Sometimes the entire muscular system of the body undergoes contraction and adjustments. For example, the bodily changes that take place in “startle reaction” when there is quick, unexpected and strong stimulus. The startle response consists of sudden movement of the head, blinking of the eyes, a characteristic facial expression, raising and drawing forward of the shoulders, turning inward of the upper arms, bending of the elbows, turning downward of the forearms, flexion of the fingers, forward movement of the trunk, contraction of the abdomen and bending of the knees.  
  
Some have questioned considering ‘startle reaction’ as an emotion as they consider startle reaction as one of the basic reflexes. There is some truth in this claim as the same type of bodily changes also appears in cases of fear response.
- iii) **Gestures and movement of the hands:** Gestures may sometimes involve the movements of the whole body.
- iv) **Change in voice:** The voice gets affected in an emotion. When excited the voice becomes loud and high pitched. Under fear the voice takes a sinking and low tone.

There are other changes of a miscellaneous nature associated with emotions such as the hair standing on end, stimulation of sweat glands, drying of the tongue etc.

Another change that takes place under emotions is the fact that we have unusual amount of energy at our disposal. For example, when we are fighting a fire, we seem to have strength and energy beyond our ordinary limit. When we are running away from danger, we are able to run much faster and the energy at our disposal seems to be much more than what is ordinarily available for us (some of us who may never win a prize at running a race may perhaps even beat a champion if we were chased by a cobra or a tiger). We would even notice a comparatively weaker person when under strong anger overcoming a much stronger man in a fight. All these are due to release of abnormal amount of energy helping us to meet the critical situation and thus preserve our well being.

### The changes that occur internally are:

- There is greater intensity of heart action.
- The pulse rate increases. This is commonly seen in fear and anger.
- Blood pressure increases in emotional excitement.
- There are many changes in gastro-intestinal tract. For example, Churning movement, slow down or stop in the stomach, the flow of saliva and other gastric juices necessary for digestion is reduced by 85 to 90%.
- There is greater secretion of glycogen into the blood stream,
- Sweat glands become more active and there is increased muscular tone.

### 1.3.6 Development of Emotions

The fine emotions of an adult, with his controlled and symbolic expressions of some of them, are certainly far removed from the blunt, massive direct action of a baby under an emotion. The difference almost resembles that between a 'cold war' and an actual front line battle on the field. Obviously great changes are taking place during the years of growth of the individual from infancy to adulthood. Almost everyone has his own characteristic developmental process as the individual develops from an infant to an adult. One of the most widely accepted schemes of the development of emotions was proposed by Bridges(1932). Let us now understand the stages of emotions as proposed by Bridges.

*Katherine Bridges' Theory* - Emotions develop as babies age

Newborns - One emotion only: diffuse excitement

3 Months - Distress and delight

6 Months - Distress differentiates into fear, disgust, and anger

12 Months - Delight differentiates into elation and affection

2 Years - Jealousy develops from distress; joy develops from delight

According to Bridges, new born infants have no differentiated emotional responses, but only have uncoordinated skeletal visceral responses, to all emotional stimuli. As the organism develops and matures, various emotions begin to differentiate with general distress and delight by about 6<sup>th</sup> month, distress developing into definite anger, distress and fear. Like this various emotions appear as the child advances in years. By about the age of 5 years, the responses such as envy, anxiety and shame appear.

Investigation undertaken by Bridges, several studies have been made on child development with reference to emotional characteristics. It has been noticed that different emotional responses are shown at different ages. Sometimes a particular stimulus which produced emotional response at an earlier age produces a distinct emotion at a lower age. The converse also takes place.

These differences in emotional responses at different age levels occur as a result of both maturation and learning. One such study showing these changes was reported by Blatz and his colleagues. Observations have been made with deaf blind human subjects and also with chimpanzees. The role of maturation and role of learning plays a very vital role in the process of development of emotions. These investigators claim that many of the emotional responses and the way of behaviour are learned. Maturation also plays an

important part in as much as, some of the response patterns depend mainly on the maturational process.

Emotional expressions and emotions in a child vary from those in an adult in various ways. Apart from role of maturation, the learning process also plays a very great part in the development of emotions. As the child grows it learns a great deal with regard to its emotional life. It learns to experience new emotions. It learns to experience emotions like anger and fear towards a new stimuli. It learns new ways of expressing of emotions. Most of the changes in emotional life of a child that takes place due to the process of learning are associated with what is ordinarily known as emotional maturity or proper development of emotions.

Emotions were found to be developed from environmental and genetic influences. Instincts and emotions are both innate patterns. Fear, Anger and Love are considered to be three basic emotional patterns found in infants and regarded as being inherited.

Emotions have been acting as wise guides in the evolutionary long run. According to Darwin (1965), emotions are developed primarily to prepare animals for action, particularly in emergencies. The nature of emotional state may be termed as psychological conditions, or as a psychological condition modified by cognitive process, where psychological arousal emerges as an essential factor, usually guided and steered by present cognitive factors and by evaluations of past experiences (Leventhal, 1980).

### 1.3.7 Components of Emotions

Most psychologists would agree that an emotion is a complex pattern of changes that include physiological arousal, subjective feelings, cognitive processes and behavioural reactions, all in response to a situation we perceive to be personally significant.

Accordingly, an emotion has four components:

- i) **Physiological arousal:** Emotions involve the brain, nervous system and hormones, so that when you're emotionally aroused the hormone secretion is more to give us instant energy. Each emotion has a specific characteristic of physiological aspects. For example: When angry, the blood rushes to our hands in order to fight. When afraid, the blood rushes to our skeletal system and leg to facilitate the fight or flight responses.
- ii) **Subjective feelings:** Emotions also include subjective awareness, or 'feeling' that involves elements of pleasure, liking and disliking. Thus, in studying emotion or knowing another person's feelings, we must rely heavily on that person's own self reports.
- iii) **Cognitive processes:** Emotions also involve cognitive processes such as memorial, perceptions, expectations and interpretations. Our appraisal of an event plays an especially significant role in the meaning it has for us.
- iv) **Behavioural reactions:** Emotions also involve behavioural reactions, both expressive and instrumental. Facial expressions such as smiles and frowns, as well as gestures and Lories of voice, all serve to communicate our feelings that may enhance our chances for survival.

The various theories of emotion differ mostly is regard to which of these various components is given priority. In much the same way, authorities differ about how emotions are activated or triggered.

The various components of emotion can be illustrated with a famous illustration from William James (1884) paper, 'What is an emotion?' James cited the example of

encountering a bear. “Imagine you are walking casually through the woods enjoying the sights and sounds of nature. Suddenly, there is a roaring sound, a crashing of undergrowth and a bear emerges into the clearing immediately in front of you. You immediately come to a halt, your heart is pounding, your mouth is dry, your muscles tense and you feel intensely afraid. You remember that it is important, when confronted by bears, to stand your ground and so you stand your ground and so you stay very still despite your fear. Eventually, after an impressive paw waving show of aggression, the bear wanders off and you are safe.

In this example, the emotion is one of the intense fear or terror, when you encounter the bear in the woods. The fear goes hand in hand with marked physiological changes; for example, the dryness in the mouth, the tension in the muscles, the racing heart and so on. The fear is also characterised by a readiness to run or to fight the ‘Fight or Flight’ syndrome. This is the functionality of fear in this instance. However, although there is action readiness, you do not actually follow that through to the level of behaviour; instead, you stand your ground.

Another part of the fear is the cognitive aspect where you actually feel extremely afraid because the bear has been understood at some level to be threatening to your current concerns such as personal survival.

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## 1.4 COMPARISON OF EMOTIONS OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS

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An individual is considered to be emotionally grown up and mature when he has outgrown some of the characteristics of emotional life of a child and had developed the characteristics of a normal adult. This process can be understood by comparing the characteristics of a child’s emotion with those of the emotions of a normal adult.

The child’s emotions are few. The primary emotions of a child shown from birth are three i.e., love, fear and anger. At the earliest stages, it does not have any emotional responses to complex situations that would arouse in a grown up adult blended emotions like jealousy, wonder, awe, admiration etc. these complex and secondary emotions are learned by the child from the adults as they grow and as opportunities occur.

In the early years of life of the child the stimuli that provoke the basic emotions are very few. They are limited to its immediate surroundings and certain biological needs. Fear is aroused only by loud noises, and when there is loss of physical support and balance. Anger is produced only when there is interference with its activities or when thwarted in its attempt to satisfy biological needs, like hunger. Love is seen when it is fondled and as a reaction to affectionate treatment by few individual adults like parents or close relatives.

Another important difference is that the child freely gives vent to the muscular and motor expressions of emotions, much more than adult. The child when is angry, kicks about, rolls on the ground, tears the clothes etc. the emotions of children are not organised and balanced. At one moment the child may be extremely angry but at the next minute it may be just the opposite state. As we grow up, we learn to organise emotions properly, to behave in a steady and dependable manner.

### Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Emotion is defined as \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ emotions are helpful and act as a motive in moving away from what one doesn’t want.

- 3) Examples for positive emotions are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) The role of \_\_\_\_\_ and role of \_\_\_\_\_ plays a very vital role in the process of development of emotions.
- 5) The components of emotions are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6) The \_\_\_\_\_ Nervous system comes into activity when the individual is in a state of danger or emergency.

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## 1.5 LET US SUM UP

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Feelings are a term which is always used for various kinds of experiences. Feelings like displeasure, grief, discontent, sadness etc. can be placed under one category characterised by a tone of unpleasantness and avoidance. Similarly feelings like pleasure, happiness, joy, delight etc., will come under one category characterised by desirable pleasant feeling tone. The feelings need not be strong always; sometimes they are very mild or as dull background states. This acts as discrimination between feelings and emotions.

The most important difference between a feeling and an emotion is one of degree or strength. Emotion can be defined as the “feeling” aspect of consciousness, characterised by certain physical arousal, a certain physical arousal, a certain behaviour that reveals the feeling to the outside world, and an inner awareness of feelings. Emotions when experienced cause some overt changes and also disturbances of visceral patterns.

According to Paul Ekman there are seven basic emotions, viz., Fear, Sadness, Anger, Joy, Surprise, Disgust and Contempt. Emotions were found to be developed from environmental and genetic influences. An emotion has four components 1) Physiological arousal, 2) subjective feelings, 3) Cognitive process and 4) Behavioural changes. The sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system plays a significant role in emotions.

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## 1.6 UNIT END QUESTIONS

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- 1) What are feelings?
- 2) Write about the development of emotions.
- 3) What are the basic emotions?
- 4) Explain about the various components of emotions.

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