The pandemic and our social interactions

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The COVID pandemic

I. COVID – a novel disease with unknown long term health effects

- Those with mild symptoms – might spread (unwillingly) the disease

  ➢ Shame and guilt feeling

II. Increased economic and health worries

- Women more risk averse in general

  - Gender impact (women being pushed into traditional gender roles)

- Worries extend from parents to children

  - More information usually helps
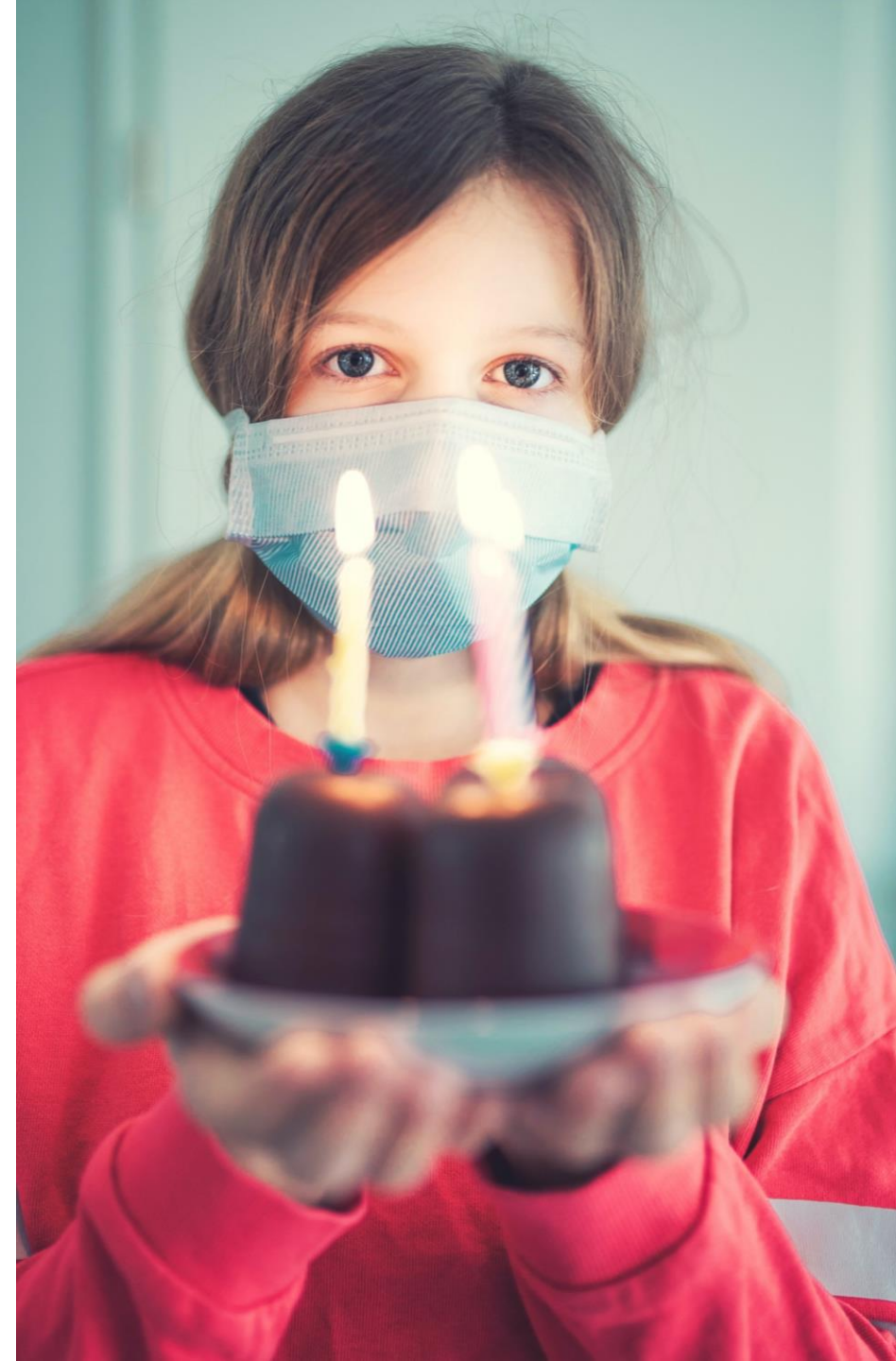
The COVID pandemic

III. Long periods of isolation

- Depression (either because of isolation or increased family stress)
    - Young (students) – increased space constraints plus blame from the outside for spread
    - Old – identified as high-risk groups often isolated for extended periods
- Extraverts deal better with problems than introverts

IV. Everyday interactions changed

- Move to homeoffice (videocalls, zoom teaching)
- Face-to-face interactions reduced and modified (face masks, social distance)
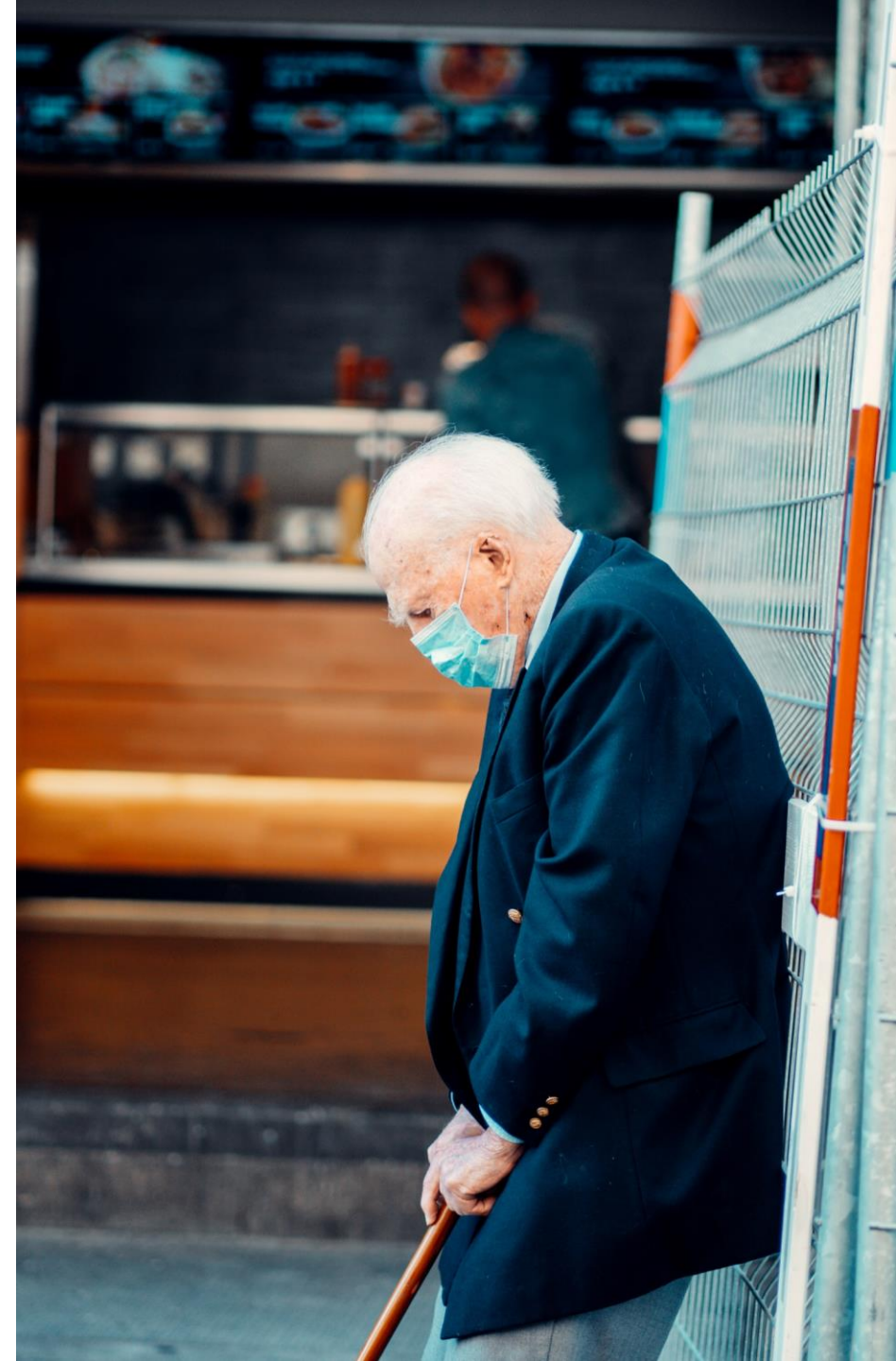
Interacting

When we talk with others, we:

- See their face

  - Also one of the earliest things babies focus on

- See where they look

  - Joint attention

- Observe signals like nodding, 'hmhm', laughing

  - Attention getters and two-way communication

Covid interactions: increasingly through screens.
What does this change?

Interactions on screens

I see the person on the screen looking away. But what is this person looking at?
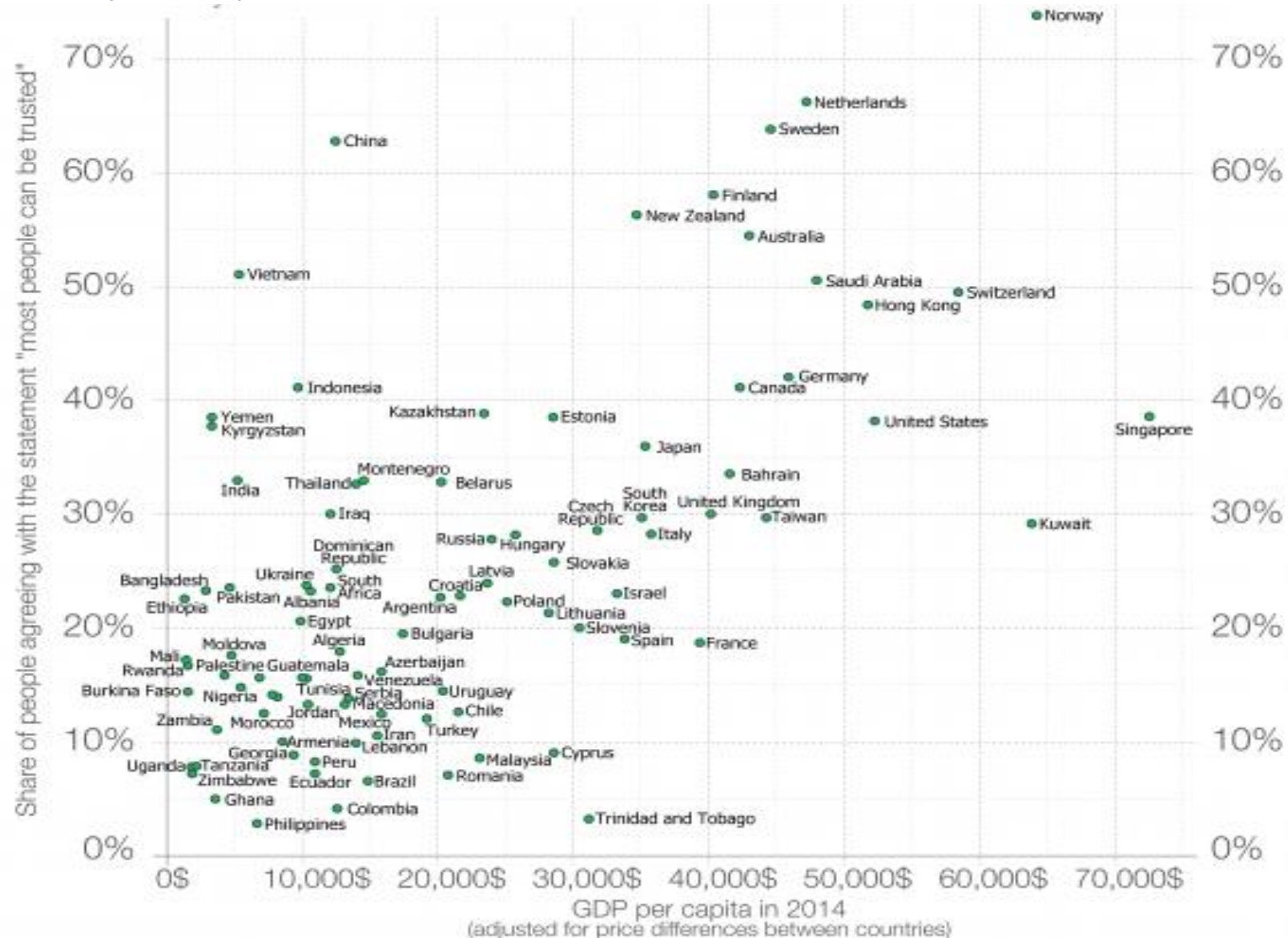
- Confusion about focus.

Laughter, hmhm

- Bad connections, microphones muted:
  - Frustration for speaker because unsure if message is received
  - Frustration for audience because interaction is cumbersome or delayed

Trust

General trust vs GDP per capita

Trust

How do we decide whether we trust someone?

- Use previous experiences
- Use reputation

But what if this is not available?

- We rely on signals – e.g. in the face.

Trustworthiness

Smiling makes you attractive and look trustworthy
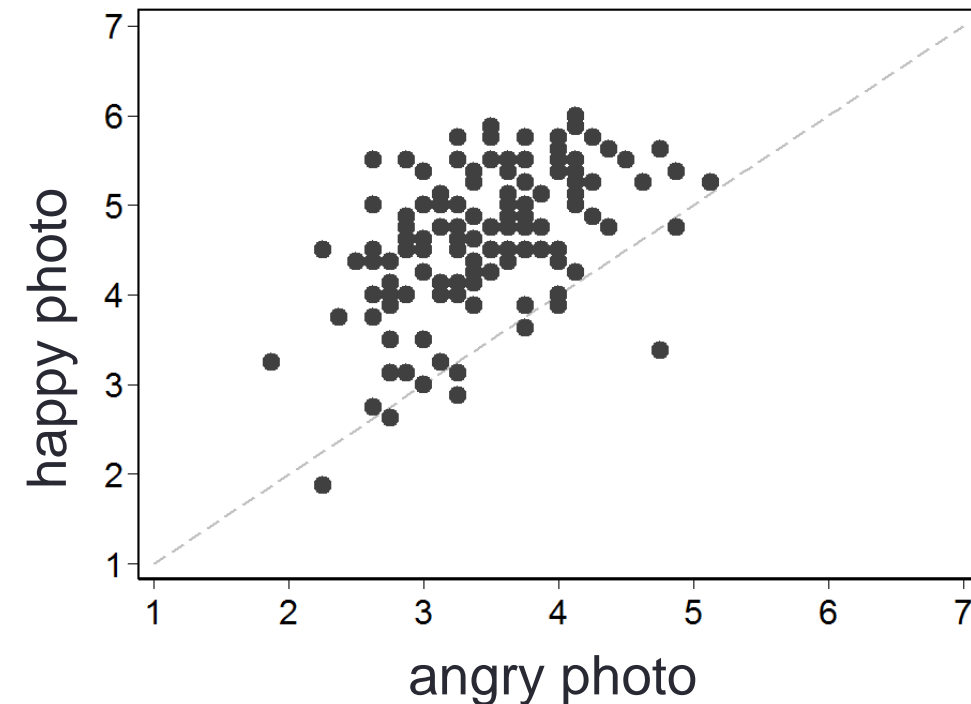
Face-to-face:

- Smiles inform us about the mood of a person

Online:

- Photos might not display how the person is feeling right now.

trustworthiness

Do people 'strategically' influence their emotion signals?

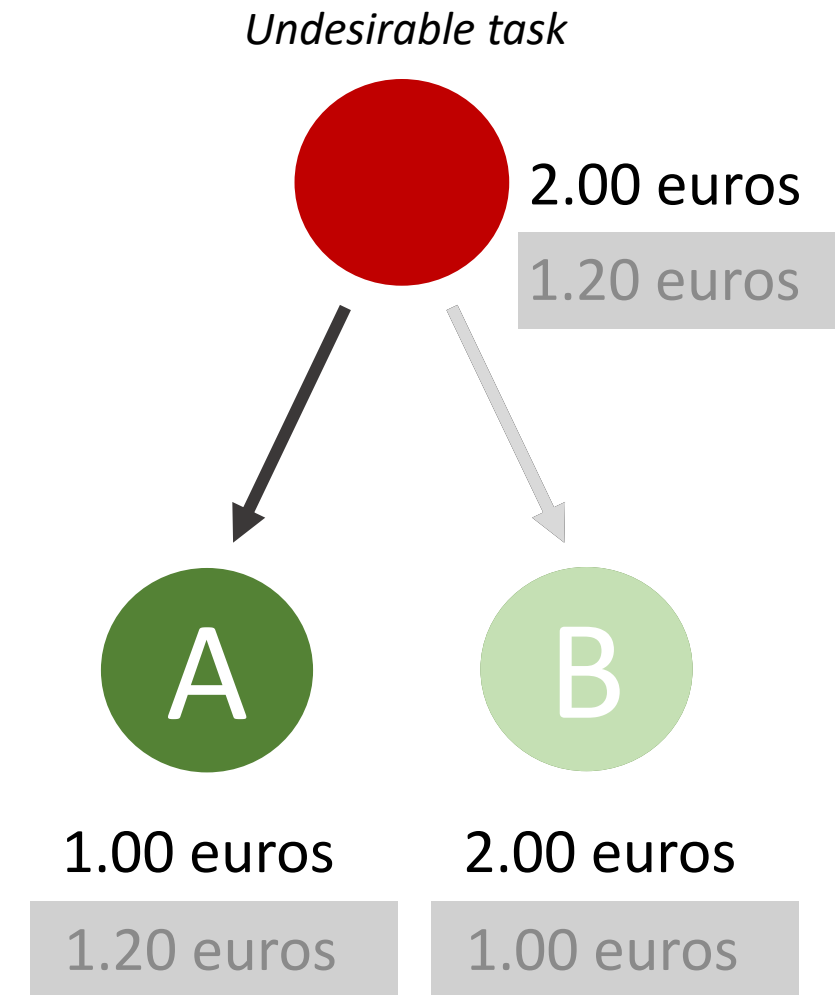Created a laboratory environment where three people interact.

Two play employees, one plays manager

Manager selects one of the two for a task that is either:

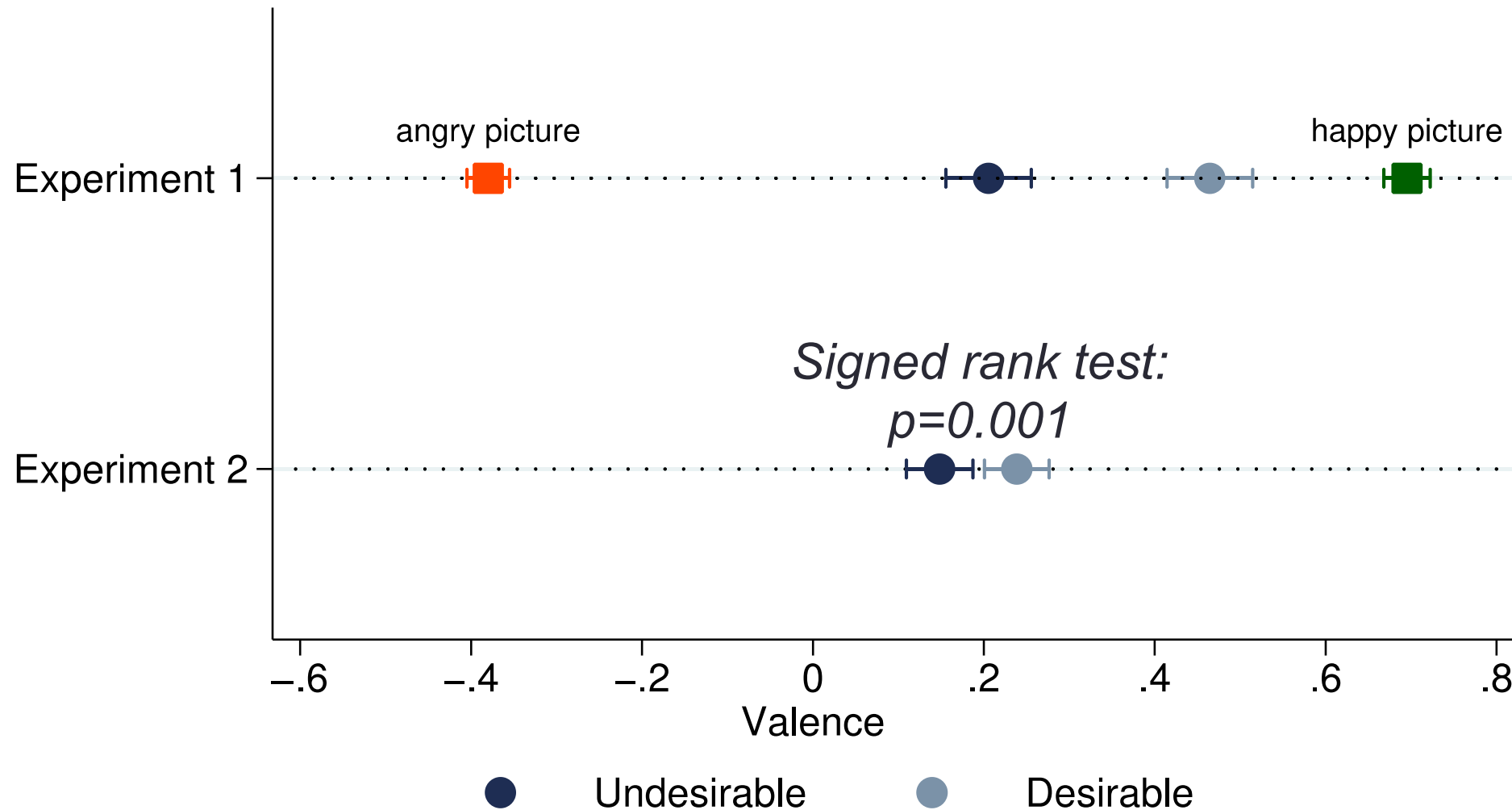- Desirable

- Undesirable

The three people never interacted before

Employees can send selfie of themselves to manager

Undesirable task

2.00 euros

1.20 euros

A   B

1.00 euros   2.00 euros

1.20 euros   1.00 euros

Experiment results

Chen, Leeuwen, Hopfensitz, van de Ven (2019)

Even during the Covid pandemic not all interaction are online

BUT most people wear masks.

Can we detect whether such a person smiles?

Ongoing study:

#SmileUnderYourMask

Where is he smiling?

0

0

Left

Right

Find our survey at:

    tse-fr.eu/suym

#SmileUnderYourMask

Thank you