

# **\*The Role of Social Context in Human Emotional Expressiveness: Inferring Other People\*s Preferences is Facilitated in a Familiar Social Context\***

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<b>Ethical review</b>	Approved WMO
<b>Status</b>	Pending
<b>Health condition type</b>	Other condition
<b>Study type</b>	Observational non invasive

## **Summary**

### **ID**

NL-OMON42630

### **Source**

ToetsingOnline

### **Brief title**

Perception of Emotions in Social Context

### **Condition**

- Other condition

### **Synonym**

emotional experiences, Inferring preferences from emotional expressions

### **Health condition**

De stude gaat niet over een aandoening per se maar over het inschatten van emoties bij mensen.

## Research involving

Human

## Sponsors and support

**Primary sponsor:** Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam

**Source(s) of monetary or material Support:** Ministerie van OC&W

## Intervention

**Keyword:** Emotions, inferring others preferences, preferences, social context

## Outcome measures

### Primary outcome

Behavioural

The main behavioural parameter is the observers\* inferring accuracy, which we will calculate as the percentage of items correctly identified as preferred versus not preferred choice. As a second measure of inferring accuracy, we will calculate Pearson\*s correlation between observers\* and consumers\* ratings on preference (pictures) and emotional experience (commercials). Self-assessment manikin (SAM) scale will be used to measure consumers\* emotional experience (valence and arousal) in relation to visual stimuli (pictures and commercials). The observer will assess consumers\* emotional expressiveness and choice preferences using a 7-point Likert scale.

### Neuroimaging

The neural activity of the participant performing the observer role will be measured with functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) which will be

derived from blood-oxygenation-level-dependent (BOLD) signals in regions of interest (ROI). The main study parameter is the level of inter-subject correlation (ISC) between observers\* neural activity. We will compare the level of ISC across conditions (social versus alone) and in relation to inferring performance (successful versus non-successful).

### **Secondary outcome**

Not applicable

## **Study description**

### **Background summary**

The social perspective implies that emotions have the purpose to co-ordinate social interactions by conveying information that assists and facilitates individuals in their reasoning about the other people\*s feelings, mental states, preferences and intentions (Parkinson, 1996). Experiencing others\* emotional states by mere observation and internal simulation gives the observer an appropriate somatosensory framework that promotes the deduction of others\* goals, attitudes, and preferences (Keysers, Kaas, and Gazzola, 2010). The presence of a friend/acquaintance is likely to make individual emotional expression and communication easier, a process known as social facilitation (Buck, Losow, Murphy and Costanzo, 1992). Being in a familiar social environment as opposed to complete isolation might enhance emotional behaviour and expressiveness in relation to certain external stimuli. We believe that an observer will perform better in inferring others\* feelings and preferences from their facial expressions when the observed are in the presence of a friend (social condition) rather than complete isolation (alone condition). We assume that the degree of inferring accuracy will be reflected in specific inter-subject synchronisation patterns across observers\* brain activity that might be modulated by the different social conditions in which the observed person is placed.

### **Study objective**

The main goal of this study is to investigate whether observers\* inferring accuracy of consumers\* preferences/emotional experience differs when the consumer (observed person) is with a friend (social condition) compared to on their own (alone condition). Physiologically, we explore whether observers\*

brain activations during inferring trials (successful versus non-successful) differ across the two conditions (alone versus social). We examine whether observers\* brain activation correlates with successful inferring performance and control for the moderating effect of social condition.

Next, we examine whether the emotional expressiveness of the consumer (observed person) is moderated by the social context. We investigate whether stronger stated preferences or more emotionally arousing stimuli are better inferred by the observer.

### **Study design**

Observational study.

### **Study burden and risks**

Not applicable

This standard observation fMRI study does not include administration of medicine products or medical intervention. We will select healthy participants with no history of neurological or psychiatric disease.

## **Contacts**

### **Public**

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## **Trial sites**

### **Listed location countries**

Netherlands

## Eligibility criteria

### Age

Adults (18-64 years)

Elderly (65 years and older)

### Inclusion criteria

All subjects will be female healthy adults (age 18-50) with self-reported normal or corrected-to-normal vision and normal hearing.

### Exclusion criteria

Individuals with a history of neurological or psychiatric disease or current medication affecting the central nervous system (CNS) will be excluded from the experiment. Individuals having ferromagnetic objects in the body will not be allowed to participate. Individuals wearing jewellery, metal objects, external prostheses, cards, keys, etc. will be asked to leave these in a locker outside the MRI scanner room. People who refuse to comply with the safety requirements will be excluded. Participants will be asked to fill in safety instruction and screening forms. Individuals who refuse to fill in this form or do not fully comply with the safety rules for MRI exams will not be allowed to do the experiment.

## Study design

### Design

**Study type:** Observational non invasive

Masking: Open (masking not used)

Control: Uncontrolled

Primary purpose: Other

### Recruitment

NL

Recruitment status: Pending

Start date (anticipated): 18-10-2015

Enrollment: 30

Type: Anticipated

## Ethics review

Approved WMO

Date: 16-09-2015

Application type: First submission

Review commission: METC Erasmus MC, Universitair Medisch Centrum Rotterdam (Rotterdam)

## Study registrations

### Followed up by the following (possibly more current) registration

No registrations found.

### Other (possibly less up-to-date) registrations in this register

No registrations found.

### In other registers

Register	ID
CCMO	NL52986.078.15