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Emotion Recognition and Gaze Pattern of Preschool Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Children

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Abstract

Very few studies have focused on the stimuli materials for social situations to understand if contextual cues have impacts on the gaze patterns of children with ASD to investigate the emotion recognition performance. This study investigated the performance across 2 age groups (preschool, school age) between ASD and typically developing (TD) children by using eye-tracking techniques and recording recognition accuracy for different areas of interest (AOI). The performance of ASD (n=91) and TD (n=155) participants were observed while asked to identify emotions in a context, including happy, sad, anger, fear, and surprise. The results showed no significant relationship between age and correct rate; but ASD groups actually spent more time on faces to recognize emotions compared to TD groups. The findings highlighted the greater effects of social experience on TD groups, leading to correctly identify emotions despite less gazing time for scanning faces.