

Social behavior is behavior among two or more organisms within the same species, and encompasses any behavior in which one member affects the other. ... This means that, in regards to humans, social behavior can be determined by both the individual characteristics of the person, and the situation they are in.

Patients with [prefrontal cortex](#) damage often transgress social rules and show lower accuracy in identifying and explaining inappropriate [social behavior](#). The objective of a study was to examine the relationship between the ability to perceive other unintentional transgressions of social norms and both decision making and emotion recognition as these abilities are critical for appropriate social behavior.

They examined a group of patients with focal prefrontal cortex damage (N = 28) and a group of matched control participants (N = 28) for their abilities to detect unintentional transgression of social norms using the “Faux-Pas” task of [theory of mind](#), to make advantageous decisions on the Iowa gambling task, and to recognize basic emotions on the Ekman facial affect test.

The group of patients with [frontal lobe](#) damage was impaired in all of these tasks compared with control participants. Moreover, all the “Faux-Pas”, Iowa gambling, and emotion recognition tasks were significantly associated and predicted by executive measures of inhibition, flexibility, or planning. However, only measures from the Iowa gambling task were associated and predicted performance on the “Faux-Pas” task. These tasks were not associated with performance in recognition of basic emotions. These findings suggest that theory of mind, executive functions, and decision-making abilities act in an interdependent way for appropriate social behavior. However, theory of mind and emotion recognition seem to have distinct but additive effects upon social behavior. Results from VLSM analysis also corroborate these data by showing a partially overlapped prefrontal circuitry underlying these cognitive domains ¹⁾.

¹⁾

Ouerchefani R, Ouerchefani N, Ben Rejeb MR, Le Gall D. Impaired Perception of Unintentional Transgression of Social Norms after Prefrontal Cortex Damage: Relationship to Decision Making, Emotion Recognition, and Executive Functions. Arch Clin Neuropsychol. 2021 Oct 8;acab078. doi: 10.1093/arclin/acab078. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 34619764.

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