

Cradling Behavior and Social Cognition: Implications for Face Processing

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The Left Cradling Bias (LCB) or preference entails preference in positioning an infant on the left side of the body. LCB seems to facilitate the monitoring of the expressive left side of both the infant's and mother's faces, thereby activating the right hemisphere specialized for socio-affective processing and face perception and suggesting cradling as an index of hemispheric lateralization.

LCB is associated with typical socio-emotional functional lateralization, contrasting with individuals who cradle either on the right or bilaterally, such as those diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Individuals with prosopagnosia, a condition characterized by difficulties in recognizing faces, and those with ASD share commonalities in facial processing deficits and altered neural activation patterns. Congruently, both groups lack the typical right lateralization for face processing.

The observed association between LCB and ASD prompts the possibility of a link between cradling lateral preference and face processing impairment. This potential link may stem from variations in lateralization patterns, influencing cradling behavior and how the brain processes facial information. Moreover, the question arises whether individuals with prosopagnosia display attenuated processing of socio-emotional stimuli due to face recognition and discrimination deficits, therefore affecting cradling preference.

In this investigation, participants underwent thorough several assessments focusing on social cognition, social networks, personality traits, and face recognition and discrimination. Preliminary findings regarding the association between cradling behavior, face processing, and social cognition are discussed.

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