

Do internal – external information processing promotes positive schizotypal traits expression in adolescence?

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Epidemiological studies suggest that positive schizotypal traits (e.g hallucinations, delusions) have significant predictive power for the unfolding of psychotic disorders in adulthood. To date however, few studies examine the potential cognitive processes that may promote the expression of positive schizotypal traits during adolescent development.

Recent cognitive models argue that faulty attribution of one's own internal content to an external event can underlie positive symptoms. In particular, evidence suggests that low-level aspects of encoding (i.e encoding style which refers to the individual differences in the readiness to impose internal schemata onto ambiguous external information) and source memory may constitute important mechanisms involved in the expression of positive schizotypy.

Here, we will first discuss the roles of encoding style and source memory in positive schizotypal traits with regards to adolescence specifically, in a cross – sectional sample. Second, preliminary longitudinal data that investigate the potential role of these internal – external discrimination processes in the maintenance or exacerbation of positive schizotypal traits over time will also be presented.