

Factor Structure of Psychotic-Like Experience and Relationship with Emotional
Functioning Among University Students in Hong Kong

Abstract

Psychotic-like experience (PLE), an attenuated form of psychotic experiences (such as hallucinations and delusions), has been reported among non-clinical individuals. It, however, remains unclear whether individuals with PLE simultaneously experience emotional disturbances, and how closely different types of PLE are associated with negative emotions (i.e., depression and anxiety). We conducted two inter-related studies with the respective aims of: (i) examining the factor structure of the Cardiff Anomalous Perceptions Scale (CAPS), and (ii) examining the associations between specific factors of PLE and negative emotions (depression and anxiety). In study 1, CAPS scores of 400 undergraduate students in Hong Kong were entered into an exploratory factor analysis with a model-testing approach. In study 2, a separate sample of 1891 undergraduate students in Hong Kong completed the CAPS, Patient Health Questionnaire – 9 (PHQ-9) and Generalised Anxiety Disorder – 7 (GAD-7). The CAPS factor scores were regressed on PHQ-9 and GAD-7 scores respectively using a stepwise multiple regression. Model fit indices indicated an eight-factor model as the best fit of our CAPS data, including four robust factors (i.e., “tactile anomalies,” “taste/olfactory anomalies,” “novel perception,” and “visual/auditory aberrance”). Of the four robust factors, “novel perception” and “tactile anomalies” were found to be positively associated with levels of depression and anxiety, whereas “visual/auditory aberrance” was found to be positively associated with level of anxiety specifically.

Keywords: Psychotic-like experience, emotional functioning, CAPS