Departmental Seminar

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. │ April 27, 2016 (Wednesday)
Rm 813, 8/F, The Jockey Club Tower │ Centennial Campus │ The University of Hong Kong

Psychosis Proneness: Psychometric Measurement and Psychological Risk Mechanism

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Abstract

Traditionally, psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions were categorical entities linked invariably to psychopathology. However, there is increasing evidence that psychosis is a continuous phenotype with subclinical manifestations. This paradigm shift has fuelled research interest in "psychosis proneness", the extent to which an individual experiences psychotic-like experiences that are insufficient to warrant a diagnosis. Since psychosis proneness is conceptualized as a subclinical manifestation of clinical psychosis with shared etiology, studying cognitive correlates of psychosis proneness can shed light on psychological risk mechanisms of psychosis while circumventing confounding variables of illness experience in clinical samples. This presentation focuses on the cognitive mechanism of aberrant "affective salience attribution", the tendency to assign emotional (positive or negative) meaning to objectively neutral or meaningless sensory information. To study the relationship between affective salience attribution and psychosis proneness, a psychosis proneness scale (Community Assessment of Psychic Experiences; CAPE) was first validated, and then correlated with an affective salience attribution task.

Psychosis Proneness, Working Memory, and the Developing Brain: A Multi-analytic Approach

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Abstract

Working memory (WM) ability matures throughout puberty and early adulthood. Deficits in WM are linked to risks of psychopathology such as schizophrenia, and there is a significant temporal overlap between the peak of first episode psychosis risk and WM maturation. The overall aim of the current dissertation is to understand normal late WM refinements, as well as its interplay with 'psychosis proneness' through a multi-analytic approach. This presentation focuses on three studies. Study 1 aimed to characterize the normal WM functional maturation process through this critical phase of cognitive development in a systematic review and coordinate based meta-analyses of fMRI studies in healthy adolescents. Study 2 and 3 empirically explored WM and its association with 'psychosis proneness' in healthy Chinese adolescent twins applying a mixed linear model approach and genetic-informed models.

~All are Welcome~

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