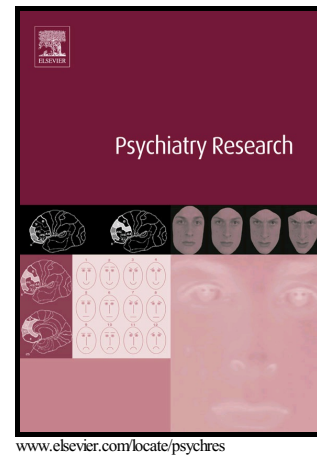


Author's Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0165-1781(16)31717-6
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2017.06.042>
Reference: PSY10589

To appear in: *Psychiatry Research*

Received date: 7 October 2016
Revised date: 26 April 2017
Accepted date: 12 June 2017

Cite this article as: Giovanni Mansueto and Carlo Faravelli, Recent life event and psychosis: the role of childhood adversities, *Psychiatry Research* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2017.06.042>

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Recent life events and psychosis: the role of childhood adversities.

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Abstract

Life events are commonly reported to be related to psychosis. However, less attention has been given to the role that recent events play on psychosis, in relation to exposure to childhood adversity. The current study aimed to evaluate the relationship between recent events and psychosis, taking into account the role of early adversities. 78 psychotic patients and 156 controls were enrolled. Childhood adversity was evaluated using a validated semi-structured interview and the Childhood Experience of Care and Abuse Questionnaire. Recent events were recorded using a semi-structured interview with a normative and contextual approach. The diagnosis of psychosis was made according to Jablenski's criteria. Chi-square, t-test, odds ratio, and binary logistic regression statistical analyses were performed. Psychotic patients reported an excess of recent events. The occurrence of more than one recent event increased the risk of psychosis; there was a cumulative effect between recent and childhood events on psychosis. Recent events were significantly related to psychosis, even in the absence of childhood adversity or when adjusted for it. Our findings suggested that the effect of recent events on psychosis may be amplified by previous exposure to early adversity. Recent events alone, could be also linked to psychosis independently of childhood adversity.

Key word: life event; childhood abuse; childhood neglect; childhood loss; schizophrenia

1. Introduction

The relationship between stressful life events and psychosis is well established (Jung, 1907; Bleuer, 1911; Steinber and Durell, 1968; Beck and Worthen, 1972; Brown et al., 1973; Varese et al., 2012; Beards et al., 2013; Gallagher et al., 2013; Trotta et al., 2015; Butjosa et al., 2016). As assumed by the vulnerability-stress model, the threshold for triggering schizophrenia is influenced by the interaction between stressors and vulnerability factors (Zubin and Spring, 1977). Minor stressors induce psychotic symptoms among those who are highly vulnerable, whereas major stressors might

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