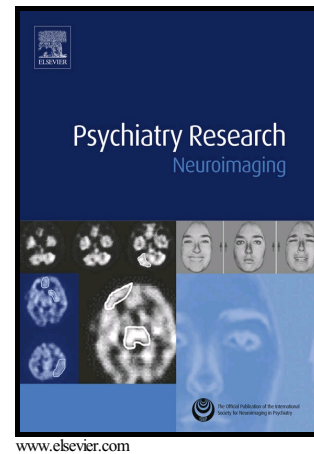


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## Attentional state switching in OCD

Switching between internally and externally focused attention in obsessive-compulsive disorder: Abnormal visual cortex activation and connectivity

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## Abstract

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is characterized by excessive absorption with internally-generated distressing thoughts and urges, with difficulty incorporating external information running counter to their fears and concerns. In the present study, we experimentally probed this core feature of OCD through the use of a novel attention switching task that investigates transitions between internally focused (IF) and externally focused (EF) attentional states. Eighteen OCD patients and 18 controls imagined positive and negative personal event scenarios (IF state) or performed a color-word Stroop task (EF state). The IF/EF states were followed by a target detection (TD) task requiring responses to external stimuli. Compared to controls, OCD patients made significantly more errors and showed reduced activation of superior and inferior occipital cortex, thalamus, and putamen during TD following negative IF, with the inferior occipital hypoactivation being significantly greater for TD following negative IF compared to TD

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