

Does Adopting a Self- vs. Other-Referential Focus Serve to Reveal Differences in Attentional Selectivity that Distinguish those with High and Low Dysphoric Disposition?

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Despite considerable past interest in determining patterns of attentional selectivity that distinguish those with heightened and lower levels of dysphoric disposition, evidence of such patterns remain inconsistent. Importantly, no prior research has investigated the role of self and other-referential processing in dysphoria-linked attentional bias, despite the demonstrated role it plays in underpinning dysphoria-linked memory bias. To address this major issue, the present two studies employed novel variants of the attentional dot probe task that allowed for the manipulation of self- vs. other-referential focus during the attentional processing of negatively and positively valenced information. The task was delivered to 96 university student participants characterised by high and low levels of dysphoric disposition. Results indicate that, compared to those with low dysphoric disposition, those with high dysphoric disposition exhibited nominally lower attentional preference for self-referent positive information, and significantly higher attentional preference for other-referent positive information. No group differences were observed in relation to attentional selectivity for negative information. Theoretical and clinical implications are discussed in relation to both elevated negative affectivity and attenuated positive affectivity aspects of depression.

Rapid presentations 2: Friday 11:30

Cyberbullying and personality in Australian adults

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Recent research has focused on the identification of personality traits which may increase an individual's likelihood of exhibiting cyberbullying behaviour. While aggression has previously been linked to cyberbullying; impulsivity, sensation seeking, self esteem and religiosity research all suggest that a relationship with cyberbullying may exist. A survey of 251 Australian adults (mean age=25, SD=9.95) identified a strong positive correlation between cyberbullying and both aggression and impulsivity; with a negative correlation found for sensation seeking and self esteem. Younger adults were more likely to exhibit cyberbullying behaviour than older adults, however no gender difference was revealed. The findings suggest that these personality traits are linked to the exhibition of cyberbullying behaviour; however a more community-based sample is needed. As personality is considered relatively stable throughout adulthood, it merits research into what other factors influence the observed decrease in cyberbullying behaviour amongst adults.

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