

Psychotic experiences in Kenyan children and adolescents.

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Abstract:

Psychotic-like experiences (PLEs) have been observed worldwide in both adults and children outside the context of a clinical disorder. In the current study, we investigate the prevalence and patterns of PLEs among children and adolescents in Kenya. Among 1,971 students from primary and secondary schools around Nairobi (aged 8-19), 22.1 % reported a lifetime history of a psychotic experience, and 16.3 % reported this unrelated to sleep or drugs. Psychotic experiences were more common in males compared to females. LCA resulted in a three-class model comprised of a normative class (83.3 %), a predominately hallucinatory class (Type 1 psychosis: 9.6 %), and a pan-psychotic class (Type 2 psychosis: 7.2 %). These results indicate that PLEs are prevalent in children and adolescents, and the distributions of symptom clusters are similar to that found in adulthood. The relationship of specific PLEs to the future development of psychotic disorder, functional impairment or distress will require further study