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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COGNITION AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

S. Galderisi

Department of Psychiatry, University of Naples SUN, Naples, Italy

The prevailing view today is that cognitive impairment and symptoms of schizophrenia represent largely independent aspects of the disorder. However, significant associations of cognitive impairment with negative symptoms have been frequently reported and associations with positive symptoms or disorganization were also found, although less consistently. The possibility that cognitive impairment is an epiphenomenon of other psychopathological dimensions has been largely ruled out by robust evidence that cognitive impairment is found before the onset of psychosis and in non affected first degree relatives of patients with schizophrenia. The possibility that the other psychopathological dimensions are a consequence of cognitive impairment is consistent with current models of schizophrenia pathophysiology. Moreover, cognitive impairment may play an important role in cognitive accounts of schizophrenia symptoms. Future research on this topic might greatly benefit from more refined psychopathological characterization of study subjects and from cognitive constructs more relevant to psychopathology.