

Abstract

Previous studies suggested child maltreatment has a significant effect on adult's schizotypal personality disorder. Schizotypal personality has been shown to have a moderate stability since early adolescence. This reflects a need to look for factors contributing to schizotypal traits at the early stage of adolescence before the personality disorder fully emerges later. Yet, little, or perhaps none, has researched on the effects of child neglect -a form of child maltreatment; on children/young adolescents' schizotypal personality traits. This cross-sectional study aims to bridge this research gap. Mediation analyses on this relationship by sleep behaviours, self-control and loneliness were conducted. Responses from 780 participants of the China Jintan Cohort Study were analysed in this study. They were in the final years of primary school at age 10-12 when responses were collected. A parallel multiple mediation analyses was performed and showed a complementary mediation by self-control and loneliness, but not sleep behaviours on the child neglect-schizotypy relationship. Two serial multiple mediation analyses were completed afterwards. Results revealed the paths: child neglect -> sleep -> self-control-> loneliness-> schizotypal personality and child neglect-> self-control -> loneliness -> schizotypal personality were significant. Both were complementarily mediating the child neglect-schizotypy relationship. However, the latter path is suggested due to a higher explanatory power on the variance of children schizotypal traits. Clinical practice may consider minimizing the traits by interventions on self-control and loneliness. Family education and therapy should also be implemented to cure the root problem of schizotypal personality traits of children.

Keywords: Schizotypal Personality Disorder, Child neglect, Sleep, Self-control, Loneliness, Mediation, Children