

Social Rank and Psychosis: understanding their role in the pathway to depression

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Introduction

Previous studies have already shown how the experience of **psychosis** might be appraised as leading to greater personal loss and humiliation (Birchwood, 2003), which seems related with the emergence of comorbid **depression** (Gilbert, 1992). It has also been argued that depression might occur due to a **compassionate deficit towards the self** (Allen & Knight, 2005) and, on the other hand, it has been previously shown that **self-criticism** emerges as a predictor of depression (Irons, Gilbert, Baldwin, Baccus & Palmer, 2006). Nevertheless, although the relationship between self-criticism, self-compassion and depression has been empirically established in other populations, it remains unexploited in psychosis.

This study aimed to explore the predictor role of self-criticism and self-compassion in the experience of depressive symptoms in a sample of patients with psychosis.

Methods

Participants & Procedures

• **54 participants** (Table 1) diagnosed with **Psychotic Disorders** completed self-report scales for the evaluation of Self-Criticism, Self-Compassion and Depressive Symptoms.

Measures

- Forms Of Self-criticizing / Attacking And Self-reassuring Scale, FSCRS (Gilbert et al., 2004); $\alpha = .73$
- Self-Compassion scale (Neff, 2003); $\alpha = .72$
- Depression Anxiety And Stress Scale, DASS 21 (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995); $\alpha = .95$

Statistical analysis plan

Non-parametric mean comparisons and post-hoc analysis were performed.

Results

• Preliminary results showed that **higher levels of Self-Criticism** and **lower levels of Self-Compassion** (*Mindfulness*) appear to be associated with **Depressive Symptoms** (Table 2), and Self-Criticism emerges as major explanatory factor of the variance of Depression (Table 3). The component Mindfulness of Self-Compassion adds 8,9% to the explanation of depression variation, while the other components of Self-Compassion don't appear to correlate significantly with the emergence of Depressive Symptoms.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

	Self-Criticism (FSCRS)	Self-Compassion_Mindfulness (SELFCS)
Self-Criticism (FSCRS)	--	--
Self-Compassion_Mindfulness (SELFCS)	-.315*	--
Depressive Symptoms (EADS-21)	.54**	-.445*

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

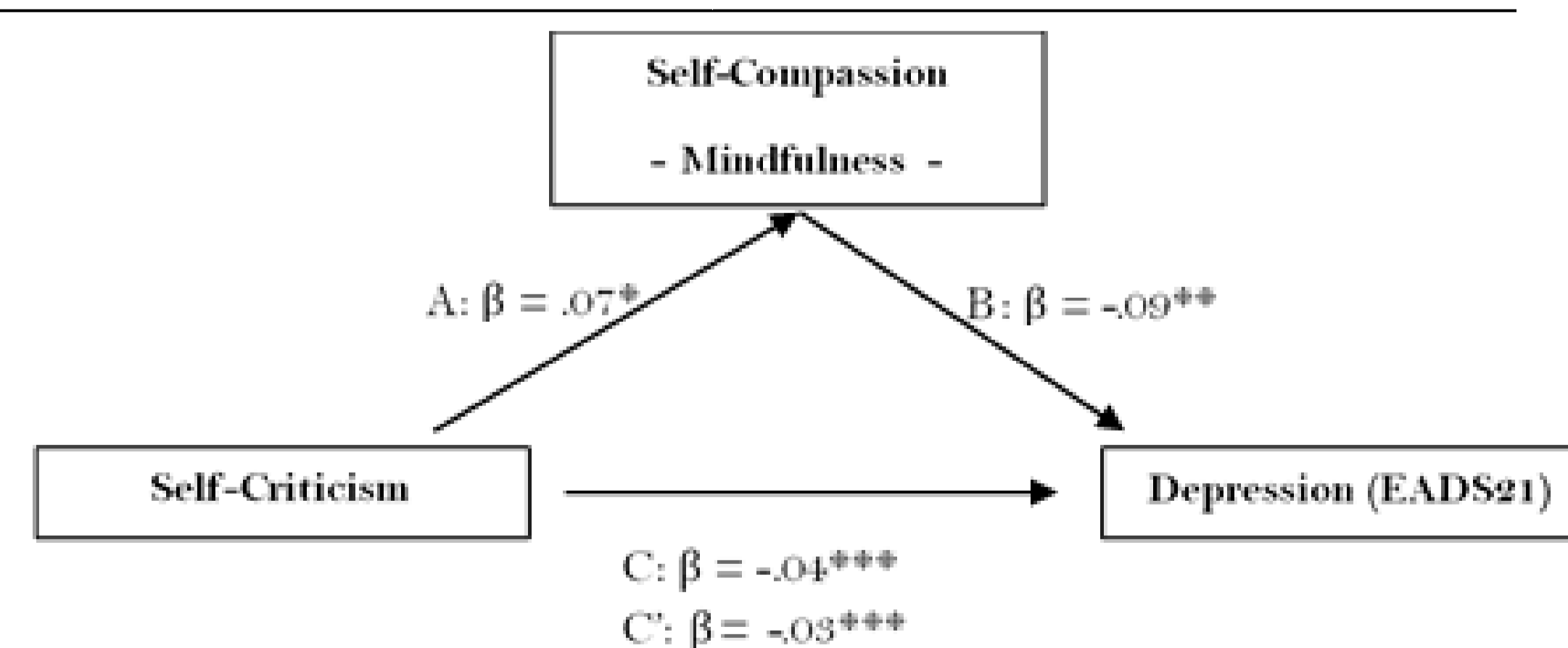
• Results revealed that the relationship between Self-Criticism and Depression was mediated by the component **Mindfulness** of Self-Compassion (Figure 1).

Table 1. Sample Characteristics

Participants	N = 54
Gender	75.9% Male
Age	M = 33.70; SD = 9.53
School Years	M = 8.87; SD = 3.64
Diagnosis	87.04% Schizophrenia

Table 3. Regression Analysis

	AdjustedR ²	R ² Change
Self-Criticism (FSCRS)	.278	
Self-Compassion (SELFCS)		
Mindfulness	.356	.089



**** $p < 0.001$; *** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$

Figure 1. Mindfulness as a mediator between self-criticism and depression (N = 54)

Discussion

These results are in agreement with those reported by previous studies that analysed the role of self-compassion and self-criticism in depression and at the same time, seem to suggest that Mindful training might be an important target for **interventions** aiming to address depression during the course of **psychotic disorders**.