

# SOCIAL DEFEAT & PSYCHOSIS:

## AN EXPERIENCE SAMPLING STUDY OF PSYCHOSOCIAL STRESS

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### RESEARCH QUESTION

- Will an increased number/intensity of social defeat experiences lead to an increased risk of psychotic experiences?
- How, where, and when do individuals experience social defeat in daily life?
  - Context and content of experience

**Definition of social defeat:**

*The experience of feeling subordinated, inferior, humiliated, or 'othered'*

### METHODOLOGY

**PARTICIPANTS**

**N = 24** (62.5% females, Mean age = 23.4)

Inclusion criteria:

- Aged 18-30
- No diagnosis of severe mental illness
- Must own an iPhone or Android smartphone

**MEASURES**

Baseline questionnaires:

- CAPE-42: Self-report questionnaire for psychosis-proneness
- Perceived Stress Scale
- Social Anxiety Questionnaire for Adults
- Scale of Subjective Social Status

ESM questionnaire:

- **Social Defeat Questionnaire**, completed on the PIEL Survey app. Participants are asked to report the following information about their last social interaction:
  - Contextual information (environment, who they interacted with)
  - Self-report questions regarding how they felt during the interaction

**PROCEDURE**

**Experience Sampling Method (ESM):**

- Participants are asked to go about their regular daily lives:

Random notifications 5 times/day for 14 days

Prompted to complete the ESM questionnaire regarding their last social interaction



### ADVANTAGES OF ESM

- Naturalistic and representative of daily life
- Captures environmental & social context
- In-the-moment assessment
  - Avoids recall bias
- Longitudinal data collection
  - When do people experience social defeat? Does it fluctuate over time/contexts/people?
- Captures variability of behaviour & experiences

### SOCIAL DEFEAT PARADIGM

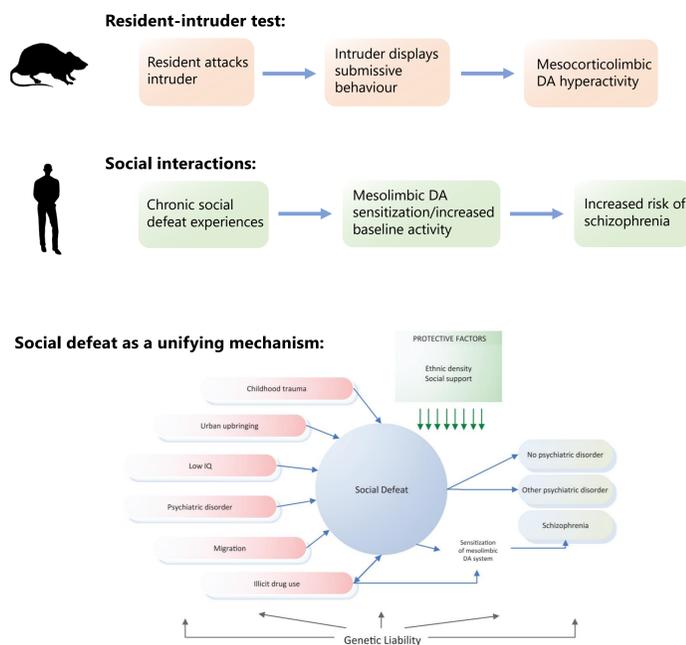


Fig. 1. Schematic illustration of the experience of social defeat as the common mechanism underlying 6 major schizophrenic risk factors.<sup>1</sup>

### SO WHAT?

Studying the social determinants of psychosis within a real-world context may contribute to a deeper understanding of psychopathological phenomena.

### REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

[1] Selten, van der Ven, Rutten, & Cantor-Graae. (2013). The social defeat hypothesis of schizophrenia: an update. *Schizophrenia bulletin*, 39(6), 1180-1186.

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