

JOINT EVENT

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Neurobiology of violence in schizophrenia and antisocial personality disorder: The role of childhood abuse**Veena Kumari**

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Mental health problems have a direct relationship with violent offending in that people with a diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder (ASPD) and a proportion of those with a diagnosis of schizophrenia are at most risk of committing violent crimes. Individuals who as children experienced psychosocial adversity, in particular sexual or physical abuse, are known to have a heightened risk of developing mental disorders, and although the majority of these do not commit any violent offences as an adult, they are on average more likely to engage in violent crimes than those who did not experience abuse. A number of studies indicate a range of common and distinct neuropsychological deficits in groups of offenders with schizophrenia-alone, APD-alone or with comorbid schizophrenia and ASPD. Violent mentally-disordered individuals with ASPD or schizophrenia also display an array of structural and functional deficits in brain regions that are widely implicated in regulation of violence through their involvement in decision-making, empathy, impulse control and emotion regulation. Some of these abnormalities in violent mentally-disordered offenders appear to be explained by their histories of stressful childhood experiences. Current and future therapies aiming to reduce violence in such populations would benefit by attending to biological and behavioural correlates of childhood abuse.

Biography

Veena Kumari obtained her Doctorate in Psychology from Banaras Hindu University in India before moving to the Institute of Psychiatry in London, UK, where she most recently served as the Professor of Experimental Psychology. Currently, she is the Chief Scientific Officer for the Sovereign Health Group, USA. Her research interests include the neurobiology of violence in psychosis and personality disorder, pharmacological and psychological therapies in psychosis, addiction, and personality and individual differences. She has received various national and international awards for her research; most recently, the prestigious Humboldt Research Award in 2014. She has published over 250 peer-reviewed articles and served as the Associate Editor or Editorial Board Member for a number of journals including *Personality and Individual Differences*, *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging*, *Current Psychopharmacology*, *Schizophrenia Research and Treatment*, and *the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*.

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