

Explanations for schizophrenia

Biological

Genetic explanations

Family studies show that the more closely related two people are, the more likely they are to both have schizophrenia.

There are hundreds of genetic variations associated with a slightly increased risk of schizophrenia.

Neural correlates

There are correlations between symptoms of schizophrenia and levels of various neurotransmitters in different brain regions (for example, dopamine, glutamate, GABA and serotonin).

Psychological

Family dysfunction

A number of early theories linked schizophrenia to parenting and communication style within families.

Most theories lack evidence. However, there are associations between schizophrenia and insecure attachment and childhood trauma.

Cognitive theories

Schizophrenia is associated with deficits in meta-representation and central control, for example suppression of automatic thinking and speech.

VS

Interactionist

The early diathesis–stress model

Meehl's diathesis–stress model combines biological and psychological explanations.

He suggested that schizophrenia requires both genetic vulnerability and psychological stress in childhood (for example, schizophrenic parenting).

The modern diathesis–stress model

Vulnerability (diathesis) can be biological (for example, genes) or psychological (for example, early trauma).

Stress can be psychological (for example, family conflict) or biological (for example, cannabis use).

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