

**EXPERIMENTER EFFECTS IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY: REPLICATION  
AND MECHANISM**

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**Abstract**

It has been claimed that experimenter effects may account for inconsistent findings in the study of cognitive correlates of paranormal belief and in extrasensory perception (ESP) research. The present study investigates these two strands by having two experimenters with differing attitudes towards the paranormal each administer to 30 participants a paranormal belief questionnaire, two tests of cognitive ability (a syllogistic reasoning task and Raven's matrices), and an ESP task. For all 60 participants, a significant negative correlation was found between paranormal belief and syllogisms performance. This correlation was attributable to just one of the experimenters, and the experimenters' correlations significantly differed on two of the belief sub-scales, thus demonstrating an experimenter effect for this measure. Additional analyses were conducted to clarify the mechanism underlying the belief-cognitive ability correlation. No evidence was obtained of ESP, nor was there any evidence of an experimenter effect for the ESP task.

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