

Imagination and Reactance in a Psi Task using the Imagery Cultivation Model and a Fuzzy Set Encoded Target Pool

ABSTRACT:

Background and Aim

Using a picture-guessing task, and a shamanic-like journeying protocol that accords with the Imagery Cultivation Model, and following principles of reactance theory, this study sought insight into: (i) psi-enhancing effects of Imagery Cultivation (IC); and (ii) detrimental effects of reactance on psi hitting. Since those participants who express extreme disagreement with the reactance prime are found to shift against the position advocated in a threatening message, a measure of ‘discrepancy’ was introduced in order to ascertain the degree to which participants were affected by the reactance manipulation.

Method

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four groups: IC/Reactance; IC/Non-Reactance; Non-IC/Reactance; or Non-IC/Non-Reactance. Participants completed a precognition trial, success indicated by a direct hit (the future target picture was ranked #1 by the participant).

Results

The IC treatment had a minor effect. Reactance group scored more hits than the Non-Reactance group (not sig.), largely attributable to ‘indecisives’ (mid-range paranormal believers). As expected, sheep scored higher than goats (not sig.); also as expected, ‘discrepants’ scored higher (marginally) than ‘non-discrepants’. Relationship between psi scoring and paranormal belief (RASGS) scores was positive and marginally significant.

Conclusions

Generally, psi effects were weak but mostly in the directions expected. Changes to the IC treatment may have reduced its effectiveness (comparisons of variations to the IC are advised). The reactance communication, which is supposed to be a threat to freedom, needs revision as it may be too persuasive. More precise measures of reactance treatment effects may be helpful.

Keywords

Imagery cultivation, Imagination, Paranormal belief, Sheep-goat effect

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Researcher's Contacts:

Dr. Lance Storm
School of Psychology
University of Adelaide
South Australia 5005
AUSTRALIA

Ph (W): +61 8 8313 5230

Ph (H): +61 8 8443 5059

Ph (Fax): +61 8 8313 3770

Email: lance.storm@adelaide.edu.au