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## ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS AS PREDICTORS OF PSI EFFECTS IN A PSEUDO-GAMBLING TASK

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**Background:** It is understood that believers in psi ('sheep') will use psi to hit a target, but non-believers ('goats') will inadvertently use psi to avoid the target. Since the sheep-goat effect is sufficiently demonstrated when sheep score significantly higher than goats, little thought is given to the fact that goats are never specifically asked to psi-miss. The ideal task for goats is to encourage psi-missing (not encourage psi-hitting).

**Aims:** This study looks at the sheep-goat effect in the context of compliance (from sheep) and noncompliance (from goats). Predictors of psi-hitting due mainly to compliance in sheep, and psi-missing due mainly to noncompliance in goats, are sought in an on-screen forced-choice card-identifying experiment in a gambling scenario. Hypothesized predictors are paranormal belief, gambling attitudes, and beliefs about luck.

**Method:** The psi task is five trials per participant at guessing the Ace-of-Spades playing card, while avoiding Ace of Clubs (each trial has 5 cards: 1 x Ace-of-Spades; 1 x Ace-of-Clubs; 3 x Kings). Measures on paranormal belief (*Australian Sheep-Goat Scale* [Thalbourne, 1995]), belief in luck (*Belief in Good Luck Scale* [Darke & Freedman, 1997], and *Questionnaire of Beliefs about Luck* [Luke, Roe, & Davison, 2008]), and attitudes towards gambling (*Gambling Attitude Scales* [Kassinove, 1998], and *Attitudes Towards Gambling Scale* [Canale et al., 2016]) were administered to determine correlates of psi performance.

**Results:** For the whole sample ( $N = 120$ ), effect sizes were at chance for spade-hitting and club-hitting, as was the case for sheep and goats separately. Sheep and goats did not score differently from each other on Spades or Clubs, and none of the scales correlated significantly with the two psi measures. The spade-hitting/club-hitting correlation was negative and significant, thus replicating the effect reported by Storm and Thalbourne (2005). Also, belief in psi and luck, and attitudes towards gambling (whether positive or negative), do not appear to influence gambling success.

**Conclusions:** The significant spade-hitting/club-hitting correlation suggests that if participants successfully targeted Ace-of-Spades, they tended to avoid Ace-of-Clubs. However, targeting King cards is also an option—in fact, there was mild displacement to King cards at 61.7% (MCE = 60%). Thus, participants could still avoid *noncompliance* if they were sheep, or avoid *compliance* if they were goats, by displacement to King cards.

**Keywords:** Compliance, Gambling, Noncompliance, Psychic ability, Sheep-goat effect

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