Ganzfeld ESP research: Building on lessons learned

ABSTRACT:

Background
Meta-analyses of ganzfeld ESP research have found highest scoring with selected participants. However, debate continues over how to interpret positive results. The present Confirmatory study follows up on this work to build on lessons learned and reduce debate.

Aims
1. to test the ESP hypothesis incorporating design features aimed to optimise psi-conduciveness *and* security (Confirmatory). 2. to explore the previously-observed link between self-reported creativity and ganzfeld task performance using validated creativity measures (Exploratory).

Method
A ganzfeld precognition design was used to test 240 participants selected for creativity as well as practice of a mental discipline and/or prior psi experience and/or psi belief. Psi-conduciveness was further optimised by selecting experimenters. Optimal security measures included recording session data in triplicate to make any tampering detectable. The study design and analysis plan were pre-registered.

Results
72 hits were obtained out of 240 sessions, a 30% hit-rate, p=.043 (1-t), z=1.714. *Post hoc* investigations and an independent software validation exercise found no subtle bias or software/RNG errors that might have inflated the hit-rate. No significant correlations were found between psi task performance and the creativity measures.

Conclusions
The study's confirmatory hypothesis was significantly supported, indicating that participants could identify the randomly selected future target. This result encourages researchers that optimum security and psi-conduciveness can productively co-exist. Our study also pioneered the use of independent 'puppeteered' software validation methods in ganzfeld research and recommends this to other researchers.

Keywords
Ganzfeld, Precognition, Extrasensory perception, Software validation

Published Work:

Pooley, A., Murray, A., & Watt, C. (2023). Understanding the factors at play in the sender-receiver dynamic during telepathy ganzfeld: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Anomalous Experience and Cognition*, 3(1), 42-47. https://doi.org/10.31156/jaex.23878

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