

Exploring the relationship between the synaesthesias and anomalous experiences

Results:

1628 people (63% female; age range 18-80+) began the survey. Types of synaesthesia varied in incidence and occur under a variety of circumstances. The Synaesthesia Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ) was not normally distributed. It was internally reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .98$) and loaded onto 1 factor. SEQ scores correlated with Anomalous Experiences Inventory scores, $\rho = .49$, $p < .0001$. Those who have traditional paranormal experiences scored higher on the SEQ than non-experiencers. SEQ scores correlated with positive schizotypy, $\rho = .46$, $p = .001$. There was no systematic relationship between synaesthesia and well-being. This relationship appears to be mediated by schizotypy cluster membership. Twenty-seven synaesthetes (3 male and 24 female, age range 18-70) were age and gender matched to 27 controls. Each completed the SEQ, the TimeStyle™ inventory (Fortunato & Furey, 2011), the synaesthesia subscale of the Tellegen Absorption Scale, Bem's precognitive memory task (2011), a Mental time travel task (D'Argenbeau & Van Der Linden, 2004) and an interview. There was no evidence for psi in the combined group ($d = .05$), the controls ($d = -.014$) or the synaesthetes ($d = -.00$). Neither the difference in scoring between synaesthetes and controls or correlation between scoring on the SEQ and psi were significant. Synaesthetic associators scored higher on psi than projectors ($z = -2.00$, $p = .047$; post hoc). Future thinking correlated with scoring on the SEQ, $\rho = .35$, $p = .011$ but not with psi. Past thinking correlated with psi ($r = -.277$, $p = .043$). Mental time travel did not relate to psi but some variables were stronger in synaesthetes. An IPA suggests that ability to represent is important in synaesthesia and anomalous experiences.

Published works:

Areas of interest:

Synaesthesia; schizotypy; mental health; anomalous experience; parapsychological experiences; ESP performance; mental time travel; TimeStyle™

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