

Extraordinary experiences and performance on psi tasks: With or without exposure to meditation or mindfulness classes and retreats

ABSTRACT:

Background

Some research indicates that meditation increases mindfulness as well as paranormal experiences of precognition, telepathy, clairvoyance, and synchronicities. There is limited knowledge about the prevalence or impact of these experiences in meditators and the general population.

Aims

To assess frequency and impact of self-reported mindfulness, paranormal experiences and performance on psi tasks in two groups over time.

Method

We explored frequency of mindfulness, psi, and extraordinary experiences and abilities in those enrolled in a meditation program and those not meditating and the impact of such experiences or abilities. We collected data securely online with IRB approval.

Results

118 subjects completed the study. Those who engaged in a meditation practice (and scored higher on the mindfulness variables) endorsed higher levels of paranormal experiences. The meditation group reported higher levels of paranormal experiences ($M = 1.81, SD = .15$) than the control group ($M = 1.48, SD = .18$), $p < .001$ and the meditation group reported higher levels of meaning attributed to those experiences ($M = 78.10, SD = 17.04$) than the control group ($M = 64.89, SD = 25.40$), $p = .002$ at the end of the study.

Conclusions

The nonrandomly selected group that received training in meditation demonstrated increased mindfulness scores over time and their mindfulness appears to be positively associated with reporting higher levels of paranormal experiences both before and after the intervention when compared to the control group. Performance on the psi tasks did not improve in either group over time and these tasks may not be sensitive enough to detect significant changes.

Keywords

Meditation, Mindfulness, Parapsychology, Psi, Extraordinary experiences

Published Work:

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