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ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS, PSYCHOMETRICS, AND PSYCHIC PERFORMANCE

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Background: Two major challenges facing researchers studying psychic (psi) phenomena include small effect sizes and inconsistent results. Previous research showed promising improvements in both through reducing exposure to electromagnetic (EM) fields. Little work has been done associating psychological traits with psi performance, with most psychometric studies having focused on psi beliefs.

Aims: This study sought to replicate previous EM research with a larger sample and more rigorous methods and study design. It also sought to test for the first time correlations between psi performance and measures of interoception (awareness of internal body processes), empathy, absorption, and transliminality.

Method: The within-subjects, triple-blind, randomized control design asked a convenience sample of 45 participants to perform a series of psi tests in four EM conditions. The psi test paired two participants in separate rooms. The sender randomly placed eight pictures on a board; the receiver attempted to place a matched set of pictures in the same arrangement. Scoring was based on the number of pictures in matching positions.

A Faraday cage tent substantially reduced exposure to environmental EM fields. Antennas reproduced outside EM fields inside the tent. Switches created three randomly ordered EM conditions inside the tent: 1) reduced EM field, tent grounded; 2) reduced EM field, tent ungrounded; and 3) environmental EM field reproduced, tent grounded. The receiving participant performed four trials: A baseline trial outside the tent then three trials inside the tent, one in each condition.

Results: There was no significant difference in psi performance between any of the four EM conditions, Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA $H(3, N=540) = .17, p = .98$.

Of the 14 psychological dimensions measured, all showed correlations in the predicted direction, with 6 statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level. Higher psi performance correlated positively with increased openness to absorbing experiences, increased access to subconscious or unconscious material, one dimension of empathy, and the interoceptive dimensions of emotional awareness, self regulation, and experiencing the body as trustworthy.

Conclusions: The study found no evidence that reducing exposure to EM fields increases psi performance, countering previous research. Increased psi performance was found to be strongly correlated with heightened interoceptive awareness, absorption, and transliminality.

Keywords: Electromagnetic fields, Psychometrics, Faraday cage, Psi

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