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## **THE EFFECTS OF EXPERIMENTER AND PARTICIPANT BELIEFS AND EXPECTATIONS ON A PRECOGNITIVE PRIMING TASK**

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**Background:** Three experiments examined the effects of psi beliefs on a "time-reversed" priming task (Bem, 2011).

**Aims:** Assess relations between experimenters'/participants' psi beliefs to reaction times (RTs) on congruent/incongruent prime/picture pairs. A congruent pair is when both the priming word and the picture are both positive or both negative. An incongruent pair is when one is positive and the other is negative. The psi hypothesis is that RT's to congruent pairs will be shorter than RT's to incongruent pairs.

**Method:** *Study 1* examined the relationship of psi beliefs to RTs to congruent/incongruent word/picture pairs. *Study 2* attempted to influence expectancies of success by pre-exposing participants' to pro or anti-psi statements. *Study 3* assessed unconscious expectations of success using the Implicit Association Task (IAT).

**Results:** *Study 1:* A significant psi effect did not emerge in the preplanned analysis, but did when trials were used as the unit of analysis. There was no correlation between experimenter expectancy and the psi effect. *Study 2* showed no significant effects. *Study 3* showed a significant reversal of the hypothesis and a significant negative correlation between participants' IATs and their overt beliefs in psi.

**Conclusions:** Results showed no effect of participants' or experimenter's beliefs on psi but do support using trials as the unit of analysis.

**Keywords:** Priming, Expectancy effect, Experimenter effect, Retrocausation

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