

The missing photon experiment: Does focused attention employ matter as an agent for interacting with light?

ABSTRACT:

Background

Mind-matter interactions have been evaluated in the lab in various ways. Despite growing positive evidence for significant effects of mental intention on physical systems, the mechanism for how intention influences the physical systems is unknown.

Aims

The aims were to evaluate the interactions between focused mental intention and two properties of light (polarization and scattering) in three exploratory experiments to further our understanding of mind-matter interactions.

Method

To detect effects in polarization, a laser beam was passed through horizontal and vertical polarizers. Participants were asked to alternately focus their attention toward and away from the beam between the two polarizers. If attention affected the photons' plane of polarization, then the illumination intensity of the beam exiting the second polarizer should increase. A third experiment explored whether attention focused toward light would cause it to scatter (or refract, or be absorbed), resulting in a decrease in overall illumination. To test this idea, the intensity of a laser beam passing through a reflective sphere was recorded, along with any light deflected from the beam and ending up inside the sphere.

Results

Two experiments with different apparatus showed significant effects contrary to the expectation that the illumination intensity of the beam exiting the second polarizer should increase. The results of the third experiment were again contrary to expectation and showed that light beam intensity significantly increasing after exiting the sphere.

Conclusions

The studies reported here are part of a long line of experiments investigating the role of consciousness in the physical world. Photons were used here as the physical targets partially because of continuing interest in light phenomena within psi research, but also because photons are quantum "entities," and as such these types of experiments may help to inform questions about the nature of observation in quantum theory.

Keywords

Photons, Mind-matter interactions, Psychophysical interactions, Psychokinesis

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