

A telephone telepathy study: Does genetic relatedness influence psychic abilities?

ABSTRACT:

Background

People worldwide have reported knowing who is calling them without using traditional means. Controlled experiments testing these claims have found both positive and negative results. Factors such as caller familiarity and physical distance have also been evaluated with mixed results.

Aims

Building upon these previous efforts, we examined the accuracy in guessing who was calling them for groups of three individuals varying in relatedness.

Method

Using a cross-sectional study design, enrolled triads guessed who was calling them in 12 trials using two randomly selected designs: 1) six trials where a computer randomly chose the caller was before the callee's guesses were made (pre-selected) and 2) six trials where a computer randomly chose the caller after the callee's guesses (post-selected). Genetic relationships, emotional closeness, communication frequency, and physical distance data were also collected to evaluate their relationship with accuracy.

Results

A total of 177 participants completed at least one trial (105 completed all 12 trials). Accuracy was significantly above chance for pre-selected trials (50.0% where chance expectation was 33.3%, $p < 0.000005$) but not post-selected trials (ns). Genetic relationship was significantly predictive of accuracy when alone in the model ($\beta = 0.21$, $z = 4.13$, $p < 0.00005$) but not when physical distance, emotional closeness, and communication frequency covariates were included (ns). Physical distance ($\beta = 0.0002$, $z = 1.56$, $p = 0.12$) and emotional closeness ($\beta = 0.005$, $z = 1.87$, $p = 0.06$) were not significant but communication frequency was ($\beta = 0.006$, $z = 2.19$, $p = 0.038$).

Conclusions

A telepathic model for knowing who is calling is more supported than a precognitive model. Future research will continue methodological improvements to replicate these findings and examine the mechanism by which people can know who is calling, as well as nuances that may moderate the effects.

Keywords

Anomalous cognition, Telepathy, Precognition, Telephone

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