A LATENT PROFILE ANALYSIS AND STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING OF PARANORMALITY, PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS, AND WELL-BEING

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Background: Historically, few quantitative studies have examined the adaptive, salutogenic benefits of paranormality (i.e., beliefs and experience). Support for the supposition that paranormality is associated with higher levels of psychological wellbeing derives from related research on schizotypy. Schizotypy and paranormality correlate strongly because the positive dimension of schizotypy encompasses characteristics that are conducive to the validation of supernatural powers and events (i.e., ideas of reference, odd beliefs, & magical thinking). Acknowledging this, the research team hypothesized that paranormality concurrent with positive schizotypy, in the absence of psychopathology, would be allied to higher levels of psychological wellbeing.

Aims: To determine whether paranormality concomitant with schizotypy is associated with higher levels of positive psychological wellbeing (i.e., meaning in life, life satisfaction, and self-esteem).

Method: The overall project comprises two related phases. Phase 1, using latent profile analysis (LPA), identifies paranormality & schizotypy subgroups and determines whether profile membership is associated with level of psychological wellbeing. Phase 2 then explores whether profile membership is related to positive psychological outcomes across time (three time points two months apart).

Preliminary results: Working with Phase 1 data, LPA (which probabilistically groups respondents using their response patterns on paranormal belief and schizotypy) identified four subgroups: Low Belief and Schizotypy (49%), Low Belief and Positive Schizotypy (13.6%), High Belief and Moderate Schizotypy (24.3%), and High Belief and Schizotypy (13.1%). Comparison of profile differences on wellbeing indices using MANOVA revealed the High Belief and Schizotypy (vs. Low Paranormal Belief and Schizotypy) group scored higher on meaning in life, life satisfaction (past, present, and future), and self-esteem. Phase 2 will assess whether profiles replicate and determine whether benefits sustain over time. In conclusion, phase 1 results supported the notion that associations between paranormality and wellbeing vary as a function of level of schizotypy; greater concomitance being indicative of higher levels of psychological wellbeing.

Keywords: Paranormal belief, Wellbeing, Schizotypy, Salutogenic benefits, Heterogeneous

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