

ABSTRACT

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES IN PERCEIVED PARANORMAL PHENOMENA

This study explored how subclinical tendencies toward Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, depression, and dissociativity are related to the perception and belief in paranormal phenomena, specifically belief in Bigfoot and belief in aliens. A total of 93 participants were recruited for this study; 26 participated in Experiment 1 and 67 participated in Experiment 2. Experiment 1 determined the stimulus materials to be used in Experiment 2. Experiment 2 examined the specific research hypotheses. In Experiment 2 participants viewed nine photographs and completed the Conners' Adult ADHD Rating Scale, the Beck Depression Inventory-II, the Dissociative Experiences Scale, and the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale. Results of multiple regression analyses indicate belief in Bigfoot is positively related to tendencies toward subclinical dissociativity, but not to subclinical tendencies towards Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or depression. None of these subclinical tendencies are related to belief in aliens. More research aimed at exploring the underlying cognitive influences on paranormal beliefs is necessary.

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