

Telepathy,
clairvoyance,
psychokinesis, and
precognition or
premonition -
experim...

[Psychology](#)



The paper “Feeling the Future - Experimental Evidence for Anomalous Retroactive Influences on Cognition and Affect by Bem” is an exciting example of an article on psychology. The article proffered pertinent issues relative to ‘psi’, a term defined as “anomalous processes of information or energy transfer that are currently unexplained in terms of known physical or biological mechanisms” (p. 1). From among the identified psi phenomena, the following were noted: telepathy, clairvoyance, psychokinesis, and precognition or premonition. As disclosed, the author’s aim was to explore the “anomalous retroactive influence of some future event on an individual’s current responses, whether those responses are conscious or nonconscious, cognitive or affective” (Bem, 2011, p. 2). Through conducting nine experiments that focus on retroactive influence, the author thereby evaluated the results according to four time-reversed effects noted as a precognitive approach to erotic stimuli and precognitive avoidance of negative stimuli; retroactive priming; retroactive habituation; and retroactive facilitation of recall. The findings from the research indicated a significant statistical correlation with psi for all experiments, except one.

From among the rationale for the findings, the author established the rationale from the “ability to anticipate and thereby to avoid danger (which) confers an obvious evolutionary advantage that would be greatly enhanced by the ability to anticipate danger precognitively” (Bem, 2011, p. 51).

Likewise, other relevant theories that could supposedly explain the findings were discussed by explaining the psychology of the psi; psi and its relation to physics (including metaphors, models and mechanisms); and the concepts of

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familiarity and belief. How the New Discoveries have affected the Practice of Psychology

The discoveries on psi have proven that through there apparently exist increased manifestations and tendencies for psi, as manifested from the number of participants who provided accurate responses which were obtained before the causal stimulus events occurred from the nine experiments. The implication of this is that psychologists could rationalize unexplained cognitive skills through the results generated from these discoveries. Likewise, those who are still skeptical could at least view the findings as opportunities to open their minds and embrace the occurrences of psi to feel the future and potentially increase understanding of the unknown.

Strengths and Weaknesses of these Discoveries

The strengths in the author's research lie in the extent of preparation for the nine experiments to ensure the reliability and credibility of the findings. As indicated, there was a need to successfully design and prepare for the extensive pilot testing for the experiments and to resolve issues of replication to successfully pass the replication tests. All major obstacles in methodology, experimentation, and testing were effectively addressed. Likewise, the discovery was supported by various authoritative researches on the same topic that increased the validity of the findings.

The only weakness noted was the inability of the author to summarize the findings in a concise and easily comprehensible manner to enable readers,

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especially those who are not psychologists, to understand and differentiate the results from the nine experiments. The topic is very interesting and the results would have been made clearer if these were summarized in a tabular format using language that is universally understood.