

Exploring the Relationship of Out-of-Body Experiences and Hallucinations: The Role of Depersonalization Experiences

Results:

Objectives: Out-of-body experiences (OBEs) have been explored in terms of their relationship to absorption, body image, dissociation, dreams, fantasy proneness, imagery, schizotypy, openness to experience, parapsychological experiences, and alterations of consciousness. Because literature reviews have also suggested a relationship between OBEs and depersonalization, our objective was to explore this further.

Methods: We conducted a random postal survey (S1) and an open web-based survey (S2). Respondents completed the Cambridge Depersonalization Scale (CDS), the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) and demographic, medical, dream, synesthesia-like and parapsychological (psi) experience items. Some also completed the Launay-Slade Hallucination Scale (LSHS) and/or an OBE phenomenology instrument that resulted in an OBE Feature Index (OFI) and an OBE Transformation Score (OTS). Compared both within and between studies overall, for OBErs vs non-OBErs, and for low vs high CDS scorers: psychological scale scores; specific CDS item scores; OFI and OTS; presence/absence and frequency of medical, dream, mystical, synesthesia-like, and psi experiences.

Results: In S1 256 persons responded, 63% female and 38% male (Age $R = 17-95$, $M = 49.3$, $SD = 18.7$). In S2 589 persons responded, 65% female and 35% male (Age $R = 13-84$, $M = 45.3$, $SD = 14.2$). CDS Scores in S1 and S2 were significantly and positively correlated to all psi, mystical and déjà vu experiences, LSHS scores, lucid and disturbing dreams. CDS scores correlated significantly but negatively to SWLS scores in S1 ($r_s = -.59$). In S1 and S2 positive significant relationships were found between CDS scores and OBEs. In S1 ($N = 11$), high and low CDS scorers did not differ on the OFI or on specific OBE features, while in S2 ($N = 61$) the feature “looking down while out of the body” was significantly different. In S1 and S2 we found significant positive relationships between OBEs and synesthesia, headaches and head injury. In S1 and S2, OBE frequency correlated significantly and positively with psi experiences, dreams, déjà vu, and mysticism. In S2, OBE frequency also correlated positively with LSHS scores. Claims and frequency of all experiences, CDS and LSHS scores, and the OTS were significantly higher for respondents in S2 than in S1. Results of both our studies replicated comparable previous findings.

Published Work:

Zingrone, N.L., Alvarado, C.S. & Agee, N (2009). Psychological correlates of aura vision: Psychic experiences, dissociation, absorption, and synaesthesia-like experiences. *Australian Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 37(2), 57-94.

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Areas of interest:

Out-of-body experiences, Depersonalization, Hallucinations

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