

Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between general reasoning ability and paranormal belief. Previous studies show that paranormal belief is negatively correlated with different kinds of reasoning ability (Bressan, 2002; Brugger, Landis & Regard, 1990; Dagnall et al, 2007; Musch & Ehrenberg, 2002; Wiseman & Watt, 2006). Since inadequate research is done on general reasoning ability, the current research focused on the effect of general reasoning ability on paranormal belief. Social factors are also suggested to predict belief in paranormal phenomena (Rice, 2003). Additional factors included gender and religious belief. Sixty-eight undergraduate participants completed a self-report questionnaire on their degree of belief in the paranormal, a reasoning test, and also reported some relevant personal information. The expected negative correlation between reasoning ability and paranormal belief was found. Besides, there was a gender difference and female participants showed a significant and higher level of paranormal belief than male participants. Participants who did not believe in any religion had higher non-religious paranormal belief than participants who believed in Christian and Catholic. The effect of religion was even stronger when religious belief and non-religious paranormal belief were computed separately. The findings demonstrate effects on paranormal belief from both cognitive and social factors.