



Research Article

Subtle Energy Perception: Pilot Study with a Buddha Relic

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Abstract

Objective: Clairvoyance denotes the purported capacity to perceive events or objects beyond the reach of the ordinary senses. We investigated this ability in a laboratory experiment with four self-identified professional clairvoyants and three laboratory staff who did not consider themselves to possess clairvoyant skills (as controls). Participants were asked to use extrasensory perception to sense a Buddha relic said to emanate “subtle energy.” Before the experiment, the relic was placed inside an opaque container, and the participants were allowed to familiarize themselves with any subtle energies they felt were emitted by the relic. They were permitted to hold their hands next to the opaque container but not touch it. For each experimental session, the relic was placed inside an opaque container randomly arranged alongside nine other identical containers. In a series of ten consecutive experimental sessions, participants attempted to detect which container held the relic without touching any of the containers. Sessions were conducted inside an electromagnetically shielded room, and the research staff followed strict blinding procedures.

Results: The number of times that the container that held the Buddha relic was correctly identified was at or below chance for all participants.

Keywords: Clairvoyance; Extrasensory perception; Biofield; Psychic ability; Bioenergetics; Energy Medicine

Introduction

Buddha relics are crystal-like objects reportedly found among the cremated ashes of Buddhist spiritual masters. Buddhist masters are believed to transfer part of their consciousness and subtle energy into these relics through their spiritual qualities and intentions of unconditional love. This process is referred to as “energetic imprinting” by Tiller and colleagues [1]. Based on a hypothesis that harnessing positive intentions decreases random variations in the local environment (i.e., a negentropic effect presumably associated with more orderly molecular, subatomic, or vibrational states), Tiller’s group developed tools to measure

such changes in locations that hosted Buddha relics. Through a series of controlled experiments, they reported that exposure to the relic apparently resulted in information being “imprinted” or recorded onto an electrical circuit that measured randomness in semiconductor components, and that system in turn, when “played back” in a room, then apparently imprinted itself into the space of that room.

The possibility that a positive intention imprint could have a measurable effect on a physical system is consistent with results from an experiment by our group evaluating changes in the molecular structure of water as a target for positive intention [2,3]. We found that ice crystals formed from water samples that had been the focus of positive intentions were assessed as being more aesthetically beautiful to independent judges. Following a double-

blind design, 100 judges gave higher scores for aesthetic appeal to ice crystals formed from water samples that approximately 2000 people had directed positive intentions toward from a distance, compared to crystals formed from control water samples from the same source. Encouraged by Tiller et al.'s previous results from positively imprinted Buddha relics, we were interested in testing the ability of professional clairvoyants to detect a Buddha relic's presence without visual cues.

Methods

A perception test was conducted with seven participants, one at a time. They included self-identified clairvoyants who provide related professional services in their communities (we refer to them as Seers). Because there is no universally accepted credentialing system for Seers, we invited experienced practitioners (>10 years in practice) to participate in the study based on testimonials from members of their respective communities regarding their efficacy as a Seer. This process was intended to model the process that any individual seeking the services of a clairvoyant practitioner would follow. Potential Seers recommended via testimonials were first vetted via phone calls with previous clients to corroborate the information in the testimonials, resulting in a prioritized list of six candidate Seers. Each candidate was then interviewed and asked if the experimental design was compatible with their perceptual abilities and if they would be willing to work within the constraints necessary for the study (i.e., anonymous participation and refraining from touching experimental containers). This process identified four Seers who participated. Additionally, three laboratory staff who do not consider themselves to possess clairvoyant skills were recruited as control participants. Participants did not know what object would be used in the experiment, and strict blinding procedures were used to ensure that the researchers could not convey cues among themselves related to the test.

Before testing each participant, Researcher #1 placed the relic in an opaque container in the center of a table inside an 8'x8'x7.5' double-steel-walled electromagnetically shielded room. Ten identical empty containers were placed on the table behind the container holding the relic for comparison. After Researcher #1 was out of the room and out of sight, Researcher #2 escorted the participant into the room and indicated which container held the relic. This assessment period allowed the participants to become familiar with any energetic characteristics they might perceive from the relic without opening the container's lid or touching it. After five minutes, Researcher #2 escorted the participant out of the room and out of the building.

To begin testing, Researcher #1 returned to the room and moved the relic into one of ten identical empty containers on the table, where the "target" container was determined using a truly random number generator (<https://www.random.org/integers/>).

The containers were lined up next to each other in positions on the table that were numbered and separated by six inches. Researcher #1 also lifted the lid of each of the other nine containers to equalize the amount of physical manipulation of the containers. After Researcher #1 was out of the room and out of sight again, Researcher #2 escorted the participant back into the shielded room and monitored while the participant tried to detect which container held the relic. Participants were permitted to hold their hands next to the containers at a minimum distance of one inch. Once the participant's choice was recorded, Researcher #2 escorted the participant out of the room and building so that the test could be repeated for ten trials, with the "target" container determined randomly again.

Results

Prior to the experiment, all of the Seers reported discernible subtle energetic perceptions that they felt were distinct from the empty containers. None of the control participants reported any subtle energetic perceptions that allowed them to differentiate among the containers.

Each of the 10 perception tests per participant involved choosing one out of ten possible choices. This protocol was designed to detect 60% accuracy versus 10% chance accuracy at a one-sided $p < 0.05$ level of significance, based on previously reported methods [4]. In a series of ten trials, four or more correct (40% or higher) responses would be statistically significant. We chose one-sided testing because we were not interested in detecting results worse than chance. Each participant's results were analysed separately, and none achieved independently statistically significant results (see Table 1). A control participant was the best performing participant with two correct choices out of ten.

	% Correct	
Participant #	Seer Group	Control Group
1	0	10
2	10	10
3	10	20
4	10	--
Average	7.5 +/- 2.5	13.3 +/- 3.3

Table 1: Average Percent Correct Choices (Chance = 10%).

Discussion

We found no evidence that professional clairvoyants were able to detect the presence of a Buddha relic without visual cues. The lack of discernment may be an indication that the subtle energy purportedly associated with the relic "radiates" in such a

way that it is difficult to distinguish its location from nearby empty containers. However, this possibility seems to be at odds with the observation that the Seers reported a clear perceptible difference during an unblinded assessment period prior to the start of the test sessions. Another possible explanation for our negative results is that the relic leaves energetic traces in the containers that linger and confound subsequent trials, although this is not supported by the data in that the accuracy did not start out high and wane as the experimental sessions progressed. It may also be the case that conventional scientific methodology is insufficient to distinguish subtle energy emanations from a Buddha relic. These negative results highlight the need to maximize the signal-to-noise ratio for tests of subtle energy perception.

Limitations

1. There was no independent verification that the Buddha relic emitted a discernible “signal” aside from the reported perceptions of the Seers during the period prior to the start of the test sessions.
2. There was no attempt to clear any potential subtle energy associated with the containers prior to the start of the study. This is considered a limitation because such clearing is something that clairvoyants say is important to do, in certain contexts.
3. Our protocol did not include a verbal request directed toward the Buddha relic, such as the one included in the protocol of Tiller and colleagues, who asked that “... the excess thermodynamic free energy aspect of this loving kindness essence be made manifest in this space.” [1]

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Written informed consent to participate in the study was obtained from all participants and study activities were approved and overseen by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IORG#0003743).

Availability of data and material

All data generated during this study are included in this published article.

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Author’s contributions

FK prepared the original draft and participated in reviewing and editing the manuscript. DR, HW, AD, and LC participated in the study design and reviewed the manuscript. GY conceived the study, collected data and reviewed the manuscript.

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