

## **A study of heterogeneity in parapsychological databases**

### **ABSTRACT:**

A fast, efficient method for modeling and assessing the influence of questionable research practices (Qrps) on meta-analyses is developed. The method is applied to three parapsychological databases to demonstrate how it can be adapted for different cases. The Ganzfeld database allows for a full application. Qrps fail to give an adequate explanation for the Ganzfeld data, thus reinforcing the evidence for psi under this well-established protocol. It provides a stronger conclusion than a prior analysis of Bierman et al. due to significant power improvements. The case of RNG micro-PK meta-analyses shows how limitations in the quality of literature and our understanding of underlying effects can be addressed by Qrp analysis. This was done by leveraging a data subset, as well as the database's large heterogeneity. The evidence for an effect is statistically stronger than for the Ganzfeld data, but analysis assumptions make the case less direct and probably less compelling for those not well familiar with the literature. However, the analysis clearly shows that the 2006 meta-analytic conclusion of Bosch et al. (that publication bias might explain the data) is not viable. It thus clarifies and advances our understanding of RNG experiments. The Global Consciousness Project is a case where the question of Qrp effects is rendered moot by pre-registration. This allows going a step further to ask whether the strong GCP result actually confirms its hypothesis. A detailed analysis introduces a novel, operational definition of goal-oriented effects, and demonstrates that the answer is clearly no. All evidence points to an experimenter selection effect, and contradicts causal explanations based on the hypothesized global consciousness.

### **Keywords**

Meta-analysis, Ganzfeld, Heterogeneity, Monte Carlo, QRP

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### **Researchers' Contacts:**

Peter A. Bancel  
Institut Métapsychique International  
51, rue de l'Aqueduc 75010 Paris  
33-1-4607-2385

Email: peterstwo@free.fr