Introduction

Sense of agency results from subjective perception and construction of the world - hence, it can be inaccurate\(^1\)

It serves central social functions e.g. the attribution of social or legal responsibility\(^1-3\)

How can we decide in which states we should not trust our flawed sensation - resisting forbidden temptations?

- Negative arousing states such as fear\(^4\) and general arousal\(^5\) decrease sense of agency
- What about positive states e.g. pleasure and sexual arousal?

Goal and Hypotheses

I. Action Binding:
   a. Sexual arousal reduces (no perceived shift of key towards tone) as other cognitive/perceptual processes were impaired\(^6,7\)
   b. pleasure increases (perceived shift of key towards tone) as positive affect showed benefits for cognition/perception\(^7,8\)

II. Outcome Binding: No effects

III. Interactions motivational states and personality traits (psychopathy, trait anxiety): exploratory

Material and Methods

59 participants (\(M = 23.75, SD = 4.21\)) randomly assigned to 1 of 3 motivation inductions

Sense of Agency measured implicitly with intentional binding task\(^6\) (Libet Clock)

Subjective arousal \(\rightarrow\) affective grid\(^9\)

Physiological arousal \(\rightarrow\) Pupil dilation + GSR + HR

Dopamine activity \(\rightarrow\) Spontaneous eye blink rates

Personality Questionnaires \(\rightarrow\) STA\(^{12}\) (trait anxiety) + PPI\(^{11}\) (psychopathy)

Procedure

- Affective Grid
- Pre Intentional Binding Task
- Affective Grid
- Motivation Induction with Film Clips
- Affective Grid
- Post Intentional Binding Task
- Affective Grid
- Questionnaires

Results

Film Clip

- Sexual arousal
- Pleasure
- Neutral

Subjective Arousal

Valence

Physiological Arousal

GSR

HR

Results

I. Action Binding: reduced in sexual arousal induction, increased in neutral and no change in pleasant state

II. Outcome Binding: reduced in sexual arousal

Conclusion

- Positive states can reduce our feeling of control as much as negative states
- Individuals higher on anxiety feel less in control over their actions in emotional states, nonetheless they are aware of the consequences
- Sexually aroused, individuals higher on psychopathy still feel in control but they omit thinking of the consequences!
- This has implications for treatment and sentence as sense of agency is crucial for the attribution of social and legal responsibility\(^1-3\)

Literature