

Presleep Determinants and Postsleep Results of Lucid Versus Vivid Dreams

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The effects of three types of waking situational variables on the emergence of awareness of dreaming while dreaming or dream lucidity as well as the relative waking effects of having had this dream, experience were considered in the present inquiry. That is, 320 psychology students provided dream content and pre—post sleep situational information about at least one dream over a 16— week, once weekly, data gathering period. Of the 1601 dreams collected 1252 were classified as vivid or highly recallable and 211 as verifiably lucid. Pre— and post—sleep in— non was gathered on the research participants activities; such as tests, extracurricular events, homework, work for pay and household chores; interpersonal interaction with friends, lovers, family members and coworkers; and emotions, including anxiety, hostility, happiness, pleasantness, rejection feelings, fearfulness, and arousal. Dream content information collected and analyzed herein included type of dream, amount of recall, visual perceptions, color perceptions, positive emotions, negative emotions, perceptions, voices, taste—smell perceptions, palpable sensations, control over dream content, and verbal behaviors.

Sex of subject by type of dream analyses of covariance with dream recall as the covariate computed on pre— and post—sleep composite activity, interaction and emotions scores and on the dream content variables. Lucid dreams were more likely to occur following active days where unpleasant interpersonal interactions and unhappy emotions prevailed than vivid dreams. These lucid dreams had the characteristic left hemisphere (i.e., sound, voices, control) and balance (i.e., sound, voice in conjunction with touch—body sensations) components often noted in the literature. These data suggest that dream lucidity serves a psychological compensatory function emerging out of stressful conditions. This is similar to reports of out—of—the—body experience, an experientially related phenomenon, occurring due to waking stress.

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