

Most Experiences of Precognitive Dream Could be Regarded as a Subtype of Déjà-vu Experiences

Kazuhiko Fukuda, Ph.D.

A questionnaire concerning dreams and déjà vu experiences was administered to 122 university students. Of all the respondents, twenty-four were not sure whether they had those experiences. Out of the rest ninety-eight students, forty-one students (41.8%) reported at least one experience of precognitive dream. Although 20% of the respondents claimed that the experiences were "true" precognitive dreams, major part (about 80%) of the respondents regarded their experiences as "pseudo" precognitive dreams (they recalled the dreams when they had "predicted" events). The onset age of the precognitive dream is concentrated on the age between 6 to 10 years old. Déjà-vu experience showed very similar pattern of age distribution. The respondents who had no precognitive dreams experienced déjà vu significantly less frequently than the ones who had "pseudo" precognitive dreams did. This research showed that many people use the word "precognitive dream" in a wrong sense by definition and that those "precognitive" dreams could be considered a subtype of déjà-vu experiences. (**Sleep and Hypnosis 2002;4(3):111-114**)

Key words: *dream reports; precognitive dream; déjà-vu experience*

INTRODUCTION

There are several articles reporting examples of precognitive dream experiences. However the studies were carried out in the area of psychical research or in the psychoanalytic perspectives, and the phenomenon does not seem to have exposed to the investigation in natural scientific areas (1-5). Although precognition means by definition

that some events are recognized in some ways before they occur in real situations, not a few case reports of "precognitive dreams" denote a kind of experiences where the person recalled that she/he had had such dreams, just when the events really occurred in reality (6). If the informants really dreamt such dreams beforehand, and just had forgotten it until the hidden memory was found out, such kind of dream could be classified as "precognitive dreams." However, it is very difficult to confirm whether such memory is correct or not.

There is a similar experience, but classified as another kind, called "déjà-vu". Funkhouser suggested the similarity and he hypothesized that déjà-vu experience can be explained by precognitive dreams. Déjà-vu experience is defined as the feeling that the events, which are

From Department of Psychology, Faculty of Education, Fukushima University, Fukushima, Japan

Acknowledgement: The author thanks Ms. Ayumi Kanno for her helpful assistance in analyzing the data.

Address reprint requests to: Dr. Kazuhiko Fukuda, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Education, Fukushima University, 1 Kanayagawa, Fukushima-shi, 960-1296, Japan,
Tel/Fax: +81/245-548-8160, E-mail: kfukuda@educ.fukushima-u.ac.jp

Accepted July 29, 2002

going on, were already experienced beforehand. Déjà vu experiences are known to occur in epileptic patients, it can also occur in non-pathological forms though (7-9). Bancaud et al. (10) demonstrated that temporal area of the brain, especially superior temporal gyrus, is included in the generation of déjà vu experiences.

The author hypothesized that the precognitive dreams are considered as a kind of déjà vu experiences where the event is assumed to have occurred during dreams instead of during awake period. If the hypothesis is correct, the dreams which they claim "precognitive" should be recalled only after they had the "predicted" experience and persons who experience precognitive dreams may also have déjà-vu experiences more frequently than ones who do not.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

Questionnaire concerning dreams and déjà vu experiences was administered to 122 (92 men, 30 women) university students. Their averaged age was 20.5±1.48 old. Questionnaire contained items about their experience of ordinary and precognitive dreams, and of déjà vu experiences. The authors defined two types of precognitive dreams. One might be considered as a "true" precognitive dream where a person has the dream before the event actually occurs, whereas the other one denotes a kind of experience like when a certain event occurs, a person recall a dream whose contents are very similar to it. The author regarded the latter as a "pseudo" precognitive dream. They were advised that the participation into this research was at their will.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of all the respondents, twenty-four chose the item "not sure". Out of the rest ninety-eight students, forty-one students (41.8%) reported at least one experience of precognitive dreams (Table 1).

Table 1. Reported Frequency of "Precognitive Dreams"

	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Frequently	2 (2.8)	2 (7.7)	4 (4.1)
Sometimes	5 (6.9)	3 (11.5)	8 (8.2)
Seldom	20 (27.8)	9 (34.6)	29 (29.6)
Never	45 (62.5)	12 (46.2)	57 (58.2)
Sub Total	72 (100.0)	26 (100.0)	98 (100.0)
Not sure	20	4	24
Total	92	30	122

Table 2 shows the results of classification of the "precognitive" dream they experienced. They were asked to answer the question "Which description below seem to correspond to their own experiences?" by choosing one of the following items, i.e., 1) You had had a dream and had remembered it until something, which corresponds to the content of the dream, happened, 2) Something happened and you recalled that you had had an dream, the content of which corresponds to it. The author regarded the former "a true precognitive dream" and the latter "a pseudo precognitive dream or paramnesic precognitive dream". Although 20% of the respondents claim the experience "true" precognitive dreams, major part (about 80%) regarded their experience of "precognitive" dreams as "pseudo" precognitive dreams.

Table 2. Subtypes of "Precognitive Dreams"

	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
True Precognitive Dream	5 (18.5)	3 (21.4)	8 (19.5)
Pseudo Precognitive Dream	22 (81.5)	11 (78.6)	33 (80.5)
Total	27 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	41 (100.0)

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the ages of onset of precognitive dreams. The onset age is concentrated on the age between 6 to 10 years old, which corresponds with the elementary school period. The pattern does not seem to be affected by whether the experience is classified into "true" or "pseudo" precognitive dreams. Déjà-vu experience showed very similar pattern of distribution.

Figure 2 shows relationship between the experiences of "precognitive" dreams and of déjà-vu. The respondents were classified into three categories, i.e., ones who experienced

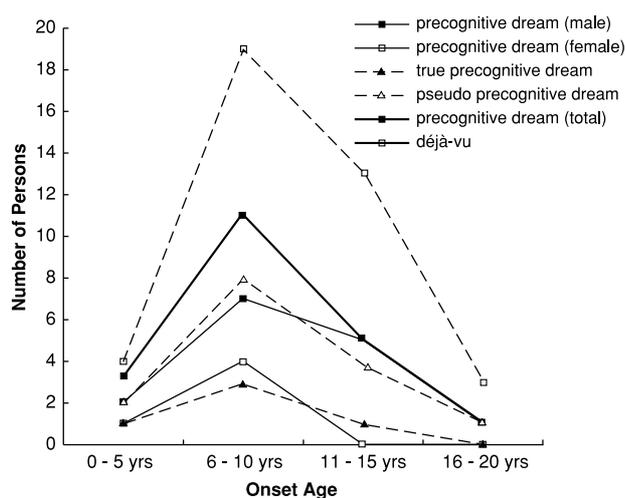


Figure 1. Distribution of age of onset of "precognitive dreams" and of "déjà-vu experiences".

"true" precognitive dreams, ones who experienced "pseudo" precognitive dreams, and ones who experienced no precognitive dreams. Frequency of déjà vu experiences was different among the three groups ($F=11.48$, $df=2$, 90 , $p<0.0001$). The respondents who had no precognitive dreams experienced déjà vu statistically less frequently than the ones who had "pseudo" precognitive dreams did ($t=4.741$, $df=83$, $p<0.001$). There were no other combinations with significant difference.

Déjà-vu experiences and "pseudo" precognitive dreams are thought to be the same kind of experiences, because of their similarity in the phenomenological appearance and in the age distributions. "True" precognitive experiences were reported only by 20% of the respondents who claimed that they had had the precognitive dreams. Major part of precognitive dreams reported by the sample turned out a variety of paramnesic experiences (i.e., déjà-vu).

Moreover, respondents reported only ordinary

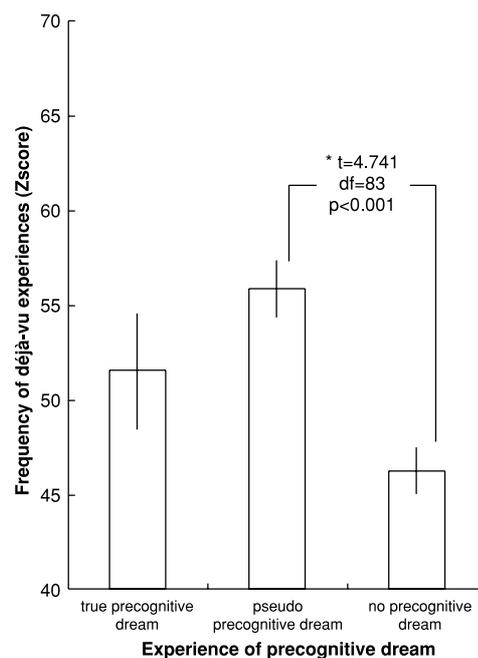


Figure 2. Relationship between precognitive dream and déjà-vu experiences. Frequencies of déjà-vu experiences were converted into Z scores and averaged in each group with deferent precognitive dream experiences. Vertical lines indicate standard errors.

daily events, which were, they claimed, known beforehand in their "precognitive" experiences, e.g., "a faucet was broken" or "missed a train". There seems to be very good chance to coincide these "precognitive" events with their dream experience.

These research results could not give a definitive conclusion whether or not there are any precognitive dream experiences in a true sense. However, it showed that many people use the word "precognitive dream" in a wrong sense by definition and that those "precognitive" dreams could be considered as a misidentification of a memory, i.e., a subtype of déjà-vu experiences, but not even as a dream experience.

REFERENCES

1. Jackson MP. Suggestions for a controlled experiment to test precognition in dreams. *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 1967;61:346-353.
2. Schriever F. A 30-year 'experiment with time' evaluation of an individual case study of precognitive dreams. *European Journal of Parapsychology* 1987;7:49-72.
3. Stowell MS. Researching precognitive dreams: a review of past methods, emerging scientific paradigms, and future approaches. *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 1995;89:117-151.
4. Stowell MS. Precognitive dreams: a phenomenological study. part I. methodology and sample cases. *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 1997;91:163-220.

5. Stowell MS. *Precognitive dreams: a phenomenological study. part-II. Discussion.* *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 1997;91:255-304.
6. Funkhauser AT. *The "dream" theory of déjà-vu.* *Parapsychological Journal of South Africa* 1983;4:107-123.
7. Harper M.A. *Déjà-vu and depersonalization in normal subjects.* *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 1969;3:67-74.
8. Sno HN, Linszen DH. *The déjà-vu experience: remembrance of things past?* *American Journal of Psychiatry* 1990;147:1587-1595.
9. Sno HN. *A continuum of misidentification symptoms.* *Psychopathology* 1994;27:144-147.
10. Bancaud J, Brunet-Bourgin F, Chauvel P, Halgren E. *Anatomical origin of déjà-vu and vivid 'memories' in human temporal lobe.* *Brain* 1994;117:71-90.