

POSITIVE AFFECT, INTUITIVE PROCESSING, AND VISUAL ENCODING

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ABSTRACT

The effects of positive affect (PA) on cognitive outcomes have been studied extensively. These effects map on squarely to a Cognitive-Experiential Self Theory (CEST) framework (Epstein, 1991; 1994). One component of CEST that has yet to be studied in the emotion literature is the theoretically-proposed tendency of the experiential system to encode information in visual images. The current study explored how PA and intuition affect a person's use of mental imagery using a perceptual priming paradigm. For participants who experienced a mood manipulation, PA and intuition interacted to predict facilitated response latencies to words that were primed by words representing objects sharing the same prototypical color controlling for reaction times to semantically primed targets and unprimed targets. This study lays the groundwork for future research on mental imagery and individual differences in intuitive processing.