

# THE EXISTENCE OF GHOSTLY-SPIRITS: DEBUNKING PARANORMAL SKEPTICISM

MOTSUMI STEPHEN TAJE

STUDENT SCHOLAR RESEARCHER, UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE, BLOEMFONTEIN.

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**Abstract:** *The debate on the existence of ghost in the human being world has been one of the ongoing controversies globally, especially based on a very ancient idea that a human body is separate from their soul, and when the body dies, the spirit can still live on nor remain trapped in the living world under certain circumstances. This research paper explores the existence of ghosts, aiming to compel the readers and making them aware of their potential reality based on historical accounts, eyewitness testimonies, and scientific inquiry. The study analyses a range of documented experiences, captured documentaries, cultural perspectives, and paranormal investigations to build a case for the credibility of ghost phenomena. Qualitative methods were primarily used, including the examination of second-hand interviews, case studies from paranormal researchers, and content analysis of reports from reputed researchers and organisations. Additionally, secondary data from scientific studies on electromagnetic fields, infrasound, and psychological responses were evaluated to support or challenge claims of ghostly encounters. The research findings reveal more about the factors or reasons behind the manifestation of ghostly spirits in the living world, the distinction between ghosts and spirits, the types of ghost hauntings, forms of ghosts and technology behind the detection of ghostly spirits. The findings suggest that while scepticism remains valid, there is compelling evidence that warrants further open-minded investigation into the paranormal: existence of ghosts.*

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## Introduction

Despite the widespread people's disbelief in ghosts and sprits, the presence of ghosts in the living world is a realistic phenomenon the living beings encounter in their daily basis. Taking it back, the history of humanity consists of ghosts and spirits-like phenomena from long way back ago. The encountering of ghostly-spirits has long been happening since the past decades, but the challenge has been the lack of profound intellectual and theoretical approaches attempting to explain and break down the possible factors behind the occurrence of these events (Zimunya & Gwekwerere, 2013). The main problem lies in the lack of empiric al evidence, standardized research frameworks, and academic attention to a topic often labelled as pseudoscience (Zimunya & Gwekwerere, 2013). This has resulted in a significant gap in understanding whether these experiences are real, psychological constructs, or manifestations of something beyond our current comprehension. This study is significant because it challenges conventional boundaries between science and paranormal spirituality and seeks to open new avenues of interdisciplinary exploration. The objectives of the research are to attempt a persuasive dive in clarifying the existence and presence of the ghostly-spirits in the living world with meticulous details featured regarding origins of ghost manifestations, attributes, behaviours and descriptions based on the collected and recorded evidence from paranormal investigators. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned context, the reported information in this paper conducted deep research and analysed recorded cases to investigate the existence of ghostly-spirits in the living world. The

research commences with a short overview of the content and followed by the literature view of the relevant concepts with together with the work of previous research. Then the research highlight the main findings of the research in the following order: (1<sup>st</sup>) the research explicitly differentiates ghostly-spirits with normal spirits, (2<sup>nd</sup>) the research explores the manifestation of ghostly-spirits in the living world, 3rd) the research explains the genres of ghostly-spirits, (4th) the two hauntings found based on ghosts behaviour, (5th) the different forms of ghosts are mentioned and explained, (6<sup>th</sup>) the explores the technology behind the detection of ghost-spirits used the paranormal investigators and ghost hunter in the paranormal field. Lastly the research sums up with the conclusion and the take the stance based on findings.

### **Literature Review**

➤ **Key Concepts:** Ghost, Spirit, Haunting, Manifestation, Paranormal phenomena

The topic on the existence of ghostly-spirits has long been tapped by the researchers. Their previous studies and research brought forward and examining the empirical evidence while some brought up the scientific arguments regarding the existence and non-existence of ghosts in the living world. Most of these previous research papers and the studies are subjective by examining and looking at this phenomenon through one lens of viewpoint specifically based only on scientific study to reach conclusion and findings. The previous research papers lacked depth in investigating this phenomenon, they neglected and omitted alternative perspectives that may possibly explain the existence of ghostly-spirits in the living world. They support the existence of ghostly-spirits as a mental condition human beings face based on medical life sciences and the principles of physics. Furthermore, the analysis reveals the experience of ghostly encounters by the human beings as something to do with their psychological and mental sickness related issues.

However, the gap that stands between this current research literature paper and the previous research literature papers is the additional aspects the previous research and studies barely covered and highlighted. The previous research identified the types of ghosts, and the forms ghostly-spirits take but did not touch the point of why ghosts manifest and show themselves in the living world. This current research explains why ghosts manifest and shows their presence in the living world. This research paper employs and consult various perceptual aspects that possibly scrutinize the existence of ghostly-spirits in the living world. It makes use of viewpoints from disparate fields such as spirituality, paranormal, scientific, tradition and the theories based on laws of nature. Depth and complexity pose as the gap between the previous research and the current research, with the current research having more depth and complexity than the previous research in explaining the existence of ghostly-spirits in the living world.

### **The difference between Normal spirits and Ghostly-spirits**

The words ghost and spirit are often used in a way that can be exchanged without making difference. Due to some of the similarities these two concepts share, people often refer to them as one (Fleck, n.d). However, there is a significant distinction between a ghost and spirit, despite their comparable characteristics and methods of detection. It is safe to use the term ghostly-spirit when referring to a ghost because arguably ghosts are still spirits but these are

different spirits of the deceased that has taken an advanced form to manifest and show themselves or even make their presence felt by those in the living world by through haunting (Mills, 2024). In contrast, defining spirits alone entails the souls of the deceased human beings or animals that has passed on to the other side of the realm or the afterlife and can visit the physical world to interact with, defend and protect their loved ones without haunting and exposing their presence (Webb, 2020). Unlike ghostly-spirits, normal spirits are more ethereal and connected to a soul as opposed to merely a picture.

The fundamental difference between spirits and ghosts is found in the nature and state of existence. While the spirits as manifestation of deceased positive energy and consciousness are often are not curtailed by the physical constraints. Conversely, ghosts are specific to deceased beings that tend to stay attached to the living physical because of lack of resolution that hinder them from moving to the afterlife. The normal spirits are often associated with positivity (good) while the ghosts are often associated with the negativity (bad) (Zimunya & Gwekwerere, 2013). However, it may not always be the case. Ghostly-spirits are restless spirits who seek closure or assistance for them to go to the next stage to rest their souls, and they do not share any emotional bond with the livings unlike normal spirits who shares emotional bond with the living beings. This emotional bond makes them frequently pay them a visit through dreams, also known as visitations, more especially if they want to communicate (Fleck, n.d). In many African cultures, normal spirits have been said to play significant role. They are viewed as important entities believed to have the power to impact the lives of their loved ones or descendants. Those spirits are consulted when needed. To exemplify, the Zulu tribe in South Africa went with the belief that the spirits of their deceased ones lived the rocks, trees, animals and the natural world situated around them (Mills,2024). Those spirits are believed to be proficient to exchange communication with the living and serve protection and guidance.

The only barrier between the livings beings and the spirit is the environment in which we both live. The spirits reside in the spiritual realm while the living beings reside in the physical realm (Webb, 2020). In a parallel reality, the only thing separating us in a very thin wall.

### **Why Ghostly-spirits exist and manifest in the living world?**

High ambivalence about the existence and presence of ghosts in the living world by the living beings posed as the main driver behind the diggings in this controversial matter to closely bring it to light and comprehend it. The manifestation of ghosts in the living world often leads to massive shock and almost impossible to believe especially to those who have not come in contact with one.

The introduction of funerary rites and burials by the humanity has been viewed as one of the most and effective soul or spirit-based mechanism to respectfully prevent the dead souls and spirits from roaming around living world. These funerary rites were introduced with ritual practices to ensure that the spirits of the deceased would not come back and haunt the living or a particular place (Coppock, 2025). However, the funerary rites and burials do not completely stop the ghostly spirits from manifesting themselves in the living world

First, people need to know and understand that ghosts are human beings outside of us with their own agency and are outside of our control and possession. There is only one way ghostly-spirits

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reveal their presence for the living beings to notice them, and the most common way they do that is by haunting. The paranormal investigators and professional ghost hunters divulge that ghosts do not haunt for no reason, there are motives behind haunting and in 80-85% recorded cases they do this to depict their presence so their demands could be heard and possibly attended by the living beings (Randles, 2001).

Based on the ghost-related data collected and analysed in the paranormal field of study, it was found that many of the ghostly encounters had something to do with the demands, desires and messages (Cait, 2023). The demands, desires or messages usually vary from one ghostly-spirit to another and are often specific to the ghost. In addition, these demands, desires are often satisfied or approved through acknowledgment and confessions while others may demand certain actions to be performed before approval (Lockyer & Marac, 2023). The most triggering side of ghosts is their flabbergasting capability to become extremely violent by causing chaotic experiences, catastrophic incidents, traumatic events and pain towards the living beings and the surroundings.

Nevertheless, it is not concluded that all ghostly-encounters are negative or hostile. The desires and demands plays a criteria role of determining whether a ghost is negative or positive depending exactly on what that demand is. A negative demand by the manifestation of ghostly-spirit means a negative ghost and vice versa. The main reason behind the manifestation or presence of ghostly-spirits is closely linked to the deceased feeling that they have some kind of an unfinished business to do in the living world and therefore they refuse to move on to the other side, which can be that they are not happy and does not accept nor acknowledge the manner in which they died [they are refusing to cross to the other side of the afterlife because they do not understand and do not accept their way death caught them] (Stockwell,2025). This refusal makes their souls remain somehow earthbound and haunt. The unfinished business may include incidents such as a sudden or a tragic deaths like vehicle accident, brutal murder and other extremely violent deaths. These kinds of death leave the dead with question marks as they find what occurred very abstruse. They tend to feel the need to linger and stick around the living world, more especially around their death locations to seek justice for their untimely tragic passing (Kellermeyer, 2022). Not only-but also, they could not be quite ready to depart because they seek closure may have a high extreme determined personality (Randles, 2001). The haunting that takes place after the attachment of their death locations does not only affect the physical location but also by the living beings and animals occupying site. By the same token, the reports disclose that ghostly-spirits do not only get confined to their death locations, but some also attach themselves to objects making what is known as “cursed objects” in Western concepts (Lockyer & Marac, 2023).

Contrariwise, it is arguably revealed that not every ghostly-spirit roaming around and stuck in the earthbound is a deceased that experienced a tragic or violent death. Some may have gone through rough, difficult, torture and troublesome life which led to the build-up of overwhelming, immense amount of negative emotions and dark feelings that makes them unable to cross over the other side freely and move on (Scott, 2025). They turn into unhappy and displeased souls that are reluctant to properly move on to the afterlife in the next realm and rest.

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However, it must be highlighted and noted that the ghostly-spirits may remain trapped in the living world forever if the reasons for their manifestations are not met or comprehended by the living beings. Remember that the main reason why they manifest in the world is because of the unfinished business they have which may entail closure, demands or desires, so if these three things are not met then that means they stay and haunt until they get what I seek for.

### **Genres of ghostly-spirits**

A general typology of ghostly-spirits was developed in the paranormal field. This typology is a useful framework that makes it possible to compare and contrast ghost-related experiences based on four distinguished separate genres or categories of ghostly experiences namely: everyday ghosts, professional ghosts, commercial ghosts and institutional ghosts. Although these genres have some significant similarities and share some important characteristics, they are a different in terms of how people describe, define and interpret them.

- **Everyday Ghosts**

The term everyday ghosts refer to the mysterious experiences that are conventionalised, usually and generally accepted cultural or spiritual beliefs (Waskul & Eaton, 2018, p. 54-75). Although cultural/traditions and personal experiences have many similarities in the context of paranormal field, it is erroneous to confuse the two (Brady, 1995). Perspectives from religious beliefs and personal experiences do not share the same sentiments when coming to the context of ghostly encounters even though they have a vast pool of similarities. The primary difference between traditional beliefs and personal experiences is based on what David Hufford's term "cultural authority" correctly describes (Hufford, 1995:18). What is meant by everyday ghost are the ghostly encounters people experience in their daily lives with or without the presence of traditional perspectives that support or substantiate the origin and the cause of such encounters (Holzer, 1997). People especially from the West do not provide conventionalising beliefs or practices with ghosts, it is fair and reasonable to speculate that most of ghostly encounters are experiences with what is called everyday ghosts. Spiritual and traditional beliefs found in South African societies provides an outstanding contrasting example of this. According to these beliefs, spirit world has a significant impact and highly influential on the living world as the departed ancestors may have influence on one's health and well-being (Waskul & Eaton, 2018, p. 54-75). So, these traditional believers would encounter what non-traditional people would call ghosts, but such encounters are understood and ritualised by the cultural authority of their belief system. On the other hand, a person who experiences a ghostly presence but does not follow a traditional or spiritual belief system that recognises this experience is left to their own means of interpreting and understanding what happen or occurred.

- **Professional Ghosts**

Professionalised ghosts entail ghost-related experiences that are liable to and sort of understood partially within the framework of discourses, practices as well as technologies of paranormal investigators, ghost-hunters, mediums or what is it also called priesting of the dead (Brady, 1995). There is a case in USA in 2016 where a 43-year-old man by the name of Jackson. One of his in-house security systems that includes a motion-activated camera caught a ghost that's seems to be a small baby child estimated to be 4-5 years. To him, there was only one ghost active in his

house as the camera portrayed but the medium revealed that there were 3 ghosts in the house and assuring him that they are not harmful at all (Waskul & Eaton, 2018, p. 54-75). Jackson's experience gives an excellent example of how professional ghosts are disparate from, and somehow not comparable to the rest of other ghost genres. If it was not of the camera system, the ghosts in the house would have been unknown and unfelt by Jackson. These ghosts cannot be captured by any camera system, there are specific equipment that are used to capture them however, that does not mean that these ghosts cannot show themselves in other camera equipment. My intake based on this is that the ghost with the intention of being seen will always find a way to depict itself or the message.

- **Commercial Ghosts**

Commercial ghosts are the ghosts found or situated in places vested with economic interests. In other words, these are the ghosts found in commercial or business orientated buildings/sites that are haunted. Accommodative places such as Hotels, B&B's and guesthouses are one of the places falling under this (Clarke, 2012:286). Commercial ghosts strictly dominate in places or buildings where the living beings have established the businesses in haunted places hence the name commercial. The different ghostly encounters are often experienced by the living beings who make use of the services offered by these places or those who work there. The results of these places being haunted may have somethings to do with the previous incidents that occurred in those places and the outcome led to it being haunted.

- **Institutional Ghosts**

Unlike the commercial ghosts which haunt the business-related places, the institutional ghosts are those that haunt institutions such as hospitals, schools, churches and others (Belanger, 2011). Furthermore, institutional ghosts are also mostly prevalent and common where human beings have been institutionalised. Places such as asylums and prisons. One of the unique traits institutional ghosts have entails how they often appear as a reflection of deep human trauma, suffering, pain, negligence, inhumane treatment and death.

### **Ghost Hauntings**

- **Intelligent/Interactive Hauntings:**

This kind of haunting happens when a ghostly-spirit is able to interact with the living beings, the environment or even both (Leigh, 2010). The interaction may include whispers, touches, smells or even trigger emotions such as sadness/anger. The interactions in this haunting prevail that the ghostly-spirit is self-aware and aware of the surroundings that's why the word "intelligent". In this haunting, the ghostly-spirits are able to converse with the livings and even interact with scientific EMF equipment paranormal investigators use to communicate with spirits.

- **Residual Hauntings:**

Unlike intelligent/interactive haunting, residual haunting ghostly-spirits do not interact with the living beings and the surrounding environment. The haunting is said to be unconscious and unaware ghostly-spirits as they usually make repetitive noises that includes footsteps, screams, laughter

and other vocal sounds (Leigh, 2010). The whole repetitive sounds are often compared to a loop or a broken record player that replays same sound over and over. Paranormal investigators often find it difficult to engage with ghostly-spirits in residual hauntings because they do not have consciousness to communicate so that makes it difficult to engage with them through EMF tools (Leigh, 2010).

### **Common Forms of Ghosts.**

Ghost form entails how a ghostly-spirit expose its presence, which can either be seen, heard or felt. Ghostly-spirits do not use the same form to manifest themselves in the living world and each form has its own characteristics. There are variety of ghost forms discovered by the paranormal researchers and investigators in the paranormal field, but my research identifies the three (3) most common forms: Apparitions, Poltergeists and Funnel ghosts which are reported to be the most occurring.

- Apparitions

The Apparitions are the ghosts that often appear full-bodied resembling a living or deceased beings (Waskul & Eaton, 2018, p.54-75). The word “appearance” which means the process of something coming into the range of being seen/becoming visible to see – is precisely what the Apparition form of ghosts specialise in (Duranti, 2023). These ghosts are usually connected or attached to events or places tied to their deaths or where they used to live.

- Poltergeists

The term Poltergeist is derived from the German words *Geist* and *Poltern* meaning noisy ghost. The Poltergeists do not possess a physical form to show themselves, but they are connected to the physical environment around them (Roll, 1972). This connection allows them to manipulate the surrounding environment by allowing them to move objects without physically touching them and make noise as well as adjusting to the physical world (Admin, 2025). They are viewed as the most harmful type of ghost because of their aggressiveness (Houran & Lange, 2001, p. 621-631).

- Funnel/Vortex Ghosts

The Funnel ghosts also known as vortex ghosts are often associated or connected to obsolete buildings or home where the people used to reside when they were alive. Although they are infrequently seen, they can be identified by sudden cold spots and warm chilly sensations in certain locations inside the buildings. They have a swirling, funnel-like shapes when visible and mostly situated inside rather than outside. These are less severe and generally harmless than other kind of ghosts (Ghosts & Gravestones, 2021).

### **Modern Technology used to detect ghosts.**

In the past years until now, technology and science through research has been evolving to prove and bring about almost everything occurring around the world and around us. Evidence has been the crucial factor in science and technology to explain and show how certain events occurs and why. However, proving the existence of ghosts has been a difficult challenge in the paranormal field of study for quite a long time now even with technology (Clauser, 2024). The obsolete science and technology rejected ghosts' existence because of lack of evidence, but the modern

technology has brought up the new fascinating tools that shaped evidence and theories about the existence of ghosts living world. While mainstream science is still struggling to fully elucidate hauntings and ghostly spirits, there are several hypotheses and approaches that attempt to understand and explain these phenomena events. The topic continues to generate debates; intrigue and more research study might clarify these enigmatic and abstruse occurrences.

Paranormal investigators make use of Electromagnetic field detector tools with sophisticated sensory features specifically designed to detect variations and disturbances in electromagnetic fields (Belangers, 2010). Electromagnetic waves have long been considered a crucial factor in paranormal investigations and ghost hunting investigations. It was revealed that ghostly spirits utilise electromagnetic waves to manifest and communicate, which is the reason why EMF meters and EVP (Electronic voice phenomena) recorders are the most suitable and effective technological equipment to come very close to prove the existence of ghostly spirits (Clauser, 2024). These tools include infrared cameras, audio recording devices, infrasound and low-frequency sounds below the proximity of human range. Paranormal investigators and theorists believe that the presence of some entities that human being eye cannot see result in instabilities that can only be seen through electromagnetic fields (Kaplan & Kaplan, 2009).

### **Conclusion-Based Findings**

Through documented eyewitness accounts, recorded paranormal phenomena, cultural consistencies across societies, and advancements in detection technology, the existence of ghostly entities can no longer be dismissed as mere superstition or folklore. The convergence of empirical data, credible testimonials, and repeatable investigative outcomes points toward the reality of a spiritual dimension that occasionally intersects with our own.

It is time for the scientific community and society at large to move beyond scepticisms and acknowledge that not all that exists can be seen or measured by conventional means. The presence of ghosts reveals that life does not end with physical death but transitions into another form of existence—one that is still capable of manifesting, interacting, and even communicating with the living. Denial of this reality limits our understanding of consciousness, mortality, and the universe itself.

Based on the findings, it is safe to conclude that we often encounter the ghosts with or without explicitly noticing them in our daily lives, but we are usually busy, occupied and tend to be distracted to notice or pay attention to some enigmatic events occurring around us that may entail and elucidate their presence. With, that may also explain their odd behaviour as to why they go extra miles to make their presence felt, seen or smelled by the living beings to notice them.

Therefore, this research affirms the reality of ghosts in the living world and calls for further exploration, respect, and open-minded investigation into the unseen. The truth is no longer hidden in the shadows—it is standing among us.

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