



Exploring the Relationship Between Personality Traits, Attitudes Toward Psilocybin Use, and Motivations for Using Psilocybin

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Background

Personality

- Personality traits are associated with varying substance use behaviours, attitudes towards substances, and motivations for use.¹
- Currently, research has a limited understanding of the user profile of psilocybin users, including varying use behaviours, potential risk factors, and outcomes of use.²
- No published research examines the impact of personality on psilocybin use behaviours.

Attitudes

- Attitudes, often associated with personality, significantly influence substance use behaviour and understanding attitudes is crucial to harm reduction and drug policy.^{3,4}
- Research on personality and perceptions of psilocybin is limited.

Motives

- Motives are a key factor in shaping human behaviour and are recognized as a major driving force that influences substance use attitudes and behaviour.⁵
- Understanding motives for substance use is vital to informing safe use and policy, particularly within shifting legal contexts.⁶
- Little research has explored motives for psilocybin use.

Hypotheses

1. **Higher levels of Openness** would **increase** the likelihood of use, frequency of use, and decrease the age of first use
2. **Higher levels of Conscientiousness** would **decrease** the likelihood of use, frequency of use, and increase the age of first use
3. **Personality** is expected to influence both **motives to use** psilocybin and **attitudes towards psilocybin**.

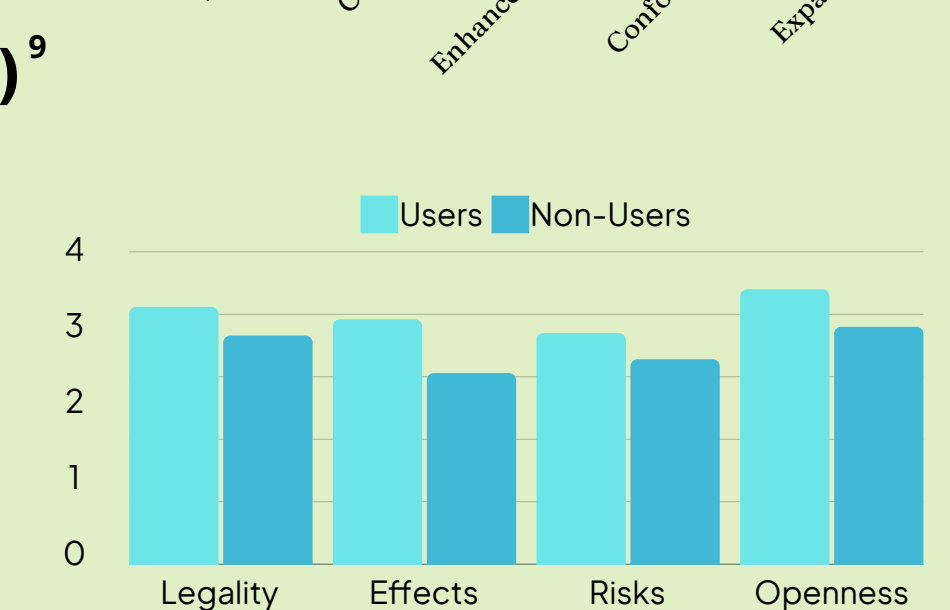
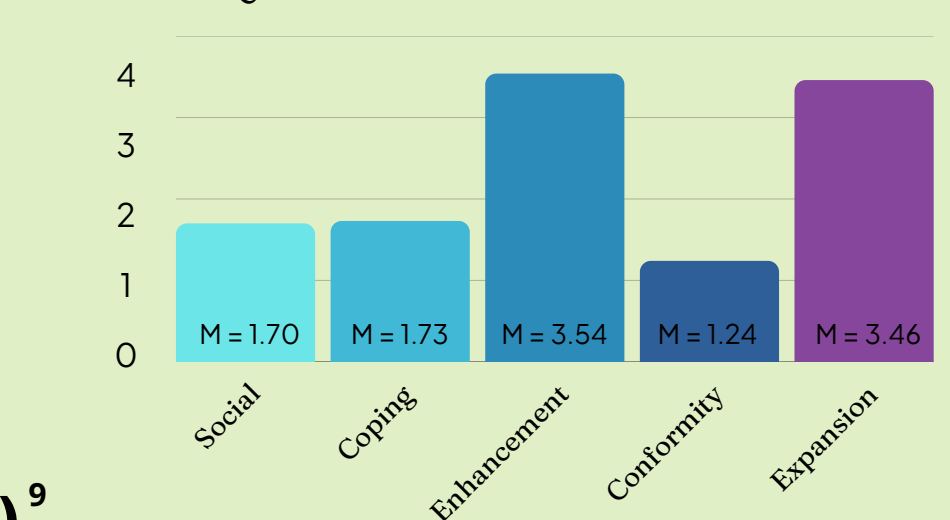
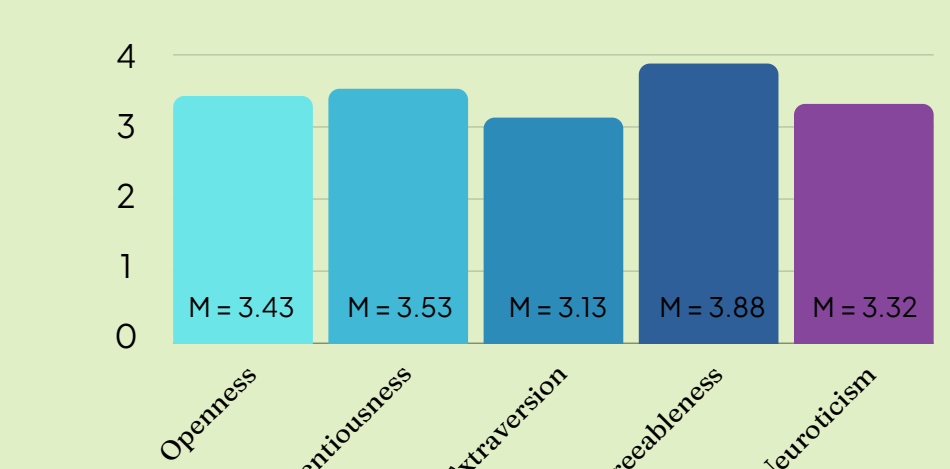
Methods

Participants

- Students (N=491,) from the University of Victoria undergraduate psychology research pool.
- 76% female, $M_{AGE} = 21.21$.

Measures

Average Means Across Sample



Big Five Index (BFI)⁷

- Five dimensions of personality

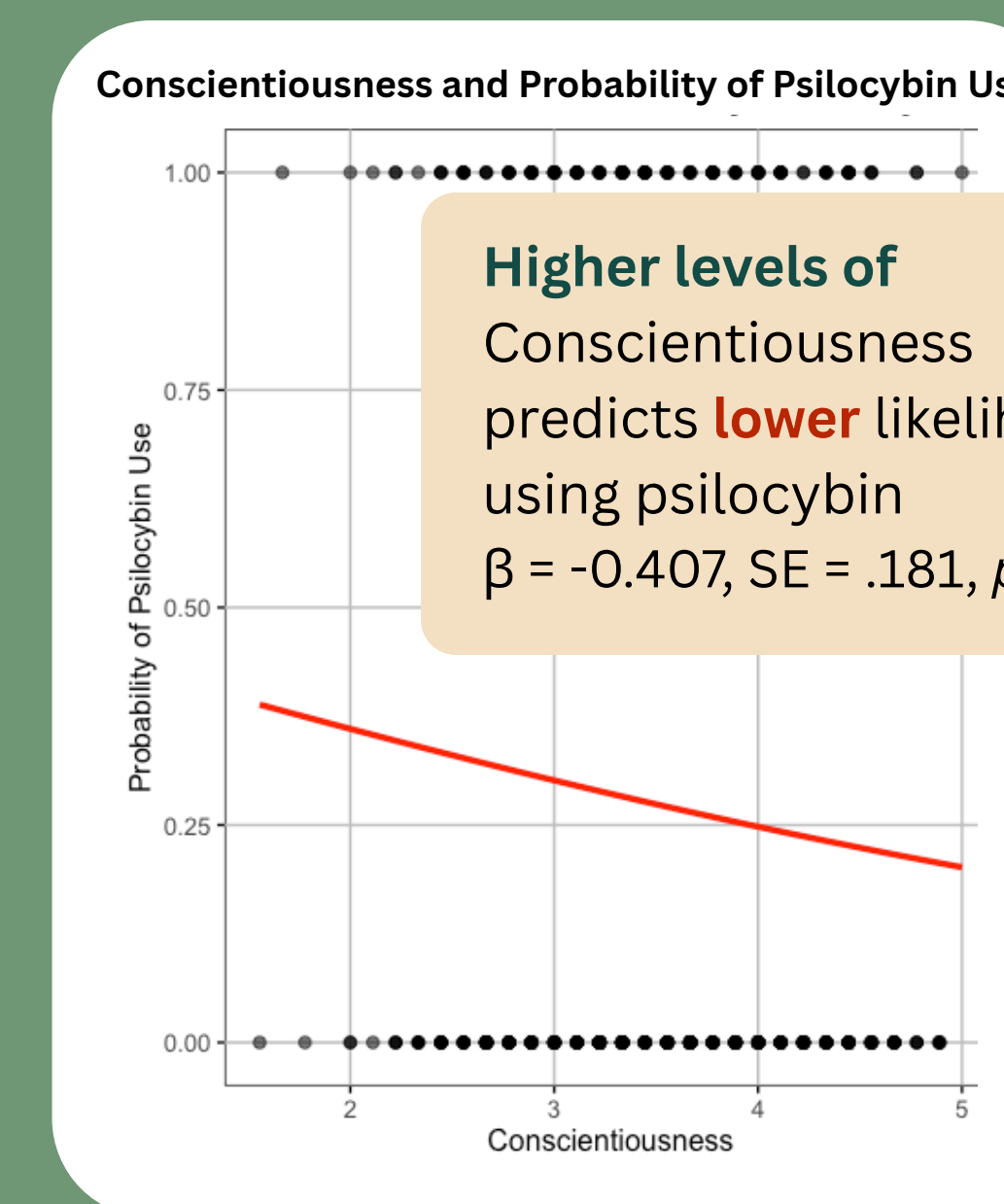
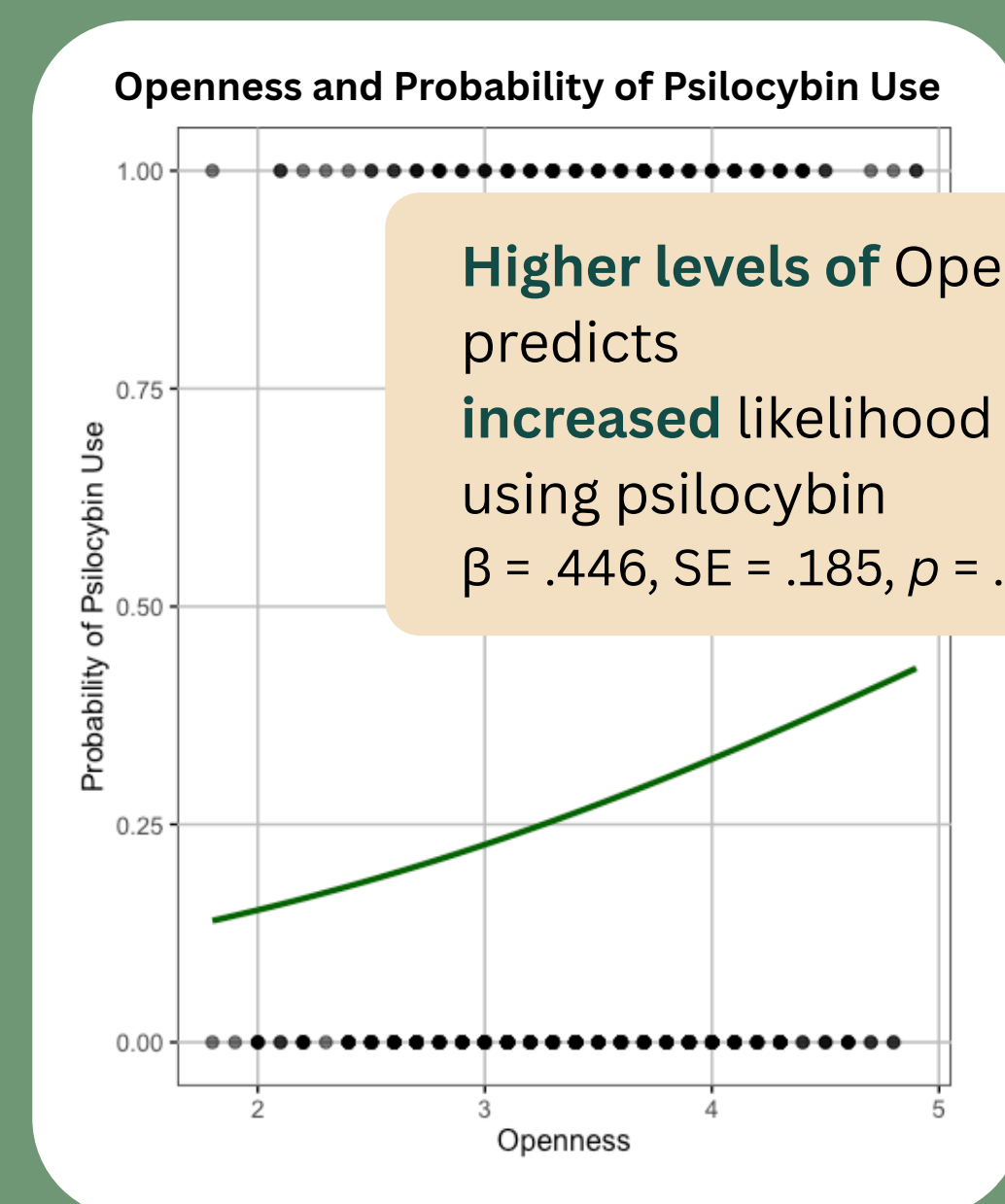
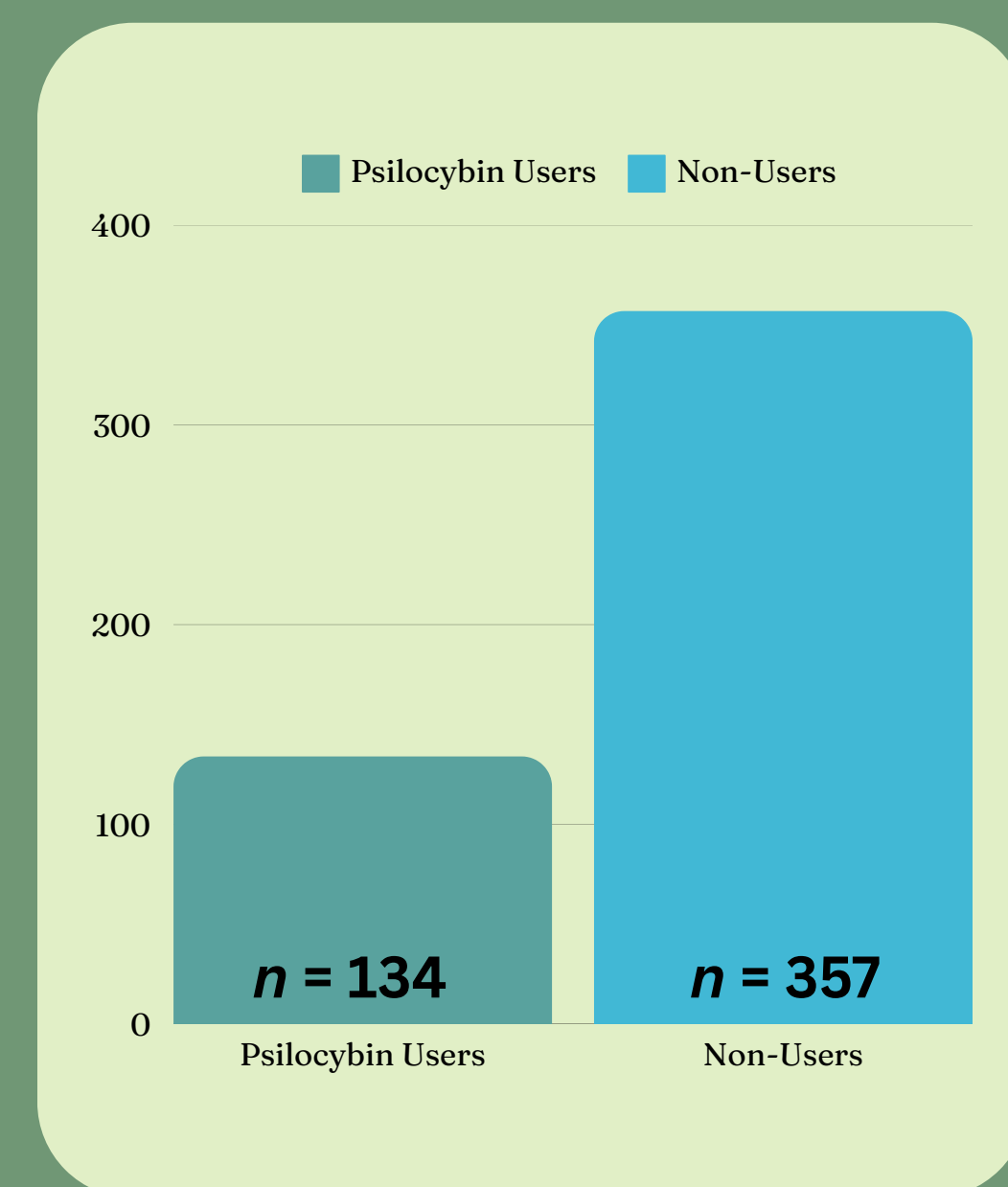
Attitudes on Psychedelics Questionnaire (APQ)⁸

- Legalization of psilocybin
- Perceived effects
- Perceptions of risks
- Openness to psilocybin

Marijuana Motives Measure (MMM)⁹

- Enhancement
- Coping
- Conformity
- Social
- Expansion

1 Do Personality Traits Predict Psilocybin Use or Non-Use?



2 Do Personality Traits Predict Frequency of Use?

Range: 0-101 uses M = 9.79 uses

High..
Conscientiousness
($\beta = -7.42, SE = 2.44, p = .003$)
Neuroticism
($\beta = -5.33, SE = 2.23, p = .019$)
Extraversion
($\beta = -3.95, SE = 1.88, p = .038$)

... predicted **lower** number of psilocybin uses among users.

3 Do Personality Traits Predict Age of First Use?



Average age of first use was **18.70** and ranged from **13 - 38**

Personality traits were **not** a significant predictor of age of first use

4 Do Personality Traits Predict Attitudes Toward Psilocybin?

Attitudes Toward Psilocybin	Personality Traits		
	Openness	Conscientiousness	Agreeableness
Openness to Psilocybin	Increases ($\beta = 1.24, p < .001$)		Increases ($\beta = 0.69, p = .025$)
Perceived Effects	Increases ($\beta = 1.22, p < .001$)	Decreases ($\beta = 0.81, p = .004$)	
Risk Perception	Increases ($\beta = 0.64, p = .004$)		
Legality Perceptions	Increases ($\beta = .79, p < .001$)		

Higher conscientiousness predicted **lower** ratings of positive **perceived effects**.

Higher agreeableness predicted **more openness** to use.

Higher openness predicted **more positive perceived effects, perceptions of legalization, openness to use** and **higher perceived risk**.

5 Do Personality Traits Predict Motives for Use?



Higher Openness predicts greater expansion motives
($\beta = 0.49, p = .021$)

Higher Neuroticism predicts greater coping motives.
($\beta = 0.25, p = .029$)



References & Supplementary Materials

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Discussion

Consistent with previous literature exploring personality and other substances, personality has a strong predictive ability (e.g., predicting using/not using, frequency of use, attitudes, and motives).

Personality predicts:

- **Use/non-use**, with high openness and low conscientiousness predicting higher likelihood of use.
- **Frequency of use**, with higher conscientiousness and neuroticism predicting lower frequency of use.
- **Attitudes toward psilocybin** (perceived effects, perceptions of risk, legalization, and openness to psilocybin)
 - Higher openness predicted more positive perceived effects, perceptions of legalization, openness to use, and higher perceived risk.
 - Higher agreeableness predicted more openness to use.
 - Higher conscientiousness predicted lower ratings of positive perceived effects.
- **Types of motives**, with high neuroticism predicting higher coping motives and higher openness predicting expansion motives.

Limitations

- Sample was limited to university students with largely homogenous demographics.
- Western, liberal context
- Self-reported measures.

Implications

User Profiles:

These findings contribute to a clearer psilocybin user profile, aiding in public education on safe use and directing further research on personality-based risks and intervention.

Policy & Legalization:

Personality traits like Openness and Conscientiousness predict psilocybin use behaviors, informing targeted policies and harm reduction strategies.

Personalized Harm Reduction:

Understanding motives (e.g., coping vs. expansion) can guide personalized education, harm reduction and health promotion, and clinical interventions to reduce risks associated with psilocybin use.

Mental Health & Well-being:

Neuroticism is linked to higher coping motives for using psilocybin, suggesting that tailored support could help individuals learn additional adaptive coping strategies for negative affect.

Future studies should expand demographic diversity and explore long-term outcomes of psilocybin use as it relates to personality, motives, and attitudes