

Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour

LETTER OF INFORMATION / CONSENT

Naturalistic Psychedelic Use at Electronic Dance Music Events: Acute Experience and Wellbeing Outcomes

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Purpose of the Study:

Psychedelic substances are increasingly used in everyday life outside of clinical trials, particularly at electronic dance music (EDM) events such as raves and festivals. Despite this, very few studies have looked at what these experiences are like for people who attend such events, and whether they relate to changes in mental wellbeing afterward. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of these experiences, specifically at EDM events/raves, on metaphysical beliefs, psychological insight, and overall wellbeing. EDM events have a high incidence of psychedelic users, providing us with a way to research naturalistic usage. Many people also attend raves sober, which allows us to have a control group of sober individuals and analyze the main effects and interactions of the EDM event itself. The research is sparse on raving itself, let alone its association with psychedelic use and their combined impact on the attendees. As a participant, you are invited to complete up to three short online surveys (described below). This study is part of a Master's research project and serves to inform harm reduction practices, EDM event design, and the broader field of psychedelic science.

Procedures involved in the Research:

Participants will be recruited from EDM events/raves and through online platforms (Reddit, Radiate, Instagram, TikTok), and invited to complete one or more anonymous online surveys about their experiences. Should you choose to participate, you will complete the survey(s) on Lime Survey, a McMaster-affiliated survey platform. The study has up to three optional timepoints, and you may join at any one and complete only the timepoints available to you: a pre-event baseline survey within 30 days before attending an event (about 15–20 minutes); a post-event survey within 7 days of attending an event (about 30–40 minutes; this is the main timepoint); and an optional 4-week follow-up survey (about 12–15 minutes). You will be asked if you would like to share your email with the research team (this is optional). If you share your email, it will be used to send you reminders to complete the surveys at each timepoint. The surveys ask about your demographics, your personality and general wellbeing, the rave you attended (setting, music, crowd, harm reduction services), substance use at the event (if applicable), your subjective experience including positive, mystical, and challenging aspects, and your wellbeing in the weeks afterward. Please complete the survey(s) only when you are sober. If you are currently under the influence of psychoactive substances, please bookmark the survey and return when sober.

Potential Harms, Risks, or Discomforts:

The risks involved in participating in this anonymous study are minimal. Due to the context of recruitment occurring in rave and EDM settings, participation is completely optional and is not affiliated with any event organizers, performers, or venue staff. You may experience soreness in your hands or upper back from sitting and/or typing for an extended period of time. If so, feel free to take breaks throughout the survey if needed.

Psychological risk in this study is also minimal. However, the recall of potentially distressing psychedelic

experiences could cause psychological discomfort. This risk will be mitigated by continuously reminding you that each item of the survey is entirely voluntary and can be skipped without penalty. There will also be a trigger warning before the Challenging Experience Questionnaire-7, which explores negative/distressing aspects of the psychedelic experience. Finally, the survey will include mental health resources that are easily accessible in cases of discomfort.

If you become distressed during the survey, mental health and crisis resources are linked at the start of the Challenging Experience Questionnaire section and again in the debrief at the end of every survey timepoint (including the 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline, ConnexOntario, Talk Suicide Canada, Fireside Project psychedelic peer support, and TripSit/DanceSafe harm reduction resources). Because the survey is anonymous and the research team has no way to identify individual participants, individualized follow-up of distressed participants is not possible (this limitation is acknowledged transparently). The mitigation strategy therefore relies on (a) consistent reminders that any question can be skipped, (b) immediately accessible crisis and support resources within the survey itself, and (c) a comprehensive debrief at the end of each timepoint.

You will also be asked about your use of substances scheduled under the Canadian Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA), including MDMA, psilocybin, LSD, ketamine, DMT, and others. In the unlikely event of a confidentiality breach, this information could expose you to legal jeopardy, reputational harm, or social/employment consequences.

To mitigate these risks, the study is fully de-identified (no name, IP address, or any direct identifier is linked to survey responses). The optional email field (for the gift card draw and timepoint reminders) will be stored in a separate file from responses and deleted after data collection closes. Data will be hosted on McMaster's LimeSurvey platform with IP logging disabled, and post-collection data will be stored on Sync (Canadian-hosted encrypted cloud). If anonymized data is later deposited on OSF for open science purposes, indirect identifiers (demographic variables) will be reported only in aggregate, never as individual records that could enable re-identification.

Potential Benefits:

This research will likely not benefit you directly. However, by understanding more about how psychedelics and raving interact and impact attendees, researchers and practitioners may better understand the implications of psychedelic use. These results may also be able to inform harm reduction at future EDM events and other large-scale events at which many attendees consume psychedelics.

Incentive/Payment or Reimbursement:

Participants who complete a timepoint may opt into a draw for one of two \$50 CAD gift cards, awarded after data collection closes. Email addresses for the draw are stored separately from survey responses and deleted after the draw. Entering the draw is entirely optional. We thank you for your time and effort in participating in our research.

Confidentiality:

Your responses to survey questions are anonymous. Survey responses will be stored on the McMaster-approved Lime Survey platform. No metrics are collected by Lime Survey that could identify you or your location (e.g., IP address). To allow us to link your responses across timepoints without identifying you, you will create an anonymous self-generated participant code from fixed prompts (e.g., the first letters of your mother's name plus your day of birth). This code is the only linkage variable and cannot be used to identify you. Throughout the study, all Lime Survey data will be stored in Sync, a secure Cloud storage software encrypted on Canadian servers. Data will be held on a password-protected personal computer, and all data stored on Lime Survey will be wiped as soon as data collection is completed. Because this is a line of research that we intend to pursue further, your anonymous data may be retained for future projects and may be deposited in a public data repository (e.g., the Open Science Framework) in fully anonymized form. We will also be collecting emails to send reminders about future timepoints in the survey.

Participation and Withdrawal:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Should you choose to withdraw at any time while completing the survey, simply close your browser, and no information will be saved. Given the anonymous nature of this survey, responses cannot be withdrawn after survey completion as there will be no way to connect participants to responses.

Information about the Study Results:

If you are interested in the results of the study, results will be posted on the Multisensory Perception Lab website by April, 2027. <https://www.msplab.ca/publications>

Questions about the Study:

If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please contact:

Study Contact Email: simonr1@mcmaster.ca
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Please note that this email will be monitored by the graduate student investigator. This student is the only person who has access to this email.

This study has been reviewed by the McMaster Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance under project #8338. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Office
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
E-mail: mreb@mcmaster.ca

CONSENT

- I have read the letter of information about the study being conducted by principal investigator Dr. David I. Shore, and graduate student investigator Rachel Simon of McMaster University.
- I agree that my participation is completely voluntary, and I understand that my data will not be identifiable.
- By participating in this study, I understand that this study includes questions about psychedelic use, and that prior psychedelic use is not a participation requirement.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive the additional details I requested.
- I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time (before survey completion).
- I agree to allow my anonymized study data to be stored and potentially used for future research.
- I am at least 18 years old.

By answering yes and proceeding to the survey, I am agreeing to participate in this study and confirm that I understand and agree to all terms and conditions as outlined in this letter of information/consent form.