

Background

- In the literature, sex differences in cannabis use have been found. Women:
 - display faster temporal progression from first use to disorder
 - more severe withdrawal symptoms
- There is a critical need to investigate why these differences occur.
- Purpose: determining if non-treatment seeking men and women with CUD:
 - report using cannabis in different situations
 - have differences in adverse childhood experiences
 - report differences in perceived stress

Aims

Hypothesis 1: Women would report more use in negative situations compared to men, while men would report use in positive situations more than women

Hypothesis 2: Women would have more adverse childhood experiences than men and greater perceived stress

Methods

Sample

N= 105 adults (27 women, *M* age = 25.84 years)

- Inclusion: met DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for cannabis use disorder (CUD), Age 18-45
- Exclusion: Pregnant women, having a history of or current major psychiatric or medical disorder, and meeting criteria for moderate or severe use disorder for another substance with the exception of nicotine and cannabis.

Measures

- Inventory of Drug Taking Situations (IDTS),
- Perceived Stress Scales (PSS)
- Adverse Childhood Effects (ACE) surveys

Demographics

Characteristic	Overall (n=105)	Female (n=27)	Male (n=78)	P-value
Age (years)	26.3 (7.2)	27.7 (8.2)	25.8 (6.8)	0.538
Race				
Caucasian	78.9% (82)	74.1% (20)	80.5% (62)	0.034
African American	17.3% (18)	22.2% (6)	15.6% (12)	
Other	3.9% (4)	3.7% (1)	3.9% (3)	
Marital Status				
Married, Widowed	15.2% (16)	25.9% (7)	74.1% (20)	0.073
Not Married, Divorced	84.8% (89)	11.5% (9)	88.5% (69)	
Education				
HS or Less	13.3% (14)	22.2% (6)	10.3% (8)	0.234
Some College	61.0% (64)	59.3% (16)	64.5% (48)	
College Degree	25.7% (27)	18.5% (5)	28.2% (22)	
Cigarette Smoker	23.8% (25)	40.7% (11)	18.0% (14)	0.016
Age at 1 st Cannabis Use	15.6 (2.7)	15.8 (3.5)	15.5 (2.4)	0.851
Years of Cannabis use	8.2 (6.6)	8.9 (6.5)	8.0 (6.6)	0.565
Use Sessions per day	2.9 (2.5)	3.2 (2.2)	2.8 (2.6)	0.324

Results

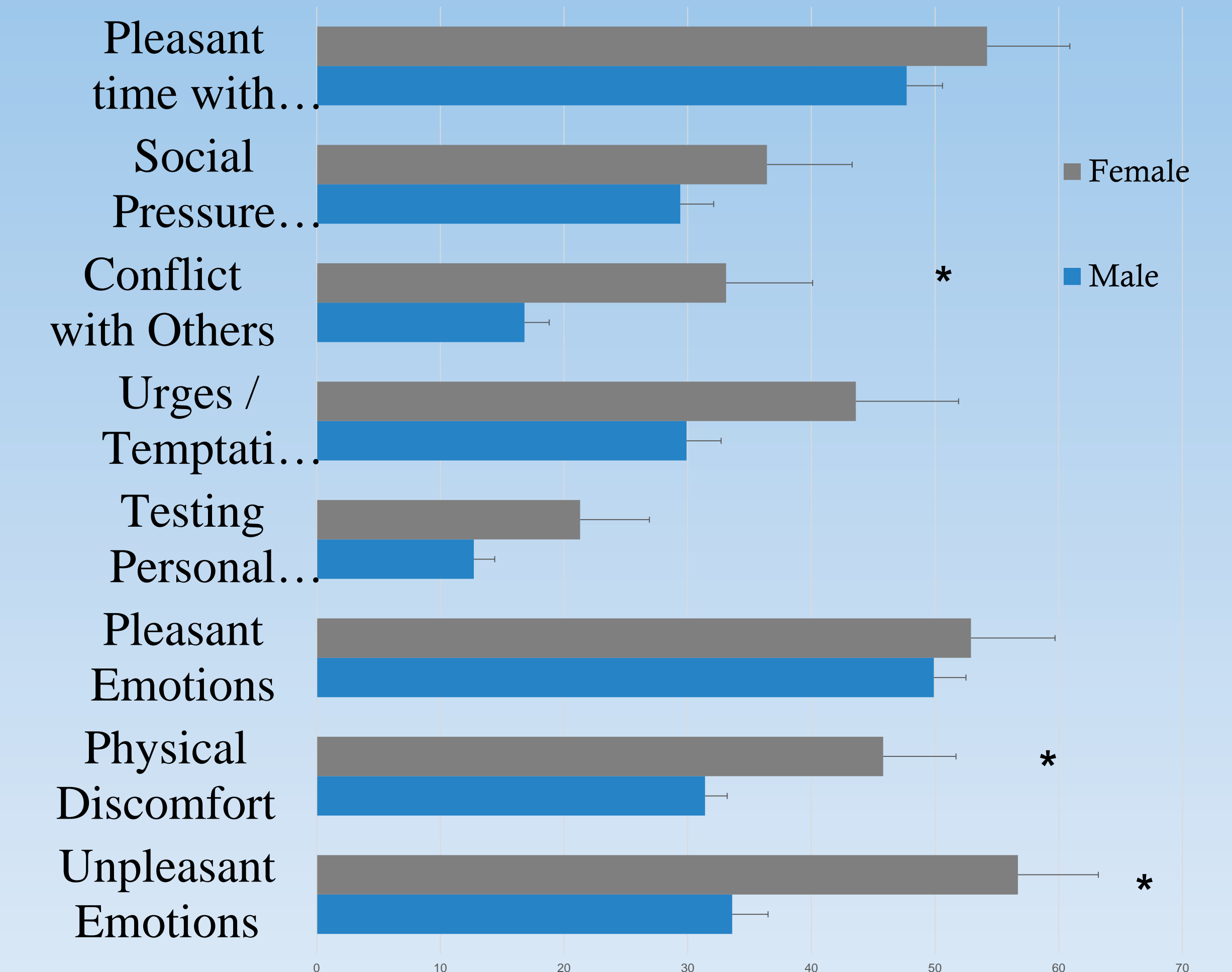
- Women significantly used cannabis compared to men for:
 - Unpleasant Emotions (p < 0.005)**
 - Physical Discomfort (p < 0.05)**
 - Conflict with Others (p < 0.05)**
- Women had significantly higher ACE scores compared to men (p < 0.05).
- No significant difference between males and females for PSS (p = ns).

ACE, PSS, and IDTS Significance

Characteristic	Overall	Female (n=27)	Male (n=78)	P-value
ACE Total Score	2.05 (2.13)	2.89 (2.49)	1.69 (1.85)	0.029
PSS Total Score	15.3 (6.0)	14.5 (6.5)	15.5 (5.8)	0.611
IDTS				
Unpleasant Emotions	39.2 (25.3)	50.2 (25.6)	34.9 (23.6)	0.009
Physical Discomfort	36.1 (19.1)	44.9 (22.5)	32.4 (15.5)	0.011
Pleasant Emotions	51.8 (22.4)	55.1 (26.3)	50.4 (21.0)	0.463
Testing Personal Control	13.8 (14.8)	15.9 (18.0)	12.8 (13.4)	0.643
Urges / Temptations	31.7 (24.1)	33.6 (27.7)	30.4 (22.4)	0.970
Conflict with Others	20.6 (20.5)	28.8 (26.5)	17.2 (16.6)	0.055
Social Pressure to Use	29.8 (22.6)	30.3 (25.1)	29.4 (21.9)	0.997
Pleasant time with others	49.5 (23.7)	48.8 (23.3)	48.8 (23.3)	0.836

Results Continued

Sex Differences in IDTS Subscales



Conclusions

Findings suggest that **women use cannabis in response to negative situations more often than men.**

- Women more likely to report adverse childhood experiences
- Men and women had similar levels of perceived stress
- Interventions focused on managing negative responding may be more effective for women with CUD
- Limitations include a small sample size and the unequal number of men and women in the study.

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