Relative Influence of Big Five Traits and Mindfulness on Alcohol Use

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INTRODUCTION

- Alcohol use is a common problem and thus a common target for treatment.
- One influence on alcohol use is personality traits, most notably low levels of both Agreeableness and Conscientiousness.
- An additional influence on alcohol use may be mindfulness, which increases awareness of alcohol use triggers.
- For this reason, mindfulness is a part of several contemporary treatments for alcohol use.
- However, it is unclear whether its influence increments those of personality traits.

METHODS

- Participants were 404 adults recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (age_{mean} = 37 years; see Table 1).
- Measures: PROMIS Alcohol Use Short Form, Big Five Inventory, and Mindful Attention Awareness Scale
- We examined relative effects of traits and mindfulness on alcohol use using a Bayesian approach to multiple regression

RESULTS

- Traits and mindfulness accounted for a medium-sized amount of variance in alcohol use.
- Agreeableness and Conscientiousness had mediumsized negative effects on alcohol use.
- Extraversion and Openness had small positive effects on alcohol use.
- Neither Neuroticism nor Mindfulness had effects on alcohol use.

DISCUSSION

- Findings underscore the influence of personality traits on alcohol use regardless of mindfulness.
- This implies that targeting personality traits may be more useful in reducing alcohol use than increasing mindfulness.
- This is consistent with recent enthusiasm for personality-focused treatment.
- Future research can examine how to do this for alcohol use specifically.

Personality traits influence alcohol use regardless of mindfulness.

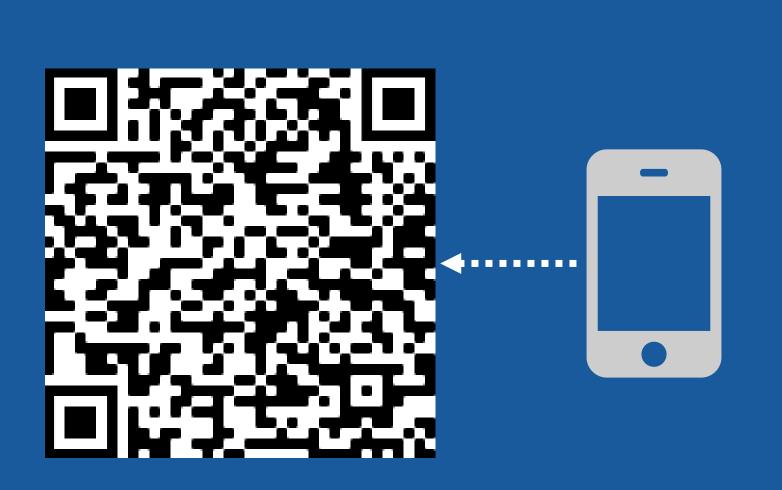


Table 1

Demographic Statistics

Demographics	n(%)			
Race				
Asian	24 (6)			
Black	31 (8)			
White	318 (79)			
Middle Eastern	1 (<1)			
Native American	3 (<1)			
Pacific Islander	1 (<1)			
Multiracial	10 (2)			
Hispanic	12 (3)			
No endorsement	3 (<1)			
Sex				
Male	210 (52)			
Female	187 (46)			
No endorsement	7 (2)			

Table 2

Internal Consistency and Correlations of Alcohol Use, Personality Traits, and Mindfulness

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Alcohol Use	(.97)						
2. Agreeableness	29	(.84)					
3. Conscientiousness	35	.47	(.86)				
4. Extraversion	.01	.33	.21	(.90)			
5. Neuroticism	.18	51	45	50	(.90)		
6. Openness	01	.25	.28	.26	19	(.86)	
7. Mindfulness	21	.17	.35	.07	25	.15	(.94)
Skew	2.08	20	48	03	.35	33	47
Kurtosis	3.48	54	33	73	52	01	.14

Note. Cronbach's alpha on diagonal; all ps > |.10| are statistically significant at *p* < .05

Table 3

Relative Effects of Big Five Personality Traits and Mindfulness on Alcohol Use

	β	95% HDI	R ²
Agreeableness	21*	[32,10]	.18*
Conscientiousness	27*	[38,16]	
Extraversion	.12*	[.01, .22]	
Neuroticism	.01	[11, .13]	
Openness	.10*	[.01, .20]	
Mindfulness	10	[19, .00]	

Note: *indicates that 0 did not fall within 95% of Highest Density Interval (HDI)

