



### BACKGROUND

The purpose of this study was to determine what effect psychopathic traits and gender have upon risk-taking behaviours across multiple domains.

Although psychopathy has been associated with increased risk for violent and criminal behaviours, few studies have addressed psychopathic traits in relation to different types of risky behaviours outside the criminal realm, as well as whether gender is associated with manifestation of different risk-taking actions.

In this study, participants were assessed on their levels of psychopathic traits, and completed multiple measures evaluating risk-related attitudes and behaviours (i.e., domain-specific, sexual behaviours, and drug use). We predicted that males and females will endorse different domains of risk-taking and that psychopathic traits will be related to gender-specific patterns of risky behaviours.

### METHOD

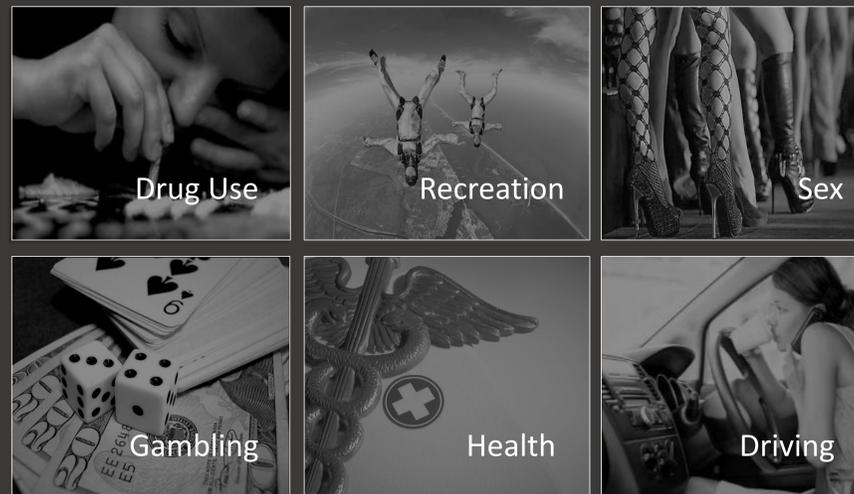


Level of Psychopathic Traits (PPI-R)  
HIGH or LOW

Gender of Participant  
MALE or FEMALE \*



DVs = RISKY BEHAVIOURS



### DISCUSSION

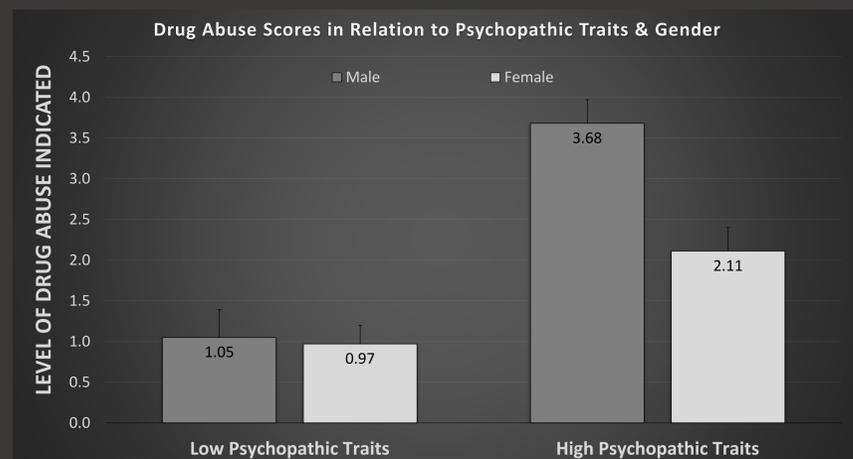
1. Recreation and health/safety risk items pertain to thrill-seeking behaviours, which have been substantiated in previous research on psychopathic traits.

2. If those high in psychopathic traits are inflating their scores, are they truly engaging in more risk than non-psychopaths? Research suggests yes; however, their egocentricity may play into overstating behaviours. Objective vs subjective risk reports are necessary to determine the relative contribution of both traits.

3. Financial risks were least likely to be endorsed, but this was likely due to the nature of an undergraduate sample with limited resources.

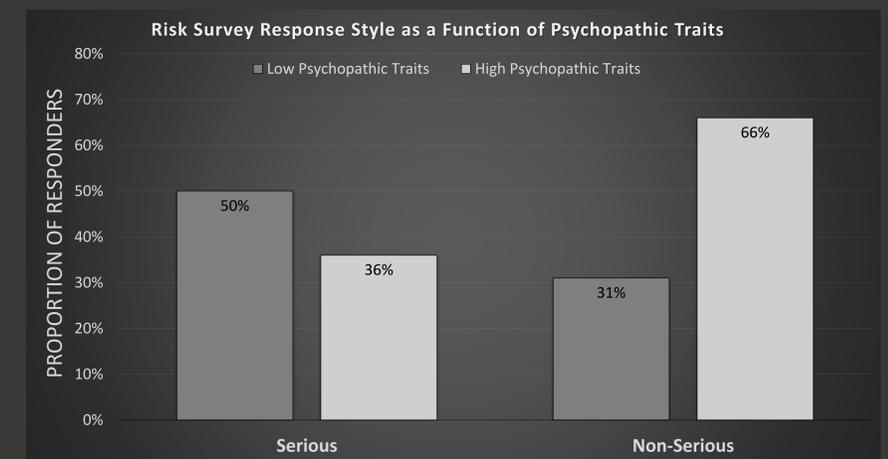
4. Participants who had not tried drugs were more risk-averse in general, yet their PPI-R total scores varied from low to high.

### RESULTS



#### General Findings:

- 1) Males were more likely to score as high in psychopathic traits (50%) relative to females (35%)
- 2) Psychopathic traits and endorsement of drug use were more relevant to predicting increased risk-taking over gender
- 3) Given that females were less likely to have high psychopathic traits, they also scored lower on most risk measures, with the exception of self-reported sexual risks
- 4) Risk behaviours, especially in relation to drug abuse, were most strongly associated with high levels of psychopathic traits
- 5) However, those high in psychopathic traits may have inflated their scores as their response style was more likely non-serious



Psychopathic Trait Level	Social	Ethical*	Financial	Health & Safety	Recreational*	Drug Abuse	Drug Usage* (Tobacco)	Drug Usage* (Alcohol)	Drug Usage* (Cannabis)
C1 (Low/Average)	Low to High	Low to Average	Low to High	Low to High	Low to High	Low	Average	Low to Average	Low
C2 (High)	Low to High	Average to High	Low to High	Low to High	Average to High	Low to High	Average to High	Average to High	Average to High

\* Denotes significant difference between clusters; NOTE: Third cluster was revealed in analysis with variable PPI-R total scores but classified as non-drug users.