

Social Music Environments and Stimulant Drug Misuse within UC San Diego Students

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Background

- 49% of individuals ages 18-40 who attended raves reported having taken at least one illicit drug [2]
- Chronic drug use can lead to psychotic symptoms, addictive cycles with intense withdrawal symptoms, decreased dopamine production, and changes in brain structure. [1]
- Ecstasy initiation is mainly associated with social environment factors such as music events and having a social network of illicit drug users. [4]
- 49.8% of social music environment participants are between the ages of 18-25 [3]

Gaps in Knowledge

Current research has not been conducted on University students in the U.S. and much of this research is almost 10 years old. Most studies regarding stimulant drug misuse concentrate on health effects rather than perception.

Objectives

To investigate the relationship between attendance at music festivals in 2023 and the perception of stimulant drug use among students at UC San Diego.

Method

- Cross-sectional anonymous online survey was distributed to UCSD undergraduate & graduate students.
- Convenience sample was conducted via social media platforms, word of mouth and school email.
- Exposure:** Music Festival attendance in 2023
- Outcome:** Perception of stimulant drug use
- SPSS was used for descriptive statistic analysis via Fisher's exact chi-square test.

For this study, stimulant drug use is defined as MDMA, Amphetamines, Cocaine, and Methamphetamines. For the purpose of this study, this definition does not include caffeine, alcohol, or marijuana products.

Results

TABLE 1. Study Demographics (N = 101)

SEX	N (%)
Male	30 (30%)
Female	69 (69%)
Other	2 (1%)
RACE	
White	17 (17%)
African American	3 (3%)
Asian	73 (73%)
Other/Prefer Not to Say	7 (7%)
HISPANIC ETHNICITY	
Hispanic	14 (14%)
YEAR IN COLLEGE	
Undergraduate 1st Year	9 (9%)
Undergraduate 2nd Year	7 (7%)
Undergraduate 3rd/1st Transfer	21 (21%)
Undergraduate 4th/2nd Transfer	56 (55%)
Undergraduate 5th+	4 (4%)
Graduate	4 (4%)
AGE	
18 - 20	30 (31%)
21 - 23	65 (64%)
24 - 26	4 (4%)
+27	1 (1%)

Figure 1. Attendance at Music Festivals in 2023

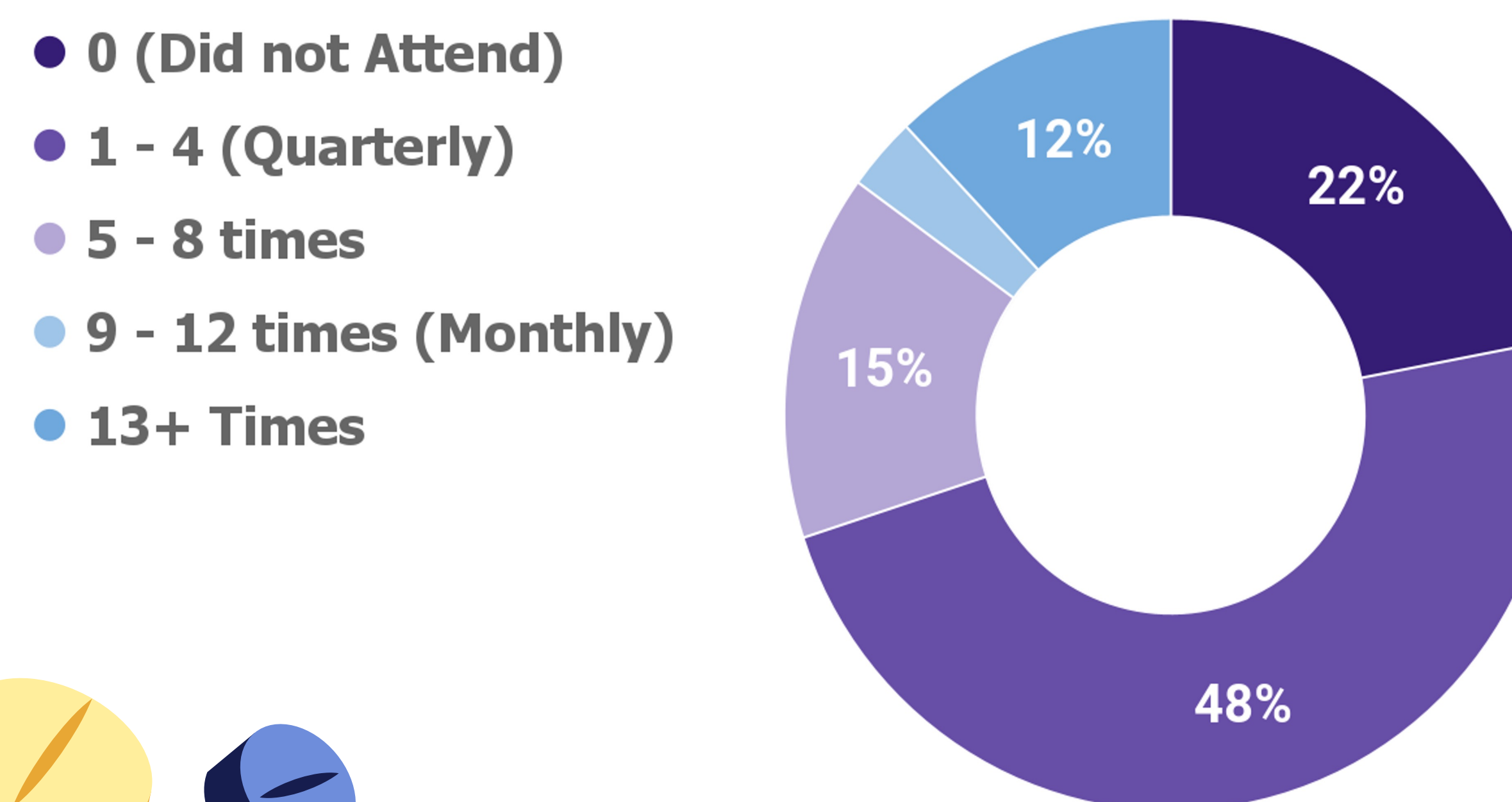


Figure 2. Stimulant Drugs Perceived Use at Social Music Events

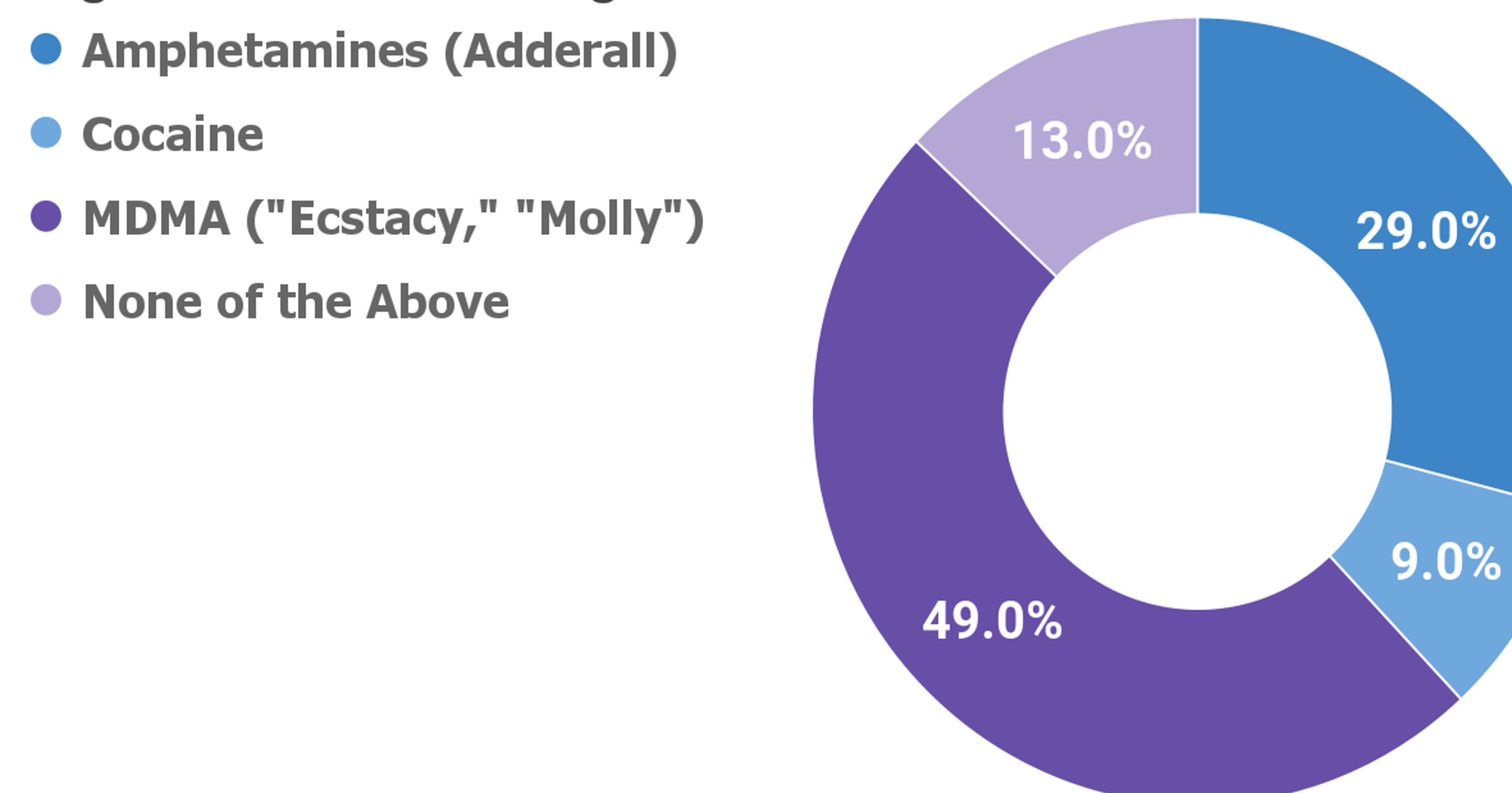
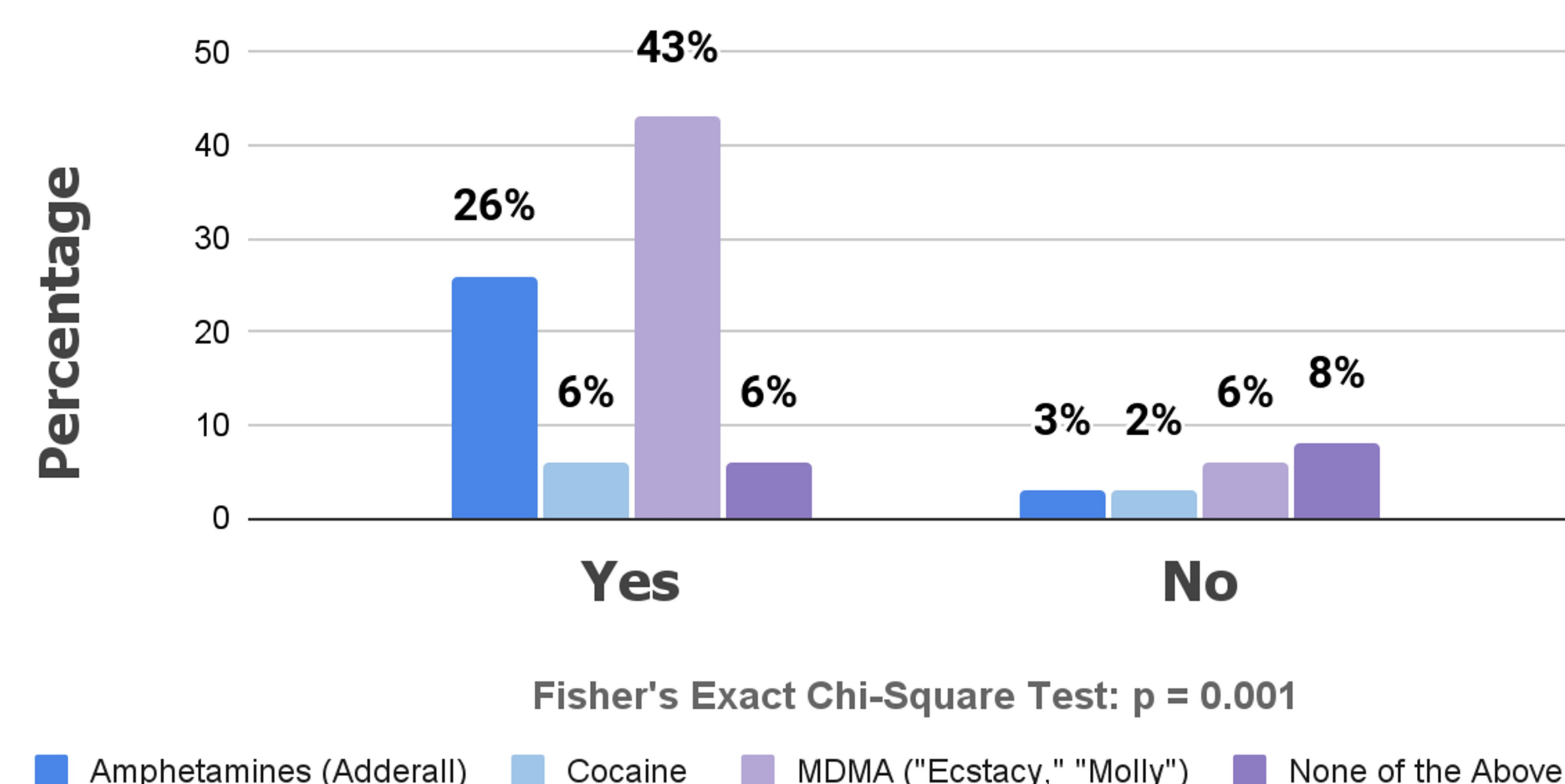


Figure 3. Perception of Stimulant Use Associated with Social Music Event Attendance



Policy Implications

Funding can go towards establishing or supporting existing campus organizations and programs to promote education on stimulant drug misuse and provide more resources for harm reduction.

Future research can further explore stimulant drug use at social music events among students across different universities in the US and their knowledge of the potential risks of stimulant use and available harm-reduction resources on their respective campuses.

Conclusions

UC San Diego students perceive that attendance at social music environments increases the possibility of stimulant drug misuse among their peers, suggesting prevalence of misuse in this population.

The most common stimulant drug perceived to be used at social music events was MDMA followed by amphetamines such as Adderall.

Acknowledgments

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