



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

FACULTY OF
ARTS, HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES

VARIATIONS AND DETERMINANTS OF NOVEL PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCE USE

Dr Kathryn Higgins

CENTRE FOR EVIDENCE & SOCIAL INNOVATION

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, EDUCATION &

SOCIAL WORK

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest

Key research questions

PATTERNS OF USE?

- Frequency
- Quantity
- Setting
- Type

RISKS AND HARMS?

- Health
- Social
- Educational



LONGITUDINAL PATHWAYS?

- NPS and other drug use
- Similarities
- Differences
- Risk & protective factors

MOTIVATIONS?

- Legal status
- Availability
- Potency/quality
- Cost
- Pleasure

METHODS – STUDY DESIGN

Phase

Integration points

1) Latent class analysis of drug use (n=2039)

Quantitative → qualitative

a) Interview schedules

b) Qualitative sampling frame

2) Interviews with drug users

Qualitative → quantitative

a) Selection of risk factors

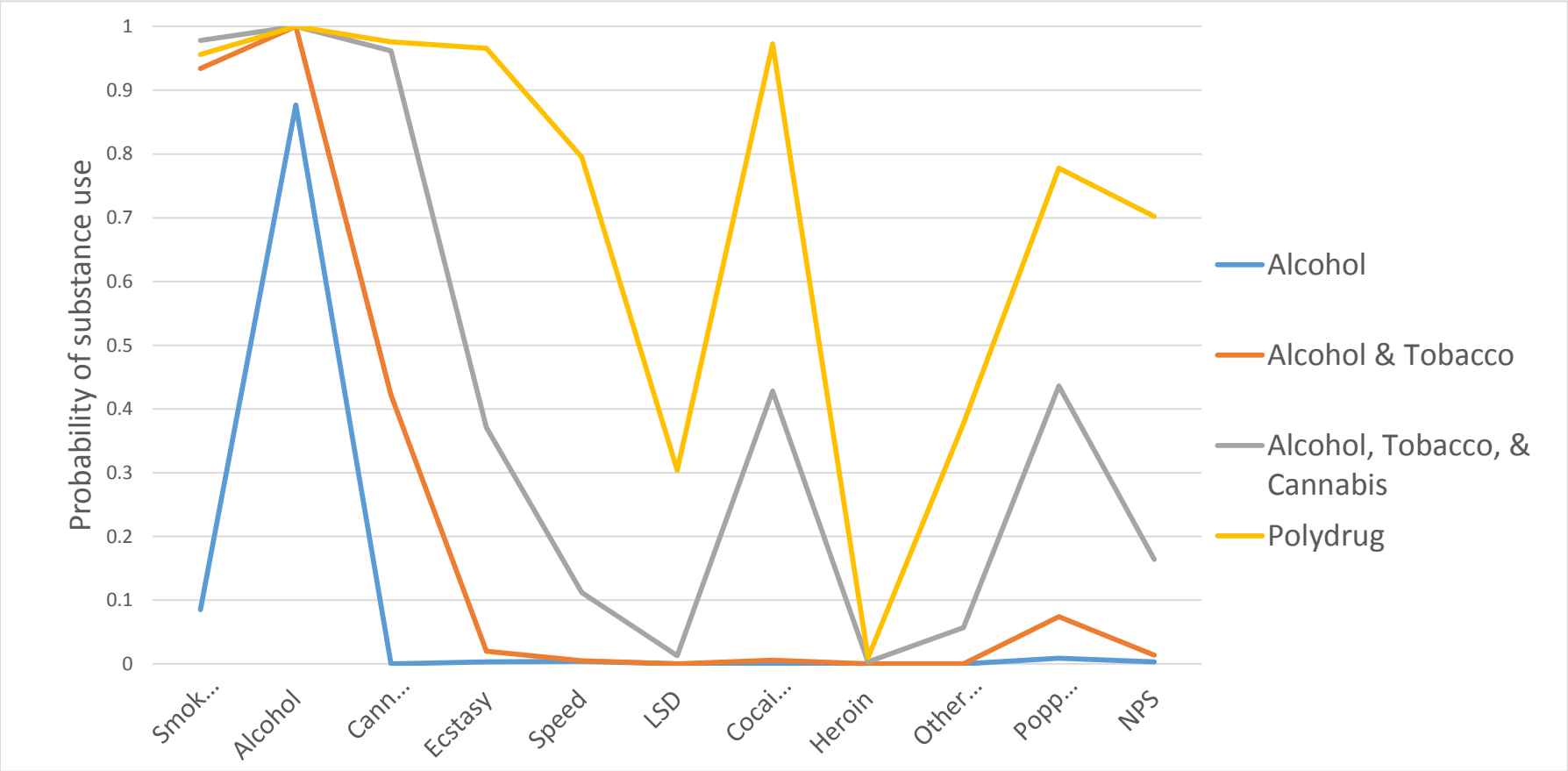
b) Selection of outcome variables

3) Regressions to identify risk factors and outcomes

RESULTS



Probability of drug use in each latent class



RESULTS

Latent Class analysis probability

	Count	Proportion	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Class 1 Alcohol	532	26%	.93	.07	.00	.00
Class 2 Alcohol & Tobacco	926	45%	.05	.88	.07	.00
Class 3 Alcohol, Tobacco & Cannabis	367	18%	.00	.14	.82	.04
Class 4 Polydrug use	214	11%	.00	.00	.10	.90
Total	2039	100%				

RESULTS



Taxonomy of groups from qualitative findings

Sample Group	Group Name
Group One	Limited Experimentals
Group Two	Past Recreationals
Group Three	Contemporary Regulars
Group Four	Dependents
Subgroup One	Generation NPS
Subgroup Two	Availers
Subgroup Three	Persistors
Subgroup Four	Non- NPS Users

KEY FINDINGS



- Confirms and broadens existing evidence
- Statistical modelling showed:
 - No one single NPS class/always polydrug use
- Difficult to unpick the relevance of risk & protective factors at population level
- Drivers of NPS use include:
 - Legal status
 - Availability
 - Quality & Potency
 - Cost
 - Pleasure

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

Suggested interventions/treatment

Don't reinvent the wheel (excellent resources exist e.g. Project Neptune)

Building on existing interventions in real time

NPS - a 'snare' to the unknown – makes it everybody's business

‘Variation and Determinants of Novel Psychoactive Substance (NPS) Use: Potential Implications for Policy and Practice’

Dr Kathryn Higgins, Dr Nina O’Neill, Dr Leeanne O’Hara, Dr Julie-Ann Jordan, Dr Mark McCann, Dr Tara O’Neill, Prof. Mike Clarke, Prof. Tony O’Neill, Dr Anne Campbell.

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