

# The Impact of Microaggressions Through the Usage of Cannabis Among Transgender Individuals Through a Biopsychosocial Lens



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## Abstract

This study examines transgender individuals and their usage of cannabis as a coping mechanism to deal with high levels of societal oppression and microaggressions. Many transgender individuals look to substance abuse and use these substances to cope with negative feelings that may occur as a result of discrimination, sexual assault, and mental health difficulties such as depression or anxiety disorders. The research aims to further explore how engaging in cannabis use aids in managing societal discrimination within the transgender community. The data is examined through the biopsychosocial model, which was created by George Engel to explore the psychological impact of oppression on transgender individuals in their biological, psychological, and social lives. The biopsychosocial model is a way of understanding how the subjective experiences of an individual can assist with understanding the impact of discrimination in several aspects of themselves. The model helps us understand the relationship between the biological and psychosocial factors in wellness. For this study, we are primarily focusing on the psychosocial aspect of this model which includes mental and emotional wellness, self-esteem, and social interactions within the transgender community.

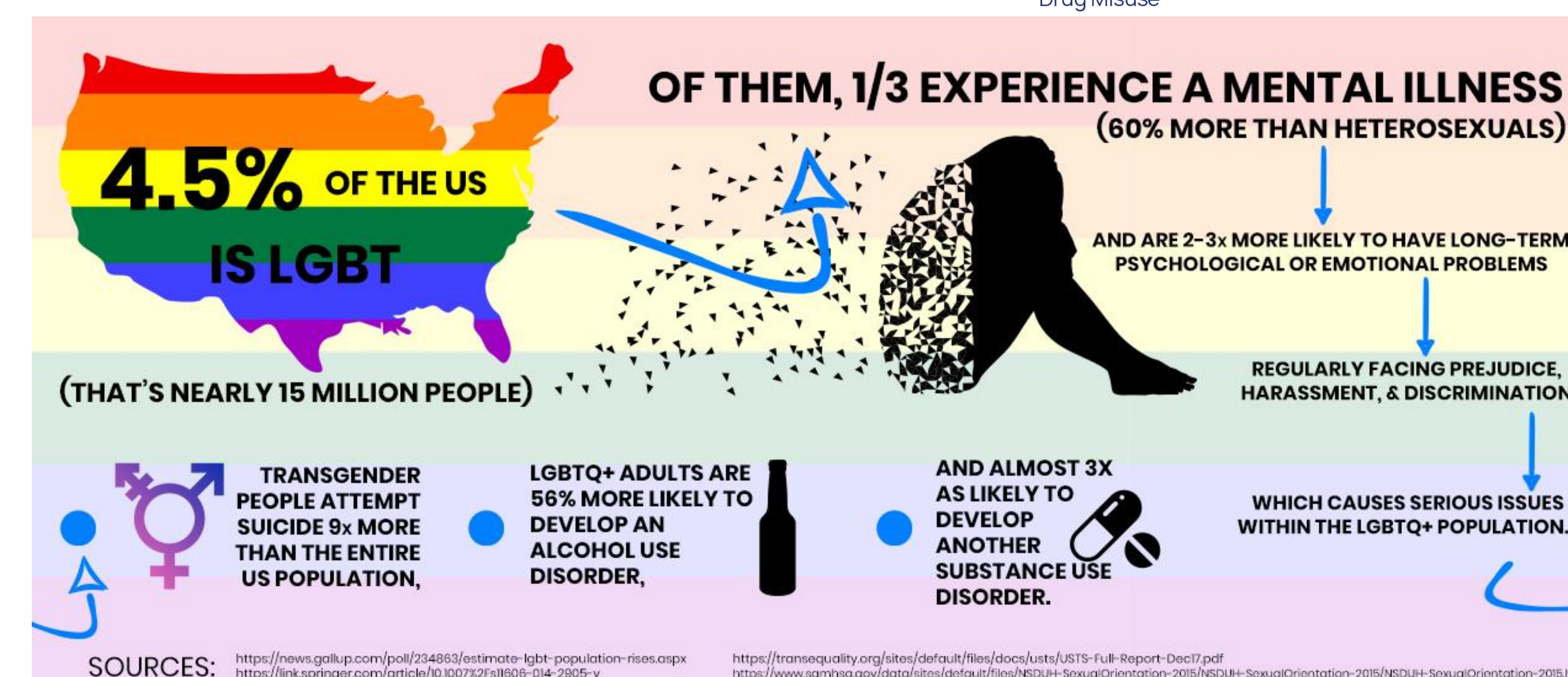
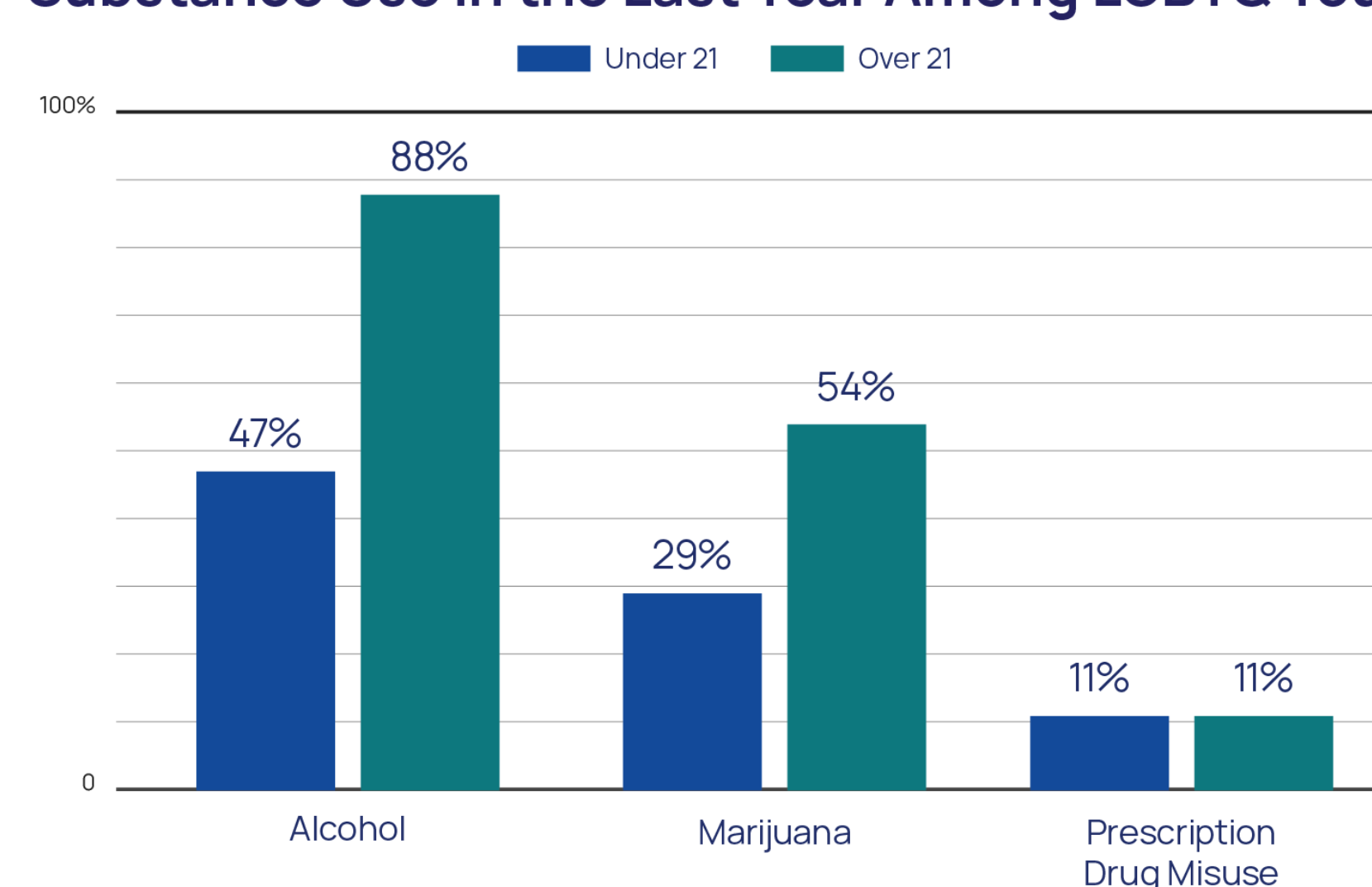
## Methods

- For this study, we focused on data collection, data analysis, and recognizing specific patterns between transgender individuals and cannabis usage.
- By collecting data from other sources regarding this topic and summarizing other major writings, a literature review is in the works for this research project.
- The type of sources that we focused on include sources regarding TGNC individuals, cannabis usage and transgender individuals, and microaggressions that TGNC individuals face.

## Background Information

- This research investigates the relationship between transgender individuals and the use of cannabis is based on the idea of discovering if substance abuse is higher for transgender individuals since cannabis is used as a coping mechanism due to the impact of microaggressions on transgender individuals.
- Fifty-five percent of the relationship between substance misuse within TGNC individuals was due to depressive symptoms due to how many of these individuals are treated in society (Nuttbrock et al., 2014).
- Although there is not much research, some statistics show a higher prevalence of substance abuse in the LGBT community, specifically the TGNC older adult community, compared to cisgender individuals (Agosto et al., 2019).
- Evidence suggests that transgender individuals may have been driven to use substances as coping mechanisms with an increased risk due to elevated stress from experiences such as trauma, harassment, minority stress, or discrimination (Cotaine et al., 2022).
- This research is a quantitative investigation that involves data analysis to examine the relationship between microaggressions faced by transgender individuals and cannabis use.
- The data analysis in this investigation is done by summarizing key findings from research done involving different studies regarding this topic and determining factors that play a role in motivating transgender individuals to use cannabis and other substances.

Substance Use in the Last Year Among LGBTQ Youth



## Conclusions

The goal of this research project is to examine the use of cannabis among transgender individuals to understand if the higher rates of usage of cannabis are due to it being used as a coping mechanism because of microaggressions faced by transgender individuals. Through analyzing data and working on a literature review, a common theme that was found throughout this research is that transgender individuals may abuse substances such as cannabis to cope with and avoid many negative feelings they deal with. By reviewing many different sources, it was found that some of the negative feelings that transgender individuals undergo come from discrimination, sexual assault, and mental health challenges such as depressive or anxiety disorders. Other studies that were reviewed throughout this research stated that transgender individuals might be motivated to use cannabis and abuse other substances because they have high-stress levels due to trauma, harassment, minority stress, physical abuse, and feeling unsafe in their community. Overall, the common theme concluded from this literature review is that transgender individuals struggle with many mental health issues due to the microaggressions they face in society which is why the rates of cannabis usage are higher for transgender individuals compared to their cisgender peers.

## References

