

**Do Psychedelic Substances Improve or Impede Creativity?**

Student's Name or Students' Names

Department Affiliation, University Affiliation

Course Number: Course Name

Instructor's Name

Assignment Due Date

## **Do Psychedelic Substances Improve or Impede Creativity?**

Psychedelic substances (hallucinogens) are a class of psychoactive compounds that alter mood, thoughts, and a person's perception of reality. A person who is under the influence of psychedelics will often have heightened senses and will not accurately interpret their reality. They will often hear, see, and smell things that are nonexistent. Psychedelics create experiences that are often described as hallucinogenic or mystical and can distort the senses, cognitive processes, emotions, and time perception. Some of the most common psychedelics include Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), Psilocybin, and N, N-Dimethyltryptamine (DMT). Psilocybin is often referred to as magic mushrooms because it is found in some mushroom species and is converted to psilocin by the body. There has been a lot of interest in determining the effects of psychedelic substances on the creative process. Creativity is a cognitive process that is valuable to humans. As such, any opportunity to enhance this process is bound to generate much interest (Mason et al., 2021). Arguably, psychedelic substances improve creativity.

First, anecdotal evidence suggests that psychedelic substances can significantly improve creative task performance. It has also been linked to the development of several valuable insights. For instance, Steve Jobs' insight into prioritizing design quality over revenue generation is attributed to the influence of psychedelics. Additionally, Ralph Abraham's insights into the chaos theory are also attributed to the influence of psychedelics (Gandy et al., 2022). Several other academics and visionaries have credited psychedelics for the valuable insights that informed various contributions to their fields.

Secondly, while there is little empirical data to support the argument that psychedelics improve creativity, there are several findings that show that psychedelics can enhance creative problem-solving and scientific creativity. In one study, subjects displayed significantly enhanced

abilities in creative task completion, whereas half subjectively said their creativity and ability to solve professional problems had been improved. Compared to their productivity without psychedelics, more than half of the subjects noted enhanced abilities (Gandy et al., 2022).

Further, some psychedelics like psilocybin have been found to create time and construct-related differentiation of effects on creative thinking. While this does not offer conclusive proof that psychedelics improve creativity, it validates the argument that psychedelics influence certain aspects of the creative process. These findings have also been leveraged to offer psychedelics as a pharmacological treatment option for mental conditions characterized by random thought patterns (Mason et al., 2021).

Studies into the effects of psilocybin on the creative process have also had some interesting results. For instance, one study found that micro-dosing of psilocybin achieved acute creative enhancement (Bonnieux et al., 2023). This evidence provides further support to the anecdotal pieces of evidence. It is also worth noting that the effects of psychedelic substances have been touted to enhance creativity by transcending the bounds of convention. For example, people who have used LSD describe heightened senses, altered states of consciousness, and divergent thinking. This allows users to think outside the bounds of convention, paving the way for new ideas and insights.

In conclusion, psychedelics offer the potential for the enhancement of the creative process. More research needs to be done on the neurobiological mechanisms of psychedelics, their long-term effects, and their applications in medicine. While there is overwhelming anecdotal evidence that psychedelics can enhance the creative process, empirical evidence is mixed at best. There should be more research focused on the empirical evidence of psychedelic use. This can be used to inform policy and regulation of psychedelic substances. Additionally, it

will be used to ascertain how psychedelic substances can be leveraged in the treatment of some mental disorders.

## References

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