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Bibliometric Analysis of The Top 10 Journals on Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy Investigating Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapy and PTSD

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Introduction

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition caused by experiencing or witnessing traumatic life events, resulting in flashbacks, nightmares, and severe anxiety. A new avenue of research for treating PTSD is psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy, which involves administering psychedelics, hallucinogenic drugs, under therapeutic supervision to help individuals deal with symptoms of PTSD. These mood altering drugs are used to treat other conditions such as treatment-resistant anxiety and depression by encouraging the formation of new neural pathways. Our team used bibliometric methods to extract and analyze data from articles to investigate the effectiveness of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy in treating PTSD.

Objectives

- evaluate the proficiency in using psychedelic-assisted therapy
- assesses the safety, efficacy, and underlying mechanisms of psychotherapy on individuals who suffer from PTSD.

Methods

The data extraction for our analysis was gathered from the Web of Science database. The search terms used for our project were "Psychedelics and PTSD" which were filtered with the keywords "Psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy". There were 250 results gathered from this search which were exported to Biblioshiny, a web interface for bibliometric analysis, and then reviewed manually. The composition of our search resulted in 124 published articles, 17 editorial material articles, and 69 review papers.

Results

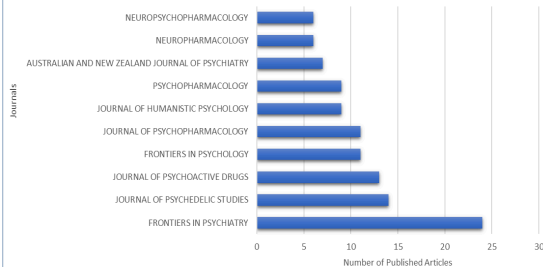


Fig 1. Top 10 Most Relevant Journals

Results

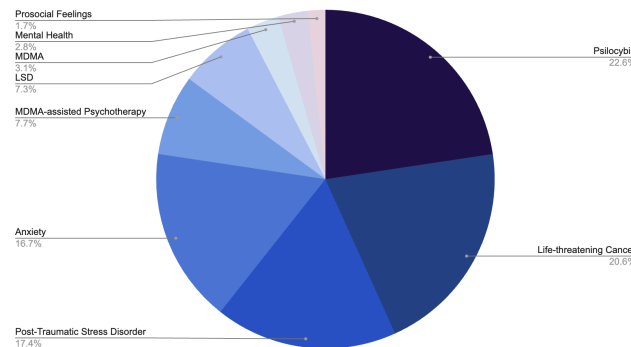


Fig 2. Top Trending Topics

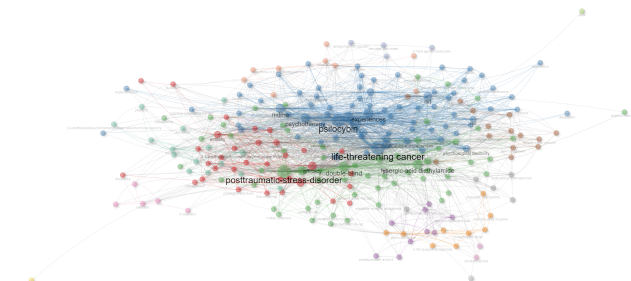


Fig 3. Thematic Map

Most Relevant Sources

The most relevant journals that contribute to psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy treatments were compiled and are shown below in Figure 1. The top 10 journals consisted of those that focus on psycho- and neuro-pharmacology, psychology, and psychiatry. Frontiers in Psychiatry leads this list with a total of 24 published articles with the Journal of Psychedelic Studies following with 14 published articles. The Neuropsychopharmacology Journal and Neuropharmacology Journal have the least amount, with only 6 published articles.

Results

Fig 4. Articles Published Per Year

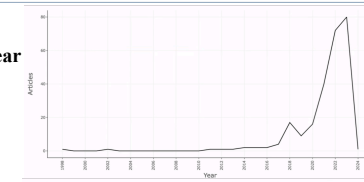
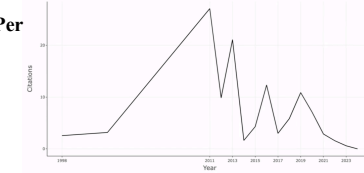


Fig 5. Citations Per Year



Results

Trend Topics

- Pie chart in Figure 2 displays the top 10 trending topics among the 125 sources according to the frequency of the terms. Psilocybin, a naturally occurring psychedelic found in fungi, was most frequently touched upon among literature concerned with psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy.

Thematic Map

- The thematic map shown below in Figure 3 visually displays recurring keywords and connected topics. Psilocybin, post-traumatic stress disorder, and life-threatening cancer were among the most frequently used keywords. These three in particular are heavily associated with each other due to the study of psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy being used to treat cancer-related anxiety and distress. Acute psychological distress and adverse reactions were the least referenced topics from the literature.

Conclusions

The results from our data analysis demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy research in PTSD treatment published so far. Research in this field has strongly focused on the use of psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy since studies have found its potential in treating related anxiety and depression disorders, such as cancer-related anxiety and distress. MDMA and LSD are also shown to be frequently addressed topics in the literature, indicating that research has expanded into other forms of psychedelics to treat PTSD along with anxiety disorders. The least addressed topics were concluded to be that of acute psychological distress and adverse reactions to treatment. This highlights a lack of research on the severity of PTSD in relation to psychedelic treatment. Side effects and negative outcomes of drug-assisted treatment should also be investigated. Future works should address and investigate these topics to improve treatment options.