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Differing attitudes towards the cannabis infringement notice scheme as a function of career aspirations and dispositional variables

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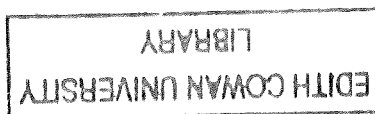
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Differing Attitudes Towards the Cannabis Infringement Notice Scheme as a Function of

Career Aspirations and Dispositional Variables

Mark Wallace

A report submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Bachelor of

Arts (Psychology) Honours, Faculty of Computing, Health and Science,

Edith Cowan University

Submitted October 2010

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Mark Wallace

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Differing Attitudes Towards the Cannabis Infringement Notice Scheme as a Function of
Career Aspirations and Dispositional Variables

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Abstract

This paper investigated the predictive relationship between individuals' career aspirations, dispositional variables such as *temperance mentality* and *need for closure*, and recent cannabis use, and attitudes towards the Cannabis Infringement Notice (CIN) scheme in Western Australia; and also examined if differences in attitudes towards CIN scheme existed between different career aspiration groups. The CIN scheme, a harm reduction strategy, came into effect on 22 March 2004 (Lenton, 2004). Harm reduction is one of three strategies encompassed by the policy of harm minimisation, which underpins Australia's approach to drugs and drug related harm (Ryder, Walker, & Salmon, 2006). Studies investigating attitudes towards harm minimisation have been conducted in Australia and internationally (e.g. Goddard and colleagues, 2002, 2003; Quick, 2007) and found that harm minimisation education was a key factor in changing people's attitudes towards harm minimisation strategies. It was unknown if individuals' choice of career could also influence these attitudes. A total of 350 students from Edith Cowan University participated in this study. After data screening, a usable sample ($n = 198$) was retained for analysis. A multiple regression analysis indicated that temperance mentality and recent cannabis use were significant predictors of attitudes towards the CIN scheme. A *t*-test was conducted to investigate differences between career choice on attitudes towards the CIN scheme mean scores; no significant difference was found in this particular sample. The mean scores for attitudes towards the CIN scheme clustered around the neutral mark, indicating that the participants were either ignorant of, or ambivalent towards, the CIN scheme. Future studies among the wider Western Australian community are warranted, and may be beneficial in relation to determining what interventions might produce more favourable attitudes towards harm minimisation strategies in general.

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Submitted: October 2010

Differing Attitudes Towards the Cannabis Infringement Notice Scheme as a Function of Career Aspirations and Dispositional Variables

The use of cannabis in Australia was relatively uncommon until the 1960s (Ryder, Walker, & Salmon, 2006). There were, however, some exceptions. According to Manderson (1993) cannabis was used for medicinal purposes in the 19th century and to a lesser extent in the 20th century; but in the later part of the century the nature and extent of cannabis use changed significantly. In the 1960s the use of cannabis became more widespread, with usage increasing more as a matter of personal choice rather than for medicinal purposes (McDonald, Moore, Norberry, Wardlaw, & Ballenden, 1994). Coinciding with the increasing use of cannabis came criminal penalties for those using this drug (McDonald et al., 1994). Criminal penalties due to cannabis use can ultimately affect ones prospects of attaining employment, rental accommodation, and the ability to travel overseas (Ryder et al., 2006).

There has been much discussion in relation to the appropriateness of penalties for minor cannabis offences, which include possession of small amounts of cannabis for personal use (Lenton & Ovenden, 1996). Research in Australia indicated that there is considerable support for the decriminalisation of such minor cannabis offences (e.g., Lenton & Ovenden, 1996; Fetherston & Lenton, 2005). Governments, however, despite often accommodating public opinion, are cautious when it comes to the issue of illicit drug policy (Lenton & Ovenden, 1994). According to Lenton (2004), "politics is about perceptions" (p. 223): Currently in Western Australia, a system of "civil sanctions for minor cannabis offences" prevails, and despite the available evidence that this system has been effective in achieving its aims (Drug & Alcohol Office, 2007), and that cannabis use is declining (Fetherston & Lenton, 2007), the current state Liberal government has indicated that it intends to reintroduce criminal penalties for the cultivation and possession of small amounts of cannabis (Lenton & Allsop, 2010), aiming to send a message that it intends to get "tough on drugs".

Although the political debate regarding the cannabis laws in Western Australia is beyond the scope of this paper, it is interesting to note the rationalism, or lack thereof, at the time of the proposed introduction of the CCA (2003); sensationalist comments from the then opposition Liberal Party demonstrated the tone of the debate. For example, one Liberal Party member suggested that the new bill was going to stupefy children by allowing them to grow cannabis and sell it at school thus negating the need for gaining meaningful employment (Parliament, 2003). Further, according to a report in Perth's Sunday Times, the then prime minister, John Howard, entered the debate urging the Western Australian government to revise the new laws (Lenton & Allsop, 2010).

The purpose of this paper is to review attitudes towards cannabis law reform, specifically the CIN scheme of Western Australia, and to examine the extent to which attitudes are predicted by career aspirations, dispositional variables and personal use of cannabis. The dispositional predictor variables are "temperance mentality" and "need for closure". This paper will also examine how one's dispositions may be forged as a result of their career aspirations by reviewing relevant literature

Western Australian Cannabis Laws

Western Australia became the fourth jurisdiction, following South Australia (1987), the Australian Capital Territory (1992) and the Northern Territory (1996), to introduce civil penalties for minor cannabis offences (Sutton & Hawks, 2005). The Cannabis Control Act (2003), which was passed through the Western Australian Parliament on 23rd September of that year, allows for infringement notices to be issued for certain minor cannabis offences; attempts to regulate the sale of cannabis smoking implements; and amends the 1981 Misuse of Drugs Act (CCA, 2003). The Cannabis Infringement Notice (CIN) scheme, as it has become known, came into effect on the 22nd March 2004 (Lenton, 2004). The introduction of

the CIN scheme saw minor cannabis offences decriminalised, that is, they incurred civil rather than criminal penalties (Lenton, 2004).

Under the CIN scheme, an individual can be served with a fine of up to \$200 if he or she is found to be in possession of used smoking equipment; up to 30 grams of cannabis; or two non-hydroponic plants. Individuals issued with a fine, also referred to as a Cannabis Infringement Notice, must expiate this by paying the fine within 28 days or can opt to complete a cannabis education session within the same period (CCA, 2003). Individuals who receive more than two CINs over a period of three years are obliged to attend the cannabis education session or face a criminal charge (CCA, 2003).

In relation to “cannabis-smoking paraphernalia”, an individual who operates an outlet where these items are sold must ensure that an adequate warning notice indicating the adverse effects of cannabis use is clearly visible to patrons of that particular outlet. Similarly, the retailer must make adequate education materials available to any individual purchasing cannabis smoking equipment (CCA, 2003). The penalties for failing to implement these regulations include fines of \$1000 for individuals and \$5000 for a body corporate. Further, knowingly selling cannabis-smoking paraphernalia from a retail outlet to minors attracts fines of \$5000 for the individual and \$25,000 for a body corporate (CCA, 2003).

According to Prior et al. (2002) the intended purpose of the CCA (2003) was to encourage individuals with cannabis-related problems to seek help; increase knowledge and awareness of the harms (health and social) related to cannabis use; prevent individuals incurring adverse social and economic costs arising from convictions for minor cannabis related offences; reduce prosecution costs incurred by law enforcement organisations and the courts related to minor cannabis offences, and enable the police to concentrate their efforts on the detection and prosecution of those engaged in the commercial cultivation and supply of cannabis.

Some cannabis-related offences are excluded from the CIN scheme and, consequently, continue to attract criminal charges. These include possession of cannabis resin (hashish) and cannabis oil; cultivation of hydroponic plants and knowingly selling or supplying equipment, which can be used to cultivate hydroponic plants; and attempting to flout the intention of the scheme by growing plants and supplying cannabis to others (CCA, 2003).

Attitude Studies

Attitudinal studies relating to cannabis laws conducted over the last two decades (e.g., Bowman & Sanson-Fisher, 1994; Lenton & Ovenden, 1996; Fetherston & Lenton, 2005) have indicated that a substantial proportion of the Australian public considered criminal sanctions inappropriate for minor cannabis offences (Barratt, Chanteloup, Lenton & Marsh, 2005). Bowman and Sanson-Fisher (1994) conducted an Australia-wide random telephone survey to gauge public perceptions of cannabis, in particular the public's attitudes towards the laws relating to cannabis use, possession and cultivation, and associated penalties. From the responding sample ($n = 1608$), 75% believed that possession of cannabis for personal use, growing cannabis for personal use, and using cannabis should not be criminal offences (Bowman & Sanson-Fisher, 1994). Further, between 52% and 55% of respondents indicated that cultivating and possessing cannabis for personal use, and using and possessing implements for cannabis use should be legal (Bowman & Sanson-Fisher, 1994). More recent surveys, however, indicated that support for the legalisation of cannabis for personal has declined. For example, findings from the 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS) indicated that 27% of those surveyed, supported the legalisation of cannabis for personal use, whereas the findings from the 2007 NDSHS indicated a decline in support (21.2%) for legalising personal use of cannabis (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2008).

Fetherston and Lenton (2007) conducted a study into the effects of the Western Australian CIN scheme on public attitudes towards cannabis laws, knowledge of, and personal use of cannabis. This study compared data from pre- and post-cannabis legislative change. Findings from phase two of the study, post-legislative change, indicated that after the laws were explained to participants, approximately 56% of respondents agreed that the strictness of the laws was appropriate, whereas 70% of the pre-change respondents indicated that the pre-legislative change laws were about right (Fetherston & Lenton, 2007). Furthermore, 29% respondents in the post-change survey believed that the new laws were too lenient, compared to 19% of pre-change respondents (Fetherston & Lenton, 2007). Other findings from the survey indicated that there was a decline in cannabis use following the introduction of the CIN scheme. In fact, results from the 2007 NDSHS indicated that there has been a significant decrease in recent cannabis use (past 12 months), dropping to 9.1% nationwide; it's lowest level since 1992 (AIHW, 2008). Although it is not suggested that the introduction of the CIN scheme was a causal factor in reducing cannabis use in Western Australia, it does appear that these findings run contrary to suggestions by some public commentators and politicians that the introduction of the CIN scheme would convey the message that cannabis use may be viewed as acceptable (Fetherston & Lenton, 2007).

Despite the research indicating that cannabis use was declining (e.g., AIHW, 2008; Fetherston & Lenton, 2005), and that the CIN scheme was proving to be cost effective, saving an estimated \$2.3 million in court related costs (Drug and Alcohol Office, 2007), editorial comments from the West Australian newspaper suggested, falsely, that cannabis use was not only increasing, but was also leading to increased adverse outcomes due to the introduction of Western Australia's "soft cannabis laws" (Lenton & Allsop, 2010). Indeed, these comments were consistently being backed up by the spokesperson, a senior psychiatrist, from the state branch of the Australian Medical Association (Lenton & Allsop, 2010). In contrast, the Drug

and Alcohol Office (2007) statutory review of the CCA (2003), declared that, based on the information relating to trends in cannabis use, there was no evidence to indicate that the cannabis law reforms had resulted in any adverse impact on the decline in cannabis use in Western Australia.

While the above research findings provided an insight into a section of public attitudes towards the Western Australian cannabis laws, they do not take into account the effects of participants' career choice, their dispositions, or their personal use of cannabis on their attitudes towards the CIN scheme. The importance of these factors should not be discounted when conducting attitude studies, as will be demonstrated throughout this paper.

Throughout the literature reviewed, the terms dispositions and attitudes were used without any clear distinctions being made between the two. Both terms are used in this paper in the same context in which they were used in the reviewed literature.

Dispositions

According to Allport (1966), dispositions have neurodynamic bases, which have "more than a nominal existence" (p. 1) and have the capacity to influence specific attitudes or behaviours. Funder (1991) suggested that dispositions can be influenced by one's interaction with his or her environment and as such may be learned. Moreover, if one considers that dispositions may be attributed to the individual's genetic makeup (Scarr & McCartney, 1983), but can also be a product of one's social environment, it may follow that individuals in similar environments, or two people with identical genes (e.g., twins), could often have dissimilar dispositions (Funder, 1991).

Individuals' dispositions may be affected by various factors. Haley and Sidanius (2005) argued that institutional socialisation might affect individuals' dispositions. Institutional socialisation occurs when a person's attitudes and dispositions are influenced by factors in their work environment, such as organisation rules, incentives, and peer pressures (Haley &

Sidanius, 2005). Dispositions, such as anti-egalitarianism or authoritarianism, (van Laar, Sidanius, Rabinowitz, & Sinclair, 1999) might reflect differences in attitudes among individuals and / or organisations compared to those such as conscientiousness and egalitarianism (Funder, 1991; van Laar et al., 1999; Haley & Sidanius, 2005).

Attitudes

Attitudes can provide an insight into the individual's needs, motivations and evaluations of issues such as prejudice, sexuality and morality and, other sociopolitical ideals. Attitudes, like dispositions, are also susceptible to change (Perloff, 2003). Strong support for attitudinal change within individuals was found when issues are of high personal relevance, and in particular when founded on political or moral grounds (Petty, Tormala, Hawkins and Wegener, 2001).

According to Perloff (2003), understanding attitudes is essential for comprehending the person in relation to their social world. Attitudes provide information regarding individuals' likes and dislikes, in addition to their perspective on the world (Zimbardo & Lippé, 1991). Attitude studies are therefore necessary to gain greater comprehension of behaviours, or changes in behaviours, within the social world, including factors such as group norms, and social or political policies (Cohen, O'Connor, & Blackmore, 2002). Further, Palmer and Short (2000) suggested that attitudes held by the public might be influential in relation to the formation of sociopolitical policies. Drug policies fall into this category.

Australia's illicit drug policies have evolved throughout the years, changing from punitive approaches to more health-focused approaches (MCDS, 2004). These changes in policies may be a reflection of the wider community's attitudes towards drug use, that is, adopting a medical, health-focused approach to drug use and addiction itself, hence the CIN scheme in Western Australia, and similar policies in other states and territories. The following

literature review provides an insight into how individuals' attitudes are influenced by their dispositions and career choices.

Review of Career Types, Attitudes and Dispositions

Haley and Sidanius (2005) used social dominance (SD) theory and vocational choice theory to examine the associations between the types of institution an individual works for on the one hand, and the attitudes and dispositional characteristics displayed by the individual, on the other. Social dominance theory suggests that human social systems are inclined towards group-based social hierarchies whereby dominant groups, for example, wealthy or ethnically dominant groups, tend to acquire and enjoy higher levels of social status including, better education, health and affluence. In contrast, minority or subordinate groups such as African Americans in the US or Indigenous groups are subject to higher rates of incarceration and poorer education (Sidanius, van Laar, Levin, & Sinclair, 2003). Indigenous Australians, for example, experience much higher rates of contact with the criminal justice system than non-Indigenous Australians. The data available on police proceedings against alleged perpetrators of crime suggest an offending rate of 1 in 10 for Indigenous Australians, compared to 1 in 79 for the non-indigenous population (Wundersitz, 2010). The main risk factors associated with offending by Indigenous people include alcohol abuse, illicit drug use, early childhood experience of domestic violence and abuse, lack of education, low socio-economic status, lack of employment, sub standard accommodation, physical and mental health issues, and lack of access to adequate services (Wundersitz, 2010).

According to Haley and Sidanius (2005), social dominance theorists identified two types of institutions, hierarchy-enhancing (HE) and hierarchy-attenuating (HA). Hierarchy-enhancing institutions are those which lend themselves to the creation and maintenance of group-based social hierarchies by making greater positive social allowances for dominant groups (white, wealthy affluent groups) rather than for subordinate groups (Indigenous or

ethnic minorities), whereas hierarchy-attenuating organisations are inclined towards the principle of equal rights and the empowerment of minority groups. Sidanius and Pratto (1999) argued that these social systems are predisposed to organise themselves along some continuum of group-based inequality especially when considering the historical record of human social structures.

The criminal justice system is an example of an HE institution. While individual members of this system may hold HA positions, such as counsellors and social workers, this organisation can still be considered an HE institution because its overall effect is the maintenance of dominant group-based hierarchies; this is particularly noticeable in societies which purport to hold democratic legitimising ideologies such as “equal justice for all” (Sidanius et al., 2003). An example of the HE nature of the criminal justice system is provided by Sidanius and Pratto (1999) who demonstrated that African-Americans and members of various other minority groups around the world receive more severe negative sanctions (e.g., prison sentences) and are over-represented in the prison system than their more dominant counterparts. This is reflected in Australia where, currently, Indigenous Australians account for 25.2% of Australia's total prison population despite comprising approximately 2.5% of the population (Select Committee, 2010). This is an increase from 20% of the total prison population since 1999 (Select Committee, 2010). The increase in Indigenous incarceration rates might be partially explained by the overall trend towards stricter sentencing. In Australia, elections fought on law and order issues, particularly at state level, have seen the introduction of mandatory sentencing, zero tolerance policing, and strengthening of other criminal justice policies. These policies are more likely to impact on Indigenous offenders who, proportionately, have more contact with the criminal justice system (Select Committee, 2010).

Hierarchy attenuating institutions, on the other hand, include civil rights groups such as Amnesty International, civil libertarian groups and social welfare groups, and those organisations dedicated to the empowerment of minority or oppressed members of society (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). Hierarchy attenuating organisations tend to ameliorate group-based social hierarchy by acting to defend social minorities and thus attempting to create higher levels of social equality (Sidanius et al., 2003). Psychology, in general, is one example of an HA profession.

The Australian Psychological Society Code of Ethics (2007), General Principle A, explicitly states that:

Psychologists demonstrate their respect for people by acknowledging their legal rights and moral rights, their dignity and right to participate in decisions affecting their lives. They recognise the importance of people's privacy and confidentiality, and physical and personal integrity, and recognise the power they hold over people when practising as psychologists. They have a high regard for the diversity and uniqueness of people and their right to linguistically and culturally appropriate services. Psychologists acknowledge people's right to be treated fairly without discrimination or favouritism, and they endeavour to ensure that all people have reasonable and fair access to psychological services and share in the benefits that the practice of psychology can offer. (p. 11).

Holland (1996) argued that individuals tend to gravitate towards studies and occupations that suit their values or dispositions, and suggested that high job satisfaction is determined by person-environment (P-E) congruence. Furthermore, research on SD theory indicated that there is a "P-E fit" with respect to sociopolitical attitudes, suggesting that for HE and HA organisations to function most effectively, they should be staffed with individuals who have dispositions that are congruent with the career roles they have to perform (Sidanius, Liu,

Pratto, & Shaw, 1994). It is also argued that this P-E fit can even be found between university students and the areas of study they pursue (e.g., Sidanius, Pratto, Martin, & Stallworth, 1991; van Laar et al., 1999). For example, students pursuing degrees that would eventually lead to HE careers, in organisations such as the Criminal Justice System, held relatively anti-egalitarian views compared to those aspiring to HA careers such as social sciences or humanities (Haley & Sidanius, 2005).

Dambrun, Guimond and Duarte (2002) further explored this idea in a study, which examined the impact of HE versus HA university majors on racial perceptions and stereotyping, social domination orientation, and perceived social norms in relation to tolerance. Using law students (HE) and psychology students (HA) as participants, their findings indicated that psychology students had lower levels of anti-Arab stereotyping and social dominance orientation, as well as higher levels of support for tolerance norms, than law students; and law students reported that individuals in their course were generally less tolerant than the psychology course counterparts, as reported by the psychology students (Dambrun et al., 2002). According to SD theory, the process by which individuals seek out value-congruent organisations, or study pathways, is known as self-selection (Haley & Sidanius, 2005).

Evidence of self-selection amongst university students was found in a number of studies. For example, Sidanius, Pratto, Sinclair, and van Laar (1996) investigated the perceived attractiveness of HE and HA careers using a sample of students from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Eight different career tracks were investigated, four of which were classified as HA careers and four classified as HE careers. The HA careers included, public defender, civil rights lawyer, social worker, and human rights advocate, whereas those classified as HE careers included, criminal prosecutor, police officer, FBI agent, and business executive. The perceived attractiveness of each career was measured

using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 'not attractive at all' to 'very attractive'. The findings indicated that there was a positive, albeit small, and significant correlation ($r = .19, p < .001$), between the perceived attractiveness of HE careers and social dominance orientation, that is, the desire to establish and maintain group-based social hierarchies. The perceived attractiveness of HA careers, however, was found to be negatively correlated with social dominance orientation, $r = -.39, p < .001$ (Sidanius et al., 1996).

Similarly, van Laar et al. (1999), conducted a study using a large sample of students ($n = 5655$) from the University of Texas to investigate the effect of students majoring in either HA or HE courses on anti-egalitarian beliefs (e.g., classical racism). Hierarchy-attenuating majors were defined as those, which were related to the study of low-status or less empowered social groups. Examples of HA majors included, special education, social workers, and African and Mexican studies. Hierarchy-enhancing majors were defined as those, which identified with, and were directed towards careers in dominant social groups, including business, finance, and marketing. Majors, which could not be easily classified, were labeled as "intermediate". The results from this study revealed that students who chose HE majors, displayed significantly higher levels of anti-egalitarianism than the intermediates, $t(5391) = 5.42, p < .0001$, whereas students in HA majors had significantly lower levels of anti-egalitarianism than the intermediates, $t(5931) = -2.26, p < .02$ (van Laar et al., 1999).

Replicating the above studies, Sidanius et al. (2003) investigated university students' sociopolitical attitudes as a function of their career aspirations, exploring the relationship between anti-egalitarianism, choice of course majors, HE or HA, and future career aspirations. In this study hierarchy-enhancing and hierarchy-attenuating careers were ranked by two independent judges. The list of HE careers included, police officers, military personnel, judges and lawyers, and national security officers. Hierarchy-attenuating careers included social scientists, social workers, and special education teachers (Sidanius et al.,

2003). Reliability of career classifications by the independent judges was deemed to be adequate (rank order $r = .84$). The findings again indicated that students with significantly higher than average anti-egalitarianism scores were attracted to the HE careers, whereas students with lower than average anti-egalitarianism scores were attracted to the HA careers, (Sidanius et al., 2003). Although this study was limited by the fact that it used only a student sample, its findings support the notion that self-selection is a determining factor between particular dispositions, on the one hand, and career aspirations, on the other (Haley & Sidanius, 2005).

Research conducted among participants from non-student populations demonstrated similar findings to those, which used student samples (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). For example, Sidanius et al. (1994), recruited participants from four different populations to determine the effect of employment in, or orientation towards careers in HE or HA organisations on social dominance orientation. Participants were recruited from (1) the City of Los Angeles Police Department (HE) (2) public defenders from the County of Los Angeles Public Defenders' Office (HA) (3) students enrolled at UCLA, and (4) a cross section of adults selected for jury duty in Los Angeles County (Sidanius et al., 1994). All of the participants were required to complete a questionnaire, which consisted of items concerning social status, and social and political attitudes. The questionnaire was developed in such a manner that the participants could not discern that the study was measuring racial and ethnic attitudes, and thus, levels of social dominance orientation (Sidanius et al., 1994). It was hypothesised that police officers (members of an HE organisation) would display significantly higher social dominance orientation scores than either the student participants or the jurors. It was also hypothesised that the public defenders (working within an HA organisation) would display significantly lower levels of social dominance orientation than either of these other groups (Sidanius et al., 1994). The results of this study confirmed both hypotheses. Furthermore, evidence of

significant differences between HE and HA groups remained when the researchers controlled for demographic factors that differed across the groups. (Sidanius et al., 1994). It would be reasonable to argue, therefore, that from the findings of the aforementioned studies, individuals who are employed in, or aspire to, careers in HE or HA institutions might hold relatively different attitudes with regards to social dominance orientation.

Social dominance orientation is a measure of one's support of anti-egalitarianism, authoritarianism and general support for social group dominance (Sidanius et al., 1994). Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle, (1994) demonstrated that the social dominance scale, which measures one's level of social dominance orientation, had high reliability (.80) and consistent construct validity, and was associated with various other dispositional variables such as, prestige-striving, desire for economic rewards and advancement, and political conservatism.

Dispositional variables as used in the current Study

Webster and Kruglanski (1994) introduced a measure of a dispositional variable using the Need for Closure Survey (NCS). According to Webster and Kruglanski (1994), the need for closure is presented as a dispositional construct consisting of a number of factors including, the desire for predictability, preference for order and structure, decisiveness, and closed-mindedness. A high score on the NCS represents a high need for closure. The need for closure is positively correlated with authoritarianism, which includes constructs such as rigidity in thinking, conventionalism, and intolerance of individuals or groups who violate conventional norms (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). It would be reasonable to suggest that individuals who score high on the NCS would, therefore, be attracted to relatively authoritarian HE careers, in organisations such as the criminal justice system or law enforcement, whereas individuals who indicate lower scores on the NCS would favour more HA careers.

Another instrument, adapted by Burt et al. (1994) used for measuring temperance mentality, is the Temperance Mentality Questionnaire (TMQ). The modern temperance mentality is characterised by two fundamental claims, (1) alcohol and other drug use is the source of many societal problems, including, but not limited to, violence, family breakdown, addiction and sexual promiscuity and (2) total abstinence will greatly reduce these problems; and is achievable by temperance solutions such as prohibition, in addition to prevention, education and treatment (Alexander, 1998). According to Burt et al. (1994), temperance mentality appears to exist on a continuum in society, ranging from a moralistic, authoritarian point of view at one end, to a libertarian, permissive inclination at the other. Burt et al. (1994) found a high correlation ($r = .58$) between temperance mentality and authoritarianism, as measured by scores on the Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale, suggesting that support for temperance mentality might be a reflection of broader dispositions relating to punitive and politically conservative attitudes. Again, due to the authoritarian nature of HE organisations, one could reasonably argue that members of such organisations, in general, would indicate higher scores on the TMQ compared to those in HA organisations.

Research related to Drug Use Strategies and Dispositions

Research has been carried out in the US and Australia (e.g., Grindle & Goddard, 2002; Goddard, Grindle, Miller, Hermann & DiTrapani, 2002; Quick, 2007) to determine the effects of variables such as personal dispositions and education on attitudes towards drug use strategies, including zero tolerance and harm minimisation. These studies are important as they seek to determine how the variables mentioned might influence one's attitudes towards drug policies.

It should be noted that the term 'harm reduction' as used in the Australian context, refers to a single strategy belonging to a tripartite group of strategies (i.e., demand reduction, supply reduction and harm reduction) that collectively aim to achieve an overall goal of harm

minimisation. In America, the term harm reduction is used in the same context as harm minimisation in Australia. The term harm minimisation (HM) will be used in this review unless the need for clarity indicates harm reduction should be used.

Harm minimisation is the philosophy adopted in the National Drug Strategy in Australia to deal with drug use (MCDS, 2004), and seeks to minimise drug related harm among those individuals who continue to use drugs, but also aims to prevent or reduce the use of drugs by controlling and reducing supply and demand (Ryder et al., 2006).

Harm reduction, as defined in Australian drug policy, aims to reduce the harms associated with drug use, both to the individual or the community in general, which may result from individuals who choose to continue to use drugs. Needle and syringe exchange programs are an example of harm reduction strategies, as they endeavour to reduce the risk of blood borne viruses being spread among injecting drug users (Ryder et al., 2006). The CIN scheme can also be considered a harm reduction strategy.

Supply reduction seeks to control the quantity of drugs available in the community through law enforcement and interdiction; the aim of demand reduction is the prevention or reduction of harmful drug use among current drug users (Ryder et al., 2006), through education programs, and in the case of legal drugs, controls on advertising. Demand reduction strategies also aim to encourage individuals not to begin using drugs (Ryder et al., 2006).

A study by Grindle and Goddard (2002) investigated the effects of temperance mentality, need for closure, and level of exposure to HM education on the attitudes of students ($n = 116$) from an American Midwestern University towards HM strategies. Based on the rationale that Midwestern Americans were mainly conservative and would disapprove of HM, Grindle and Goddard (2002) recruited students from three different units, in which students were exposed to varying degrees of HM education; for example, Introductory Psychology (no exposure to HM), Abnormal Psychology (two HM lectures), or Drug Policy (several weeks of HM

lectures). The students rated their acceptance of eight HM strategies, in addition to completing the TMQ and the NCS (Grindle & Goddard, 2002). Briefly, the findings from this research study indicated that participants who had more exposure to HM education were more accepting of harm minimisation, although those who scored high on closed-mindedness and temperance mentality (viewing alcohol or other drug use as morally wrong) were less accepting. However, when controlling for the need for closure and temperance mentality, a significant effect for HM education exposure was found, indicating that education on harm minimisation may improve acceptance of HM strategies, and in particular the more controversial strategies such as needle and syringe exchange programs (Grindle & Goddard, 2002).

A study by Quick (2007) replicated that of Grindle and Goddard (2002), by investigating the effects of the level of exposure to HM education and dispositional variables on the attitudes towards harm minimisation among Australian undergraduate university students. Dispositions such as the need for closure and temperance mentality were measured using the NCS and the TMQ; the level of exposure to harm minimisation education was determined by the courses in which the participants were enrolled. For example, it was expected that students enrolled in Addiction Studies would have a higher level of exposure to harm minimisation education compared to students enrolled in Psychology (medium exposure), and even more so compared to those enrolled in Sports Science (low exposure). Like Grindle and Goddard (2002), the results from the study indicated that acceptance of HM was significantly affected by exposure to harm minimisation education, $F(2, 481) = 109.76, p < .001$, that is, the higher the level of exposure to HM education, the greater the acceptance of the philosophy of harm minimisation. Furthermore, it was found that the levels of exposure to harm minimisation significantly affected TMQ scores, $F(2, 481) = 59.32, p < .001$, that is, the more exposure individuals had to harm minimisation education, the lower their level of temperance

mentality. No significant effect was found for harm minimisation exposure on the need for cognitive closure (Quick 2007).

In another study to determine attitudes towards harm minimisation, Goddard et al. (2002) randomly assigned 172 university students into two groups. One group was required to read a paragraph containing a message supporting the “war on drugs”; the other group read information supporting harm minimisation. Both groups were then required to complete the NCS and the Harm Reduction Acceptability Scale (HRAS), which was developed by Goddard (1999), to determine the acceptability of harm minimisation among American treatment professionals. Participants were categorized into high and low groups, using a median split, based on their mean NCS score (Goddard et al., 2002). A 2 x 2 (message [war on drugs, harm minimisation] x NCS [high, low]) analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted on the mean HRAS scores. The results from the ANOVA found a significant main effect for message type (war on drugs, harm minimisation), $F(1, 167) = 11.54, p = .001$, which indicated that the war on drugs message group showed less acceptance of harm minimisation strategies compared to the harm minimisation message group. A significant interaction was also found, $F(1, 167) = 4.52, p = .04$. Post hoc tests revealed that for the war on drugs message group, NCS (high, low) had no effect on acceptance of harm minimisation. However, for the harm minimisation message group, there was a significant difference between participants who scored low on the NCS compared to those participants who scored high on the NCS, $t(85) = -2.70, p < .01$. This result indicated that, for those who read the harm minimisation message, greater acceptance of harm minimisation was a function of need for closure; individuals with a low need for closure who read the HM message were more accepting of harm minimisation compared to individuals with a high need for closure (Goddard et al., 2002). The findings indicated that providing information about harm minimisation may be sufficient to persuade

individuals who have low need for closure to accept this philosophy for dealing with problems related to alcohol and other drug issues (Goddard et al., 2002).

Quick's (2007) study found no significant differences on the NCS scores between the three 'level of exposure' groups and consequently, no further analyses were conducted using this variable. It was, therefore, difficult to infer whether high or low scores on the NCS would have had an effect on acceptance of harm minimisation within the Australian undergraduate sample used in Quick's (2007) study. These findings from these studies, however, demonstrated that education is an important factor in relation to acceptance of the harm minimisation philosophy (Goddard & colleagues, 2002, 2003; Quick, 2007).

The preceding literature review, demonstrated that individuals' dispositions can affect career choice through the process of self-selection (Haley & Sidanius, 2005), and career choice might affect dispositions through factors such as institutional socialisation (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). It has also been shown that dispositions and education can affect attitudes towards drug policies (Grindle & Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al. 2002; Quick, 2007). It is, however, unknown at this stage if individuals' career aspirations directly affect attitudes towards drug policies, in particular, harm minimisation strategies.

Research Questions

Building on previous studies by Sidanius and colleagues (1994; 1996; 1999) which investigated the relationship between HE and HA careers on dispositions; and studies by Goddard and colleagues (2002; 2003) and Quick (2007) which examined the effects of education and dispositions on attitudes towards harm minimisation, the aim of the current study was to investigate the predictive relationship between career aspirations, dispositions and demographic variables on attitudes towards the CIN scheme in Western Australia. The research questions for this study were:

1. Is there a predictive relationship between career aspirations, dispositions, and personal use of cannabis on attitudes towards the CIN scheme in Western Australia?
2. Is there a difference between HE and HA groups on attitudes towards the CIN?

It was hypothesised that there would be a predictive relationship between career aspirations, dispositions, and personal use of cannabis on attitudes towards the CIN scheme. It was also expected that there would be a significant difference between HE and HA career groups on CIN attitudes.

Method

Study Design

This quantitative research study is of a quasi-experimental design, whereby each participant was administered a number of questionnaires, and a multiple regression was conducted to determine individuals' attitudes towards Western Australian's cannabis policy. The criterion variable was the attitudes towards the CIN scheme, which was measured using the CIN attitudes questionnaire (Appendix E). This was adapted from a larger questionnaire by Fetherston and Lenton (2007), which was used in a survey to gauge participants' cannabis use, knowledge of, and attitudes towards the CIN scheme, pre- and post-CIN scheme implementation. The predictor variables in this study were, the participant's career aspirations, which were classified into HE or HA; temperance mentality, measured by the TMQ (Appendix C); the need for closure, measured by the NCS (Appendix D); and recent use of cannabis (past 12 months) as reported by the participants.

Participants

Before commencing research, ethics approval for the study was sought and granted by the Edith Cowan University Faculty of Computing, Health and Science Ethics Committee. Participants were recruited from the School of Psychology and Social Sciences, and the School of Law and Justice after approval from the appropriate unit co-ordinators. There were

approximately 500 students available for participation, determined by the enrollment numbers provided by the unit co-ordinators for PSY 1101 (Introduction to Psychology), CRI 1102 (Quantative Research Methods in Criminology and Justice), and CRI 1103 (Criminology). The exact number was difficult to determine, however, as there was some overlap between disciplines, that is, some students who were enrolled in the Psychology unit were also enrolled in both of the Criminology units.

Procedure

Prior to handing out the questionnaires in the lectures, the students were given a brief outline of the purpose of the study and were assured that participation was entirely voluntary and that confidentiality would be maintained by collecting no identifying information. All of this information was included on the information letter which participants were required to read prior to commencement. Participants were asked to be as specific as possible with regard to their career aspirations, for example, individuals who aspired to being lawyers were asked to state whether they intended to be “defence lawyer” or “prosecution lawyer”. The questionnaires were distributed and completed during the lectures, with the approval of the respective lecturers, during the week commencing 24th May, semester one, 2010. Three hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed of which 255 were returned, representing a response rate of 73%.

Materials

Participants were asked to read a statement of disclosure (Participant Information Letter, Appendix A), which stated the purpose of the study and provided a brief outline of the CIN scheme operating in Western Australia. A demographics form (Appendix B) was required to be completed along with the TMQ (Appendix C), the NCS (Appendix D) and the attitudes towards the CIN scheme questionnaire (Appendix E).

The TMQ developed by Burt et al. (1994) was used to determine an individual's level of support for abstinence as the desired outcome for alcohol and other drug (AOD) use (Quick, 2007). Temperance mentality, according to Burt et al., (1994) is a cohesive collection of ideas, which engages individuals to consider drug and social issues. The TMQ contains 20 items that are negatively stated and require reverse scoring; these are items 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 41, 43, 45, and 50. The psychometric properties of the TMQ have not been subject to scrutiny, however, Burt et al. (1994) reported high internal consistency in their research (Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$). The TMQ was scored using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Participants were required to indicate their level of agreement on 50 statements. The mean scores were calculated and the measure of temperance mentality defined using the following scale; opposition < 2.5, neutral 2.5 - 3.5, and support > 3.5 (Burt et al., 1994).

The NCS was developed by Kruglanski, Webster and Klem (1993) in order to determine an individual's need for closure. According to Webster and Kruglanski (1994), individuals with a high need for closure would display urgency and decisiveness in their decision-making by making "important decisions quickly and confidently" (p. 1050). The NCS has proven reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$) and 12-week test-retest reliability ($r = .86$) (Webster and Kruglanski, 1994). This questionnaire was scored using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a series of 42 statements. High scores on this scale indicated high need for closure. The NCS included 16 statements, which required reverse scoring; these were items 2, 5, 12, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 27, 28, 34, 37, 38, and 42. In order to remain consistent with the scoring system used by Burt et al., (1994), participants' mean scores were calculated and retained for use in the data analysis.

The CIN attitudes questionnaire was derived from a larger attitudes survey questionnaire developed by Fetherston and Lenton.(2007), which was used to gauge public opinion towards the CIN scheme, knowledge of cannabis use, and personal cannabis use. The questionnaire used in the current study, however, addressed only those items concerned with the CIN scheme and was scored using a 5 - point Likert scale. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a series of 22 statements. Low scores on the CIN questionnaire indicated greater acceptance of the CIN scheme. Similar to the TMQ and the NCS, mean scores from this questionnaire were calculated to maintain consistency in scoring. The CIN questionnaire means were used as the criterion variable in the regression analysis. A number of items on the CIN questionnaire were reverse scored. These were items 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, and 20. These were decided upon by consensual agreement between the researcher, supervisor Dr. David Ryder, and the author of the original CIN attitudes questionnaire, Professor Simon Lenton from the National Drug Research Institute (NDRI).

Data Analysis

Data screening was conducted on the questionnaires; those that included too many missing responses (e.g. one or more pages incomplete) were excluded from the data set ($n = 21$), leaving a sample of 234 participants, or 66.8% of questionnaires distributed. These questionnaires were assigned an identification number for future reference.

Career aspirations were categorised into either HE or HA, according to the criteria set out by Sidanius et al. (2003). There were a number of participants who listed their career aspiration as 'unsure' ($n = 18$), and a number of career choices were unclassified ($n = 18$), for example, 'writer' or 'researcher'. These participants were excluded from the analysis, as one of the hypotheses expected that career choice, HE or HA, could predict attitudes towards the CIN scheme; a total usable sample of 198 participants remained (56.5% of distributed questionnaires). Of these, 55 were males and 143 were females. Ages ranged

from 17 - 62 years ($M = 23.43$, $SD = 9.43$), with 78% of participants aged between 17 and 25. The sample size was deemed adequate for this study. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), when conducting a multiple regression analysis, a sample size of $N \geq 50 + (8 \times [\text{number of predictors}])$ is adequate. Using this formula, the minimum number of participants required for this particular study was eighty-two.

All of the data were entered into SPSS version 18. Reverse scoring was done using data transformation. Total scores for each participant were calculated on each of the three scales. These total scores were retained as separate variables in the original data table. The mean scores for each questionnaire were obtained and retained in the original data set for use in the regression analysis and *t*-tests. Demographic information, such as gender, age, marital status, and cannabis use were appropriately coded.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted using the entry method, as there was no specific theoretical basis for determining the order in which the predictor variables should be entered. In the multiple regression analysis the predictor variables were the mean TMQ and NCS scores, career aspirations, and recent cannabis use, and the criterion variable was the attitudes towards the CIN scheme. It was decided not to use the demographic question, "If you have used cannabis in the past 12 months, do you think that should you be caught in possession of cannabis, this would affect your career prospects?" as a predictor variable; the rationale being that if the participant is committed to his or her career path and they believe that their cannabis use, if any, will affect their career prospects, then at some stage, they will cease to use; or, given that the CIN scheme has been in operation for at least six years, due consideration has been given by the participants to their cannabis use and, along with the prospect of being caught in possession of cannabis, have chosen their career path regardless.

A *t*-test was conducted to determine if there were any differences between HE and HA groups on attitudes towards the CIN scheme as determined by their mean scores on the CIN

questionnaire. Two other *t*-tests were carried out to investigate whether any differences existed between HE and HA groups on TMQ and NCS scores. The latter *t*-tests were carried out purely to maintain the flow of analysis, they did not form part of the research questions.

Results

Characteristics of Sample

Table 1 displays the demographic information collected from the participants. A number of items were omitted due to non-responses by participants.

Table 1

Characteristics of Sample (Percentage of Sample in Parentheses)

Characteristic	Male (<i>n</i> = 55)	Female (<i>n</i> = 143)
Age-Range		
17 - 25	48 (24.2)	108 (54.5)
26 - 35	5 (2.50)	16 (8.10)
36 - 45	1 (0.50)	10 (5.10)
46 - Highest	1 (0.50)	9 (4.50)
Career Aspirations		
HE	40 (20.2)	52 (26.3)
HA	15 (7.6)	91 (46.0)
Recent Cannabis Use		
Yes	15 (7.6)	27 (13.6)
No	40 (20.2)	116 (58.6)
Marital Status		
Single	52 (26.3)	113 (57.1)
Married / DeFacto	3 (1.5)	25 (12.6)
Separated / Divorced	0 (0)	5 (2.5)
Children		
Yes	4 (2.0)	26 (13.1)
No	51 (25.8)	117 (59.1)

Multiple Regression

A multiple regression analysis using the entry method was performed to examine the predictive relationship for career aspirations, temperance mentality, need for closure and recent use of cannabis on attitudes towards the CIN scheme. The guidelines outlined in Field (2009) to evaluate the assumptions of multiple regression were followed. The data were checked for univariate outliers. One case which exceeded the standardized score of + or - 3 (3.20) was detected. It was decided not to remove it, as doing so had no effect on the resulting model. Examination of residual scatterplots and histograms revealed that the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Shapiro-Wilk's statistic indicated that univariate normality was assumed for temperance mentality $W(198) = .992, p = .30$, and also for need for cognitive closure $W(198) = .987, p = .07$, however, assumption of univariate normality was violated for attitudes towards the CIN scheme $W(198) = .986, p = .04$. It was decided that this variable did not require transformation as the residual scatterplot indicated that the assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were not violated. Cooksey (1996) suggested that data transformations are not recommended, when only minimal deviations from normality are present, based on the premise that, as the researcher is not dealing with the original dataset, interpretation may be affected. The data were also examined for multivariate outliers. An inspection of the Mahalanobis distances in the SPSS dataset showed none of these values exceeded the critical value, $p < .001, df = 4, \chi_{crit} = 18.47$, indicating that there were no multivariate outliers. Table 2.1 displays the correlations from the multiple regression analysis. The correlations between the predictor variables are below .8, which is an acceptable indicator that no multicollinearity exists (Field, 2009). There were also no singularities.

Table 2.1

Correlations between Temperance Mentality, Need for Cognitive Closure, Career Aspirations, Recent Cannabis Use, and Attitudes towards the CIN scheme

Measure	Mean CIN	Mean TMQ	Mean NCS	Career_Asp	Recent Can_use
Mean CIN	—	.409**	.167	.009	.229*
Mean TMQ	.409**	—	.231	.043	.238
Mean NCS	.167	.231	—	.044	.132
Career_ASP	.009	.043	.044	—	-.037
Recent Can_use	.229*	.238	.123	-.037	—

* $p = .05$, ** $p < .001$.

Table 2.1 illustrates the correlations between the predictor variables and the criterion variable. As can be observed, there was a significant and positive correlation between temperance mentality and attitudes towards the CIN scheme ($r = .409, p < .001$); likewise there was a significant but small positive correlation between recent cannabis use and attitudes towards the CIN scheme ($r = .229, p = .05$).

The results from the multiple regression analysis indicated that the model was significant; the multiple R (.435) was significantly different from zero, $F(4, 193) = 11.249, p < .001$. Table 2.2 illustrates the unstandardised coefficients (B), the standardized coefficients (β), the t values, and the significance level of the predictor variables (p). The multiple R , R square and adjusted R square values are also provided. The R square value indicates how much variance the model accounts for, while the adjusted R square value indicates how much variance the model would account for if the sample were taken from the general university population.

Table 2.2

Predictors of Attitudes towards the CIN scheme

Variable	Attitudes towards CIN scheme				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	1.872	.219		8.53	.000
Mean TMQ	.272	.051	.326	5.31	.000
Mean NCS	.049	.050	.066	.98	.33
Career_Asp	-.003	.044	-.005	-.08	.94
Recent Can_use	.109	.055	.132	1.97	.05
<i>R</i>	.435				
<i>R</i> square	.189				
<i>F</i>	11.249				
Adjusted <i>R</i> square	.172				

The *R* square value (.189) indicates that the model accounted for 18.9% of the variance in attitudes towards the CIN scheme as determined by the predictor variables. An inspection of the *t* values indicates that mean TMQ ($t = 5.31, p < .001$) and recent use of cannabis ($t = 1.97, p = .05$) were significant predictors of attitudes towards the CIN scheme in this particular sample.

In summary, the need for closure and career aspirations were not significant predictors of attitudes towards the CIN scheme; however, temperance mentality and recent cannabis use were significant independent predictors.

T-tests

The results from an independent samples *t*-test comparing the mean CIN attitudes scores for the HE and HA groups found no significant difference between groups. Similarly, no significant differences were found for the mean scores on the TMQ and NCS between HE and HA career groups. These mean scores are illustrated in Tables 3.1 to 3.3.

Table 3.1

Mean scores for attitudes towards the CIN scheme

Career Aspiration	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	<i>N</i>
HE	3.05 (.31)	92
HA	3.04 (.36)	106

Table 3.2

Mean scores for TMQ

Career Aspiration	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	<i>N</i>
HE	2.93 (.43)	92
HA	2.89 (.46)	106

Table 3.3

Mean scores for NCS

Career Aspiration	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	<i>N</i>
HE	3.86 (.46)	92
HA	3.82 (.44)	106

Further Analyses

There are two points worth noting; first, the majority (86.36%) of individuals' attitudes towards the CIN scheme clustered around the 2.5 - 3.5 range (neutral) as determined by the scoring system on the TMQ by Burt et al. (1994). While this indicated that the majority of participants appeared to be neutral towards the CIN scheme, an inspection of frequency and cross-tab analysis indicated that the scores from participants on particular questions suggested that they either agreed / strongly agreed, or disagreed / strongly disagreed, depending on the question. This occurred on a number of items on the CIN questionnaire. And second, the 'Attitudes towards the CIN scheme' questionnaire was derived from Fetherston and Lenton's (2007) post CIN implementation attitudes survey. This survey consisted of a much larger set of questions, of which 22 were considered relevant for the CIN questionnaire used in this study. Fetherston and Lenton (2007) divided their questionnaire into a number of different sections, each containing clusters of questions related to that particular section, for example, 'attitudes towards the legal status of cannabis', 'personal cannabis use', and 'attitudes in relation to policing'; they reported the frequencies of participants' responses on each question in these sections.

These points justified conducting a factor analysis on the CIN questionnaire to determine if any underlying factors would emerge, and also to determine if those factors which did emerge from the CIN questionnaire used in this study would align with those of Fetherston and Lenton (2007).

Principal Factor Analysis (PFA)

The PFA with a Direct Oblimin rotation was performed on the 22 items from the CIN attitudes questionnaire. Nine underlying factors, which exceeded Kaiser's criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1 emerged from the analysis, which together accounted for 48.87% of the total variance in the underlying set of variables. A number of the extracted

communalities were quite small, for example on CIN question 19, the extracted communality was .125, suggesting that these items should be excluded from the factor analysis (Field, 2009). It was decided, however, to retain all of the items in order to remain consistent with Fetherston and Lenton's (2007) original questionnaire. Furthermore, Garson (2010) suggested that if an item has a low communality it should probably be removed from the model, as low communalities across the set of items could indicate that the variables bear little relation to each other. However, it is also suggested that the communalities of items should be considered in relation to their interpretability to the underlying factors. A communality of .75, for example, is high but is meaningless unless the factor on which the variable is loaded is interpretable. A communality of .25 may be low, but may be meaningful if the item is contributing well to an underlying factor (Garson, 2010). Therefore, due consideration should be given not to the communality value itself, but to the extent of which the item is important in the interpretation of the factor; although often this level of importance is greater when communalities are high (Garson, 2010). In the current factor analysis, some of the communalities were low but the variables were retained as they contributed to the composition of the underlying factor.

For ease of underlying factor interpretation, Coates and Steed (2005) suggested suppressing values less than .3 prior to rotation. The resulting nine latent factors are presented in Table 4.1 and aligned with subsections of Fetherston and Lenton's (2007) original questionnaire. Although no particular hypotheses were proposed in relation to these underlying factors, it was decided to conduct separate multiple regression analyses on each factor to investigate the outcomes.

Table 4.1

Factor Loadings for Principal Factor Analysis with Direct Oblimin Rotation of Attitudes towards the CIN Questionnaire

Factor 1. Legal status of cannabis	
Q.2 It should be legal for an adult to grow a small amount of cannabis for personal use.	.951
Q.1 It should be legal for an adult to grow a small amount of cannabis for personal use.	.894
Q.3 Growing two cannabis plants should not be a criminal offence.	.305
Factor 2. Perceived effect of CIN scheme on the cannabis market	
Q.13 Obtaining cannabis has become easier.	.709
Q.14 The number of people growing their own cannabis has increased.	.703
Q.11 The number of people using cannabis has increased.	.667
Q.12 The cost of purchasing cannabis has increased.	.397
Q.15 The amount of contact cannabis users have with criminals has increased.	.368
Factor 3. Approval of policing dubious hydroponic equipment sellers	
Q.18 The laws should give police the power to act against people who sell hydroponic equipment who they have evidence are knowingly selling equipment for cultivation of cannabis.	-.652
Q.7 In general, the CIN scheme is a good idea.	.580
Q.10 The laws for minor cannabis offenders are too harsh.	-.355
Factor 4. Likelihood of being caught in possession of cannabis for personal use	
Q.5 It is likely that someone breaking the law regarding dealing or selling cannabis will be caught.	-.876
Q.4 It is likely that someone in possession of cannabis for personal use will be caught.	-.668
Factor 5. Appropriateness of CIN laws	
Q.8 The laws for minor cannabis offenders are too soft.	.934
Q.9 The laws for minor cannabis offenders are about right.	.529

Factor 6. CIN scheme and education

Q.21 It is more appropriate to use education to reduce the rate of cannabis use in the community than giving people a criminal record for using the drug. .832

Q.6 People less likely to reuse cannabis if given education rather than a criminal record. .366

Factor 7. Exclusion of growing hydroponic plants

Q.17 Exclusion of hydroponic cannabis plants will result in many users obtaining it from suppliers with criminal associations. .572

Q.16 The cultivation of even 1 or 2 hydroponically grown cannabis plants should have been excluded from the scheme and result in criminal charges. -.486

Factor 8. The CIN scheme and criminal convictions

Q.20 The CIN scheme probably hasn't affected the number of people receiving criminal records for a cannabis related offence. .555

Factor 9. The CIN scheme and police discretion

Q.22 It is appropriate that police can exercise their discretion in whether to issue a CIN or charge the person to prevent people exploiting the rules. .571

Note. Factor loadings < .30 are suppressed.

Multiple Regression Analyses on Underlying Factors

A series of multiple regressions was conducted on the underlying factors derived from the factor analysis on the CIN questionnaire. While no specific hypotheses were presented, some interesting results were found. It should be noted that in these analyses, the TMQ and NCS total scores were used as predictor variables, along with career aspirations and recent cannabis use. The total scores on the underlying factors were used as the criterion variables. From the separate multiple regressions conducted on the nine underlying factors, five were found to be significant models. These five models are summarised in the following tables, 4.2 to 4.6. For each of the criterion variables, the Shapiro-Wilk's statistic indicated that the assumption of normality was violated, $p > .001$. Data transformations were performed on these variables but they had no effect on the distributions.

Table 4.2

Factor 1. The Legal Status of Cannabis

Variable	The legal status of cannabis				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	1.047	2.124		.49	.623
Total TMQ	.038	.010	.271	3.85	.000
Total NCS	.005	.012	.030	.43	.66
Career_Asp	-.409	.425	-.064	-.96	.34
Recent Can_use	1.418	.534	.271	2.65	.009
<i>R</i>	.374				
<i>R</i> square	.140				
<i>F</i>	7.86				
Adjusted <i>R</i> square	.122				

The regression analysis presented in table 4.2 illustrated that this model was significant, $F(4, 193) = 7.86, p < .001$. Assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were met for each of the predictor variables. Inspection of the t values indicated that total TMQ score ($t = 3.85, p < .001$), and recent cannabis use ($t = 2.65, p < .01$) were significant predictors of attitudes towards the legal status of cannabis.

Table 4.3

Factor 2. Effects of CIN scheme on the Cannabis Market

Variable	Effects of the CIN scheme on the cannabis market				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	11.77	1.78		6.61	.000
Total TMQ	.021	.008	.190	2.85	.011
Total NCS	.007	.010	.050	.69	.49
Career_Asp	-.589	.356	-.116	1.65	.10
Recent Can_use	-.505	.448	-.082	-1.129	.26
<i>R</i>	.240				
<i>R</i> square	.058				
<i>F</i>	2.950				
Adjusted <i>R</i> square	.038				

The regression analysis presented in table 4.3 illustrated that this model was significant, $F(4, 193) = 2.95, p < .05$. Assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Inspection of the t values indicated that Total TMQ score ($t = 2.85, p < .05$) was a significant predictor of attitudes towards the effects of the CIN scheme on the cannabis market.

Table 4.4

Factor 3. Approval of Policing Dubious Hydroponic Equipment Sellers

Variable	Approval of policing of dubious hydroponic equipment sellers				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	2.863	.779		3.68	.000
Total TMQ	.006	.004	.124	1.74	.084
Total NCS	.008	.004	.138	1.975	.05
Career_Asp	.106	.156	.046	.68	.50
Recent Can_use	.589	.196	.211	3.00	.003
<i>R</i>	.332				
<i>R</i> square	.110				
<i>F</i>	5.96				
Adjusted <i>R</i> square	.092				

The regression analysis presented in table 4.4 illustrated that model this was significant, $F(4, 193) = 5.96, p < .001$. Assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Inspection of the *t* values indicated that Total NCS score ($t = 1.97, p = .05$), and Recent Cannabis Use ($t = 3.00, p < .01$) were significant predictors of attitudes towards the approval of policing dubious hydroponic equipment sellers.

Table 4.5

Factor 4. Likelihood of Being Caught in Possession of Cannabis for Personal Use

Likelihood of being caught in possession of cannabis for personal use					
Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	1.955	1.274		1.534	.127
Total TMQ	.017	.006	.209	2.86	.005
Total NCS	.007	.007	.070	.97	.33
Career_Asp	.232	.255	.063	.91	.36
Recent Can_use	.123	.321	.028	.38	.70
<i>R</i>	.255				
<i>R</i> square	.065				
<i>F</i>	3.350				
Adjusted <i>R</i> square	.046				

The regression analysis presented in table 4.5 illustrated that this model was significant, $F(4, 193) = 3.35, p < .05$. Assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met.

Inspection of the *t* values indicated that Total TMQ score ($t = 2.86, p < .01$) was a significant predictor of attitudes towards the likelihood of being caught in possession of cannabis for personal use.

Table 4.6

Factor 5. The Appropriateness of the CIN Laws

Variable	The appropriateness of the CIN laws				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	.872	1.201		.73	.47
Total TMQ	.025	.006	.309	4.424	.000
Total NCS	.006	.007	.059	.86	.39
Career_Asp	-.546	.240	-.151	-2.276	.024
Recent Can_use	.426	.302	.097	1.411	.160
<i>R</i>	.389				
<i>R</i> square	.152				
<i>F</i>	8.626				
Adjusted <i>R</i> square	.134				

The regression analysis presented in table 4.6 illustrated that this model was significant, $F(4, 193) = 7.86, p < .001$. Assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Inspection of the *t* values indicated that total TMQ score ($t = 4.42, p < .001$), and Career Aspirations ($t = -2.28, p < .05$) were significant predictors of attitudes towards the Appropriateness of the CIN laws.

The principal factor analysis uncovered nine underlying factors, which aligned with the respective sections of Fetherston and Lenton (2007) questionnaire. Multiple regressions, which measured attitudes towards the underlying factors, were carried out and revealed five significant models. Temperance mentality was a significant predictor of the criterion variable in four of these models. A brief description of the results was presented for each significant model. Further investigation might be warranted in these areas, with the inclusion of harm reduction strategies other than the CIN scheme.

Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to review attitudes towards cannabis law reform, specifically the CIN scheme of Western Australia, and to examine the extent to which attitudes were predicted by demographic, dispositional and career variables and personal use of cannabis. Participants in the study consisted of undergraduate students recruited from the School of Law and Justice, and the School of Psychology and Social Science at Edith Cowan University, Joondalup.

Two hypotheses were proposed; first, it was expected that career aspirations, dispositional variables, and recent cannabis use, when taken together, would be significant predictors of attitudes towards the CIN scheme; second, it was expected that there would be a significant difference between HE and HA career groups on attitudes towards the CIN scheme. The findings from both hypotheses are addressed in turn.

The first hypothesis, which examined the predictive relationship between career aspirations, dispositions (temperance mentality and need for closure) and recent cannabis use, on attitudes towards the CIN scheme, was not supported in full. This hypothesis, however, was partially supported: the regression model was significant $F(4, 193) = 11.249$, $p < .001$; two of the variables emerged as significant predictors, temperance mentality ($t = 5.31$, $p < .001$) and recent cannabis use, $t = 1.97$, $p = .05$.

The findings from the current study indicated that there was minimal correlation ($r = .009$) between career aspirations and attitudes towards the CIN scheme (see Table 1.1). Career aspirations were not a significant predictor of attitudes towards the CIN scheme. This result was surprising given the nature of HE and HA careers and their respective correlations with dispositions such as social dominance orientation, authoritarianism, temperance mentality and need for closure (e.g. Burt et al. 1994; Sidanius and colleagues, 1994, 1996, 1999; Webster & Kruglanski, 1994); and also the positive correlation between social

dominance orientation and attitudes towards policies such as, tougher law and order measures (e.g. Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Furthermore, while only the results of the significant regression models were reported for the underlying factors derived from the factor analysis conducted on the attitudes towards the CIN scheme, it appeared that career aspirations had small correlations with each of these underlying factors also. For example, the correlation between career aspirations (C-A) and factor 1, (attitudes towards the legal status of cannabis) was weak and negative, $r = -.058$; the correlation between C-A and factor 2 (attitudes towards the perceived effect of CIN scheme on the cannabis market) was also small, $r = .129$; the correlation between C-A and factor 3 (attitudes towards approval of policing dubious hydroponic equipment sellers) was weak and negative, $r = -.085$. These weak correlations were found between career aspirations and all of the remaining underlying factors. These outcomes may be a function of the attitudes of young university students in general. Closer investigation in future research is warranted.

According to MacKey and Courtright (2000), while lecturing in various criminal justice courses, they observed that students majoring in these courses demonstrated more punitive attitudes than students in other courses. Consequently, they conducted a study to investigate the punitive attitudes among a sample ($n = 633$) of university students in Northeast USA. The primary purpose of the study was to determine whether any differences existed between students majoring in criminal justice and other (non specified) courses on their attitudes towards criminal punishment (MacKey & Courtright, 2000). A questionnaire was developed consisting of 15 statements to specifically measure the punitive attitudes of the participants. This questionnaire was analysed for reliability and was found to be within an acceptable range (Cronbach's alpha = .85). The results from the study indicated that there was a significant difference between criminal justice students and other students on their attitudes towards criminal punishment ($t = 3.05, p < .05$), supporting their hypothesis that criminal justice

majors held more punitive attitudes compared to other students (MacKey & Courtright, 2000). It is unfortunate, however, that the other students' courses were not specified; it can only be speculated, that by virtue of the hypothesis the researchers were testing, these might have been HA courses. One would therefore expect, that due to the less criminally punitive approach of the CIN scheme, attitudes towards the scheme would have been predicted by career aspirations, however this was not found to be the case.

A low positive correlation ($r = .167$) was found between need for closure and attitudes towards the CIN scheme. Contrary to expectations, the need for closure was not a significant predictor of attitudes towards the CIN scheme. While Goddard et al., (2002) found an effect for need for closure on attitudes towards harm minimisation, this effect was found for participants who were presented with harm minimisation information (as opposed to participants who had read a war on drugs message) and indicated a low need for closure as determined by their score on the NCS. Although participants in the current study were given a brief outline of the CIN scheme, no significant difference was found between HE and HA groups on their NCS scores. In fact, the scores on this scale clustered around the mean for both groups. Quick (2007) also found no effect of need for closure on attitudes towards harm minimisation, and no significant differences were found between the levels of exposure to harm minimisation education groups and the need for closure.

In contrast, temperance mentality, as determined by the mean scores on the TMQ, was a significant predictor of attitudes towards the CIN scheme in the current study. A significant positive correlation ($r = .41, p < .001$) was found between temperance mentality and attitudes towards the CIN scheme, which indicated that individuals who rate high on temperance mentality would be less accepting of the CIN scheme, as high scores on the CIN questionnaire indicate lower acceptability. This result is not surprising given that temperance mentality was found to be highly correlated ($r = .58$) with authoritarianism (Burt et al., 1994),

and individuals with authoritarian dispositions were more likely to favour more punitive drug policies (MacCoun, 1998).

Goddard, Mallott, and Grindle (2003), conducted a study to determine the reliability of the HRAS. Low scores on the HRAS indicated greater acceptance of harm minimisation (Goddard et al., 2003). The study also examined the correlation between the HRAS and the TMQ. The findings indicated that there was a significant negative correlation ($r = -.538$) between both scales (Goddard et al, 2003). This result is inconsistent with the findings of the current study; and given that the CIN scheme is a harm reduction strategy, and is scored in a similar direction to the HRAS (i.e., low scores on the CIN questionnaire indicate greater acceptance of the scheme), further investigation of this inconsistency is warranted.

Recent use of cannabis (past 12 months) also emerged as a significant predictor of attitudes towards the CIN scheme. A significant but small positive correlation was found between both variables, $r = .23, p < .05$. MacCoun (1998) suggested that people who had family members or friends who used drugs were more likely to favour harm reduction strategies. It would be reasonable to conclude that drug users themselves, and in particular cannabis users, would also be more accepting of harm reduction strategies such as the CIN scheme. However, the regression model indicated that the unstandardised beta coefficient for recent cannabis use was low ($B = .109$) and its acceptability as a predictor variable just approached significance, $t = 1.97, p = .05$.

Although there may have been other demographic variables, such as ethnicity or religiosity, or other dispositional variables, which might have contributed in predicting attitudes towards the CIN scheme in the current study, these remain untapped and are a possible area for future research.

The second hypothesis predicted that there would be a significant difference between HE and HA groups on attitudes towards the CIN scheme. This hypothesis was not supported. This

result was unexpected, given that findings from previous research indicated that career choice does affect attitudes, particularly when those attitudes concern social or political factors (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). Sidanius et al. (1996), for example, conducted a study consisting of attitudinal responses from 722 UCLA students which assessed the attractiveness of HE or HA careers in order to determine if there would be an effect for these career aspirations on socio-political attitudes such as social dominance orientation (SDO) and political conservatism. The findings from this study indicated that there was a positive correlation between those aspiring to HE careers and SDO, whereas a negative correlation was found between individuals aspiring to HA careers and SDO. Similar correlations were found between HE and HA career aspirations, and political conservatism (Sidanius et al., 1996). Further, studies using non-student samples concur with the findings by Sidanius et al. (1996) (e.g., Sidanius et al., 1994).

Although these studies did not measure attitudes towards drug policies directly, it would be reasonable to conclude that individuals with high levels of SDO and who demonstrate politically conservative orientations would be less accepting of policies such as those that decriminalise minor drug related offences (i.e., harm reduction strategies). The CIN scheme is an example of such a strategy. Due to the lack of research into the effects of career aspirations on attitudes towards illicit drug policies, in particular harm minimisation strategies, it was necessary to investigate if any relationships existed between variables such as career aspirations and dispositions, and variables such as dispositions and punitive attitudes. If it was found that there were any associations between these factors, then this might be indicative of any associations existing between the former two factors (i.e., career aspirations and attitudes towards drug policies).

Social dominance orientation, authoritarianism, and political conservatism feature prominently in research relating to determining public attitudes; particularly those relating to social and political issues (e.g., Dallago, Cima, Roccato, Ricolfi, & Mirisola, 2008; Duckitt,

2006; Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, & Birum, 2002; Pratto et al., 1994). Duckitt (2006) found that authoritarianism, as measured by the RWA scale, was a strong predictor of attitudes towards groups who pose a threat to social order (e.g., drug dealers). It would be plausible to suggest that “drug users” might also fall into this category.

Furthermore, a positive and significant correlation ($r = .32, p < .01$) has been found between authoritarianism and social dominance orientation (Duckitt, 2006). This is an important finding with respect to the current study, as other researchers have found that authoritarianism was positively correlated with temperance mentality and also with the need for closure (e.g., Burt et al., 1994; Webster & Kruglanski, 1994).

Other studies have found positive correlations between the perceived attractiveness of HE careers and social dominance orientation (e.g., Sidanius et al., 1996), and between social dominance orientation and attitudes towards policies such as, tougher law and order measures, which would have adverse outcomes for “low-status” groups (e.g., Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

However, negative correlations were found between social dominance orientation and attitudes towards policies that favour aiding low-status groups (e.g., Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Hierarchy-attenuating careers or organisations that espouse HA ideologies, as earlier described, are those that are associated with caring professions and / or the empowerment of low-status groups. It would be expected, therefore, that individuals aspiring to careers in these professions should indicate lower levels of social dominance orientation than their HE counterparts. Furthermore, as observed earlier, criminal justice (HE) majors held more punitive attitudes compared to other students (MacKey & Courtright, 2000).

Tougher law and order measures might include those that adopt a more punitive approach to illicit drug use; hence the term “tough on drugs” often being used in this context. One would expect, therefore, that individuals aspiring to HE careers would have less favourable attitudes towards the CIN scheme compared to individuals aspiring to HA careers

by virtue of the respective correlations (positive, negative) between the perceived attractiveness of these career types and social dominance orientation; and the positive correlation between social dominance orientation and authoritarianism. However, as no significant differences between HE and HA groups on attitudes towards the CIN scheme were found, along with no differences on the TMQ and NCS, no inferences can be attributed to the participants in this study in relation to the differing HE and HA attitudes and dispositions as found in earlier studies (e.g., Sidanius et al., 1994; van Laar et al., 1999).

Two tentative explanations are proposed for the result from the second hypothesis, which found no difference between individuals aspiring to either HE or HA careers on attitudes towards the CIN scheme: First, it is highly likely that participants in this study are not fully aware of the details of the CIN scheme (although a brief outline was provided on the Participant Information Letter); and second, given that 78% of participants were in the 17 to 25 age bracket; politics, or political policy and legislation, may be of little or no interest to them.

The first explanation is highly plausible. Sutton and Hawks (2005) reported on the findings from a qualitative study that they conducted to review the CIN scheme in Western Australia from the perspective of the police and judiciary. Interviews with relevant stakeholders were conducted pre- and post-CIN implementation. The findings from the post-CIN implementation interviews, however, are of particular interest and bear most relevance for this study.

Interviews and group discussions were conducted approximately three months after the CIN scheme came into effect (Sutton & Hawks, 2005). Participants in the post-CIN implementation phase of the study included operational police officers (e.g., senior sergeants, constables, a senior officer from the Organised Crime Unit, and a number of non-sworn personnel within the Western Police Service). The primary focus of this particular study was

on operational officers' understanding of the new cannabis laws (Sutton & Hawks, 2005). The findings from the post-CIN implementation study indicated that operational police officers were unsure of the details of the new cannabis laws, even after six months of relevant training (Sutton & Hawks, 2005). Moreover, the participants reported that some members of the general public were also confused about the CIN scheme and its implications; these police officers stated that many individuals believed it was legal for them to possess and cultivate cannabis for personal use (Sutton & Hawks, 2005).

A qualitative study by Wright (2010) was conducted using interviews to better understand the knowledge of, and attitudes towards the CIN scheme among operational police officers in rural Western Australia. A sample of police officers ($n = 10$) from the Mid West Gascoyne District (MWGD) were recruited for the study. Participants were between the ages of 23 and 52 years old and held various ranks from Constable to Sergeant (Wright, 2010). During the interviews participants described their experiences of the CIN scheme, and themes such as knowledge, attitudes, context and behaviour emerged (Wright, 2010). Participants' knowledge of the scheme is of particular relevance to the current study. It was found that some of the participants had limited awareness of important aspects of the CIN scheme, such as the cannabis education session (CES) as an alternative to paying a fine. Consequently, when issuing a CIN, some participants failed to inform the offender of the CES option; this in turn lead to the offenders remaining unaware of the options available under the CIN scheme (Wright, 2010).

Wright (2010) suggested that the lack of awareness among participants in relation to the details of the CIN scheme might be due to factors such as inadequate training or education when the scheme was introduced, and behaviour modelling by observing more senior officers issuing CINs incorrectly.

Given that some individuals, whose job it was to implement the CIN scheme, were still uncertain of the details of the scheme following six months of training (Sutton & Hawks, 2005), it is likely that finding no difference in attitudes towards the CIN scheme among HE and HA participants in this particular study is a reflection of the lack of understanding of the current cannabis laws in Western Australia. This finding is made more apparent when one considers that the majority of participants' ($n = 171$) mean CIN scores clustered around the 2.5 - 3.5 (neutral) mark, the scoring system consistent with that already established by Burt et al. (1994) on the TMQ. These predominantly neutral scores were possibly more indicative of uncertainty than neutrality.

Another study by Landy, Hynes, Checinski and Crome (2005) examined medical students' attitudes towards, and knowledge of, drug and alcohol abuse. Participants ($n = 671$) consisted of 1st year and 4th year students recruited from two medical schools in the UK and were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of 20 statements relating to substance misuse issues (e.g., "treatment of substance misuse does not warrant resources due to poor outcomes" and "drug misusers are less deserving of treatment than other patients"). Agreement with each statement was measured using a 5 - point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Landy et al. (2005) found that knowledge of substance misuse was poor amongst the students, and that minimal improvement was observed between 1st and 4th year students. However, it was also found that students across both years reported favourable attitudes towards receiving more training and education in relation to substance abusers (Landy et al., 2005). It may well be the case that, when it comes to factors relating to drugs, drug use, or drug related policies, not enough education or information is disseminated at the appropriate level to individuals who may be in the position to effect change, or whose careers are affected by these issues.

The second explanation, that government policies or legislation are of little or no interest to students, or perhaps, young people in general, could also be likely. In an annual survey conducted among 1st year students in the US by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA in 2000, Kellogg (2001) reported that interest in political affairs had reached its lowest level since the survey had been first established. The results of the study are based on the responses of 269,413 students from 434 of the nation's colleges and universities, and despite the fact that the survey was conducted during an election year when political interest usually increases, only 28.1% of the students surveyed indicated that they were interested in political matters; a substantial drop from 60.3% when the survey was first conducted in 1966 (Kellogg, 2001). However this level reached 39.5% in 2008 (Pryor et al., 2008), which is not surprising, given the general political enthusiasm generated by the presidential candidate Barack Obama, who was elected later that year.

Furthermore, an online search uncovered an article in a British national newspaper, which reported the results of a Mori poll taken among young people of voting age just prior to the 2005 UK general election. The poll revealed that 52% of young people polled intended to vote, but less than half (45%) indicated that they had sufficient knowledge of political issues (Hilpern, 2008). This report suggested that over half of the "young" voting population in the UK (55%) had little or no knowledge of political issues.

An Australian study that was primarily concerned with the political engagement of young Australians was conducted by Bulbeck (n.d.). This qualitative study was carried out using participants ($n = 1000$) recruited from year 11 and 12 in various high schools throughout the country, along with 1st year university students. The findings suggested that young people are generally not interested in mainstream politics as practiced by politicians and political parties, with some indicating that politics was boring and irrelevant, and viewed politicians as self-centered and corrupt (Bulbeck, n.d.). Several of the participants indicated

that they wished to see a political system that embraced values such as morality and ethics rather than power (Bulbeck, n.d.). Although this study reported just a sample of the participants' feedback in relation to their interest in political engagement, the general sentiment appeared to be one of apathy and / or disillusionment with the political system in Australia (Bulbeck, n.d.).

In Australia, where state and federal voting is compulsory, the level of knowledge of political issues among the young voting population might be comparable to that of young people in the USA and the UK; and given that 78% of the sample in the current study were in the 17 to 25 age bracket, lack of knowledge, or even apathy, might be a plausible explanation for the findings. Research into this particular area among young Australians is worthy of further investigation.

Limitations

There were a number of limitations in the current study. The first is in relation to generalisability of the findings. The results were not generalisable due to the fact that the sample consisted mainly of 1st year university students, with 78% of participants in the 17 to 25 age range and are therefore, not representative of the general community. To address this issue, future research may need to replicate this study using participants from the wider community.

The timing of the data collection might also be viewed as a limitation. Data were collected during the final lectures in the last week of semester one, 2010, when students are usually preoccupied with end of semester activities and studying for exams. It is possible, therefore, that the questionnaires may have been hastily completed. Although it would have been preferable to collect data when there was less pressure on the participants, time limitations prevail when conducting studies and researchers have to accommodate accordingly.

Another limitation related to the instruments that were used in the present study. The CIN attitudes questionnaire has not been empirically tested and validated. However, as this scale was derived from a larger questionnaire by a researcher who is highly respected in the field of alcohol and other drug research, it was deemed to be an adequate measure of attitudes towards the CIN scheme. Furthermore, the TMQ and NCS were both constructed for research use in the US and as such the reliability and validity of both have only been examined in that context (Quick, 2007). Future research using these scales in the Australian context needs to address this issue.

A further limitation relates to the relatively low variance accounted for by the predictor variables in the regression model. The *R* square value indicated that the model accounts for only 18.9% of the variance in attitudes towards the CIN. As previously stated future studies of this nature will need to be explored using other variables, including, but not limited to, ethnicity and religiosity, which could account for a higher proportion of variance. It is difficult, however, to determine what these might be. It is quite possible that there are none, and that confounding variables account for a large proportion of the variance.

Conclusion

The CCA (2003) was passed through the Western Australian Parliament on 23rd September of that year following much, and often heated, debate. This act permitted cannabis infringement notices to be issued for certain minor cannabis offences; attempted to regulate the sale of cannabis smoking implements; and amended the 1981 Misuse of Drugs Act (CCA, 2003). The CIN scheme, a component of the CCA came into effect on the 22nd March 2004 (Lenton, 2004).

The present study examined the predictive relationship between career aspirations, dispositions and recent cannabis use on attitudes towards the CIN scheme. It also investigated whether individuals aspiring to HE careers would differ significantly on their attitudes

towards the CIN scheme compared to individuals aspiring to HA careers. Although neither hypothesis was fully supported, a predictive relationship was found between temperance mentality and recent use of cannabis on attitudes towards the CIN scheme, indicating, at least, partial support for the first hypothesis.

This study was relatively novel, as a review of the literature indicated that there was a paucity of research into career aspirations and their effects on attitudes towards drug policies. Only one study was found that investigated the affects of students majoring in criminal justice and their attitudes towards criminal punitiveness compared to students majoring in other courses (i.e., MacKey & Courtright, 2000).

Previous studies have indicated that education is an important factor in relation to illicit drug policies; particularly harm minimisation strategies such as harm reduction (e.g., Goddard & colleagues, 2002; Goddard, 2003; Quick, 2007). Education, which can increase individuals' awareness of the goals and effectiveness of such strategies, becomes even more important when some of the components of such strategies are controversial and can incur emotive and often irrational debate. Needle and syringe exchange programs are an example of such controversial strategies (Goddard et al., 2002). Other studies concur, indicating that more education is needed at the appropriate level (e.g., Landy et al., 2005; Sutton & Hawks, 2005; Wright, 2010).

It had been stated earlier that some public commentators and politicians viewed the CIN scheme as a soft on drugs policy (Lenton & Allsop, 2010). The current Western Australian Liberal Government indicated that it is committed to repealing the CCA (2003) by reintroducing criminal penalties for possession and cultivation of cannabis, by lowering the threshold for eligibility for a CIN and taking criminal action against individuals who are involved in the cultivation of any amount of cannabis (Lenton & Allsop, 2010). This would appear to indicate that tougher laws are imminent.

Drugs, whether legal, such as tobacco and alcohol, or illegal are capable of causing harm (Lenton, 2004). Rescinding the current cannabis laws, however, may have adverse personal and social costs and therefore warrants further debate. According to the 2007 Drug and Alcohol Office Statutory Review of the CCA (2003), the majority of the original aims of the CIN scheme had been achieved, including developing a close relationship between police and health agencies, and redirecting minor cannabis offenders away from the courts, thus saving an estimated \$2.3 million in court related costs. The DAO (2007) review also provided an opportunity to identify and recommend changes that will considerably improve the system. Therefore to repeal the CCA (2003) completely would appear to be more a political agenda rather than a pragmatic strategy to deal with minor cannabis offenders.

Australia has acquired a formidable international standing for adopting a harm minimisation policy in response to drug use (Single & Rohl, 1998). With growing international realisation that the war on drugs strategy is clearly not working, efforts to adopt the harm minimisation approach in other countries appear to be gaining momentum. Evidence based approaches to drug related issues, rather than political agendas clearly need to be implemented. Education and training will not only be instrumental in removing the negative perceptions associated with harm reduction strategies, thus providing a way forward for those who will be instrumental in effecting change in drug policies, but will also serve to provide aid to those individuals who are affected by drug related harm itself.

Although a thorough review of relevant literature was carried out in relation to career choices and attitudes towards drug policies, there appears to be a distinct lack of research in relation to establishing a link between both factors. It is envisaged that future studies will address this issue in more detail.

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APPENDIX A

Participant Information Letter

My name is Mark Wallace, and I am an Honours Psychology student at Edith Cowan University. I appreciate your interest in this study. The aim of this study is to investigate the effects that individuals' degree choice and dispositional variables have on attitudes towards the Cannabis Infringement Notice (CIN) scheme in Western Australia.

Briefly, the CIN scheme is set out as follows:

- The possession of cannabis for personal use remains illegal
- Possession of up to 15 grams of cannabis by an adult incurs a \$100 fine
- Possession of more than 15 grams but less than 30 grams incurs a \$150 fine
- Possession of used smoking equipment incurs a fine of \$100
- Possession of not more than two non-hydroponic plants incurs a fine of \$200. Cultivation of hydroponic plants will remain subject to a criminal charge.
- Offenders are required to pay their fine in full within 28 days or complete a cannabis education session within the same time period.
- Individuals who receive more than two CINs within a three-year period are obliged to complete the cannabis education session or face a criminal charge.
- Possession of cannabis resin or cannabis oil will not be eligible for an infringement notice.
- Police can lay criminal charges to individuals who attempt to flout the intention of the scheme, for example, engaging in the supply of cannabis, even if they are in possession of amounts which are eligible for a CIN.
- Juveniles are exempt from the CIN scheme and are dealt with by the juvenile justice system.

Participation in this research study is entirely voluntary and participants are free to withdraw at any time without any penalty or explanation. In order to maintain anonymity, no consent letter is attached; therefore consent is implied by completion of the questionnaire. You are required to complete four (4) questionnaires should take approximately 15, and my supervisor and I will be the only people who have access to the information. The questionnaires will be kept in a secure filing cabinet at ECU for a period of no more than seven years, after which time will be shredded.

The results of the study will be provided to you upon request by contacting me at the details listed below. Although unlikely, if you experience any discomfort resulting from participating in this study, a list of counseling services is provided. Any concerns regarding participation in this study can be addressed by contacting my supervisor or me, or Dr. Justine Dandy (independent representative).

Mark Wallace: (Researcher)
Phone: [REDACTED]
Email: mwallac0@our.ecu.edu.au

Dr. David Ryder (Supervisor)
Phone: 6304 5452
Email: david.ryder@ecu.edu.au

Dr. Justine Dandy (Independent representative of ECU)
Phone: (08) 6304 5105
Email: j.dandy@ecu.edu.au

Yours Sincerely,
Mark Wallace

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle or fill in your answers in the section provided.

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your gender?
Male / Female
3. Current year of study (e.g. 1st yr, 2nd yr) _____
4. What is your major? _____
5. What is your minor? _____
6. What career path do you eventually hope to pursue?

7. Have you ever used cannabis?
Yes / No
8. Have you used cannabis in the past 12 months? (If 'No' then proceed to Q.10)
Yes / No
9. If you have used cannabis in the past 12 months, do you think that should you be caught in possession of cannabis, this would affect your career prospects?
Yes / No
10. What is your marital status?
Single
Married
Separated / Divorced
Widowed
8. Do you have children?
Yes / No

APPENDIX C

TEMPERANCE MENTALITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer every question with a number between 1 and 5, according to the following code.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

(1) Alcohol use is a sign of personal weakness.

1 2 3 4 5

(2) I am opposed to the "war on drugs."

1 2 3 4 5

(3) Moderate use of illegal substances does not result in serious health problems.

1 2 3 4 5

(4) Drug addicts cannot become casual drug users again.

1 2 3 4 5

(5) Access to alcohol should be strictly controlled.

1 2 3 4 5

(6) To reduce our country's substance abuse problem, a "Drug Free Lifestyle" should be promoted by schools.

1 2 3 4 5

(7) Being "under the influence" of alcohol or other drugs can be a rewarding, beneficial experience.

1 2 3 4 5

(8) Normal people don't get violent when they drink.

1 2 3 4 5

(9) Where they exist, public drinking establishments serve a beneficial social function.

1 2 3 4 5

(10) The behaviour of certain ethnic groups is making it difficult for our country to control drug use.

1 2 3 4 5

Please answer every question with a number between 1 and 5, according to the following code.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

(11) Alcohol and other drug use lead to family breakdown and domestic violence.

1 2 3 4 5

(12) Addiction is a disease.

1 2 3 4 5

(13) Drinking can cause madness.

1 2 3 4 5

(14) Selling marijuana would be immoral, even if it were legal.

1 2 3 4 5

(15) I could never be friends with a person who drinks heavily.

1 2 3 4 5

(16) Citizens should take action if the government fails to enforce (maintain) drug laws.

1 2 3 4 5

(17) Not drinking alcohol is a sign of personal strength.

1 2 3 4 5

(18) Drinking leads to financial ruin.

1 2 3 4 5

(19) Abstinence from alcohol in a community is the key to social progress.

1 2 3 4 5

(20) Casual use of alcohol causes few serious health problems.

1 2 3 4 5

(21) Alcohol is the fundamental cause of much of the misery that children endure in our country.

1 2 3 4 5

(22) Alcohol consumption does not increase inappropriate sexual arousal.

1 2 3 4 5

(23) Christian doctrine contains no strong arguments against drinking.

1 2 3 4 5

(24) If cocaine was legalised, there would be less crime.

1 2 3 4 5

Please answer every question with a number between 1 and 5, according to the following code.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

(25) Alcohol is dangerous because it causes addiction in some people.

1 2 3 4 5

(26) Moderate use of alcohol sets a good example.

1 2 3 4 5

(27) If alcohol were more freely available, there would be more crime.

1 2 3 4 5

(28) In countries where marijuana is legally served in public establishments, levels of crime increase.

1 2 3 4 5

(29) Moderate drinkers can be good workers.

1 2 3 4 5

(30) Using illicit drugs sets a bad example.

1 2 3 4 5

(31) Even though it is legal, selling alcohol is immoral.

1 2 3 4 5

(32) The use of drugs like heroin and cocaine should be a matter of personal choice.

1 2 3 4 5

(33) Drugs are dangerous because they cause addiction.

1 2 3 4 5

(34) Drinking does not undermine morality.

1 2 3 4 5

(35) Drug use does not increase promiscuity.

1 2 3 4 5

(36) Some people addicted to alcohol can become moderate drinkers again.

1 2 3 4 5

(37) To reduce our country's alcohol problem, abstinence should be promoted by schools.

1 2 3 4 5

Please answer every question with a number between 1 and 5, according to the following code.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

(38) Prohibition (totally forbidding the use) of alcohol would be a mistake.

1 2 3 4 5

(39) Drinking alcohol causes people to lose control.

1 2 3 4 5

(40) Once they start, people spend every penny they have on buying illegal drugs.

1 2 3 4 5

(41) Use of illicit drugs does not cause insanity.

1 2 3 4 5

(42) Drugs are the underlying cause of much of the misery that children suffer.

1 2 3 4 5

(43) Alcohol use does not commonly lead to family breakdown and domestic violence.

1 2 3 4 5

(44) Drug use is a result of a lack of self-discipline.

1 2 3 4 5

(45) I do not choose my friends on the basis of whether they drink or not.

1 2 3 4 5

(46) Nobody who drinks really benefits from it.

1 2 3 4 5

(47) If the government fails to control the alcohol trade, citizens should take matters into their own hands.

1 2 3 4 5

(48) Drinking is a "sin" (morally wrong).

1 2 3 4 5

(49) People who take illegal drugs at home cannot be good employees.

1 2 3 4 5

(50) Moderate use of illicit drugs in a community does not hinder social progress.

1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX D
NEED FOR CLOSURE SURVEY

Read each of the following statements and decide how much you agree with each according to your beliefs and experiences. Please respond according to the following scale.

- 1 Strongly Disagree**
2 Moderately Disagree
3 Slightly Disagree
4 Slightly Agree
5 Moderately Agree
6 Strongly Agree

1. _____ I think that having clear rules and order at work is essential for success.
2. _____ Even after I've made up my mind about something, I am always eager to consider a different opinion.
3. _____ I don't like situations that are uncertain.
4. _____ I dislike questions which could be answered in many different ways.
5. _____ I like to have friends who are unpredictable.
6. _____ I find that a well ordered life with regular hours suits my temperament.
7. _____ When dining out, I like to go places where I have been before so I know what to expect.
8. _____ I feel uncomfortable when I don't understand the reason why an event occurred in my life.
9. _____ I feel irritated when one person disagrees with what everyone else in a group believes.
10. _____ I hate to change my plans at the last minute.
11. _____ I don't like to go into a situation without knowing what I can expect from it.
12. _____ When I go shopping, I have difficulty deciding exactly what it is that I want.
13. _____ When faced with a problem, I usually see the one best solution very quickly.
14. _____ When I am confused about an important issue, I feel very upset.
15. _____ I tend to put off making important decisions until the last possible moment.
16. _____ I usually make important decisions quickly and confidently.
17. _____ I would describe myself as indecisive.
18. _____ I think it is fun to change my plans at the last moment.
19. _____ I enjoy the uncertainty of going into a new situation without knowing what might happen.
20. _____ My personal space is usually messy and disorganised.
21. _____ In most social conflicts, I can easily see which side is right and which is wrong
22. _____ I tend to struggle with most decisions.

Read each of the following statements and decide how much you agree with each according to your beliefs and experiences. Please respond according to the following scale.

- 1 Strongly Disagree**
- 2 Moderately Disagree**
- 3 Slightly Disagree**
- 4 Slightly Agree**
- 5 Moderately Agree**
- 6 Strongly Agree**

23. _____ I believe that orderliness and organisation are among the most important characteristics of a good student.
24. _____ When considering most conflict situations, I can usually see how both sides could be right.
25. _____ I don't like to be with people who are capable of unexpected actions.
26. _____ I prefer to socialise with familiar friends because I know what to expect from them.
27. _____ I think that I would learn best in a class that lacks clearly stated objectives and requirements.
28. _____ When thinking about a problem, I consider as many different opinions on the issue as possible.
29. _____ I like to know what people are thinking all the time.
30. _____ I dislike it when a person's statement could mean many different things.
31. _____ It's annoying to listen to someone who cannot seem to make up his or her mind.
32. _____ I find that establishing a consistent routine enables me to enjoy life more.
33. _____ I enjoy having a clear and structured mode of life.
34. _____ I prefer interacting with people whose opinions are very different from my own.
35. _____ I like to have a place for everything and everything in its place.
36. _____ I feel uncomfortable when someone's meaning or intention is unclear to me.
37. _____ When trying to solve a problem, I often see so many possible options that it's confusing.
38. _____ I always see many possible solutions to problems I face.
39. _____ I'd rather know bad news than stay in a state of uncertainty.
40. _____ I do not usually consult many different opinions before forming my own view.
41. _____ I dislike unpredictable situations.
42. _____ I dislike the routine aspects of my work (studies).

APPENDIX E

ATTITUDES TOWARDS CIN SCHEME

For each of the following statements, please circle the number that corresponds to your personal attitude:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

(1) It should be legal for an adult to grow cannabis for personal use.

1 2 3 4 5

(2) It should be legal for an adult to possess a small amount of cannabis for personal use.

1 2 3 4 5

(3) Growing two cannabis plants should not be a criminal offence.

1 2 3 4 5

(4) It is likely that someone in possession of cannabis for personal use will be caught.

1 2 3 4 5

(5) It is likely that someone breaking the law regarding dealing or selling of cannabis will be caught.

1 2 3 4 5

(6) People less likely to reuse cannabis if given education rather than a criminal record.

1 2 3 4 5

(7) In general, the CIN scheme is a good idea.

1 2 3 4 5

(8) The laws for minor cannabis offenders are too soft.

1 2 3 4 5

(9) The laws for minor cannabis offenders are about right.

1 2 3 4 5

(10) The laws for minor cannabis offenders are too harsh.

1 2 3 4 5

For each of the following statements, please circle the number that corresponds to your personal attitude:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Since the CIN scheme was introduced,

(11) The number of people using cannabis has increased.

1 2 3 4 5

(12) The cost of purchasing cannabis has increased.

1 2 3 4 5

(13) Obtaining cannabis has become easier.

1 2 3 4 5

(14) The number of people growing their own cannabis has increased.

1 2 3 4 5

(15) The amount of contact cannabis users have
with criminals has increased.

1 2 3 4 5

Attitudes regarding hydroponic cannabis.

(16) The cultivation of even 1 or 2 hydroponically grown cannabis plants should have
been excluded from the scheme and result in criminal charges.

1 2 3 4 5

(17) Exclusion of hydroponic cannabis plants will result in many users obtaining
it from suppliers with criminal associations.

1 2 3 4 5

The new laws also give police the power to act against sellers of hydroponic equipment who knowingly sell equipment for the cultivation of cannabis or who otherwise engage in criminal activity.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement

(18) The laws should give police the power to act against people who sell
hydroponic equipment who they have evidence are knowingly selling
equipment for cultivation of cannabis.

1 2 3 4 5

For each of the following statements, please circle the number that corresponds to your personal attitude:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The CIN scheme only applies to adults. Those under 18 years of age are excluded from the scheme and dealt with under the existing juvenile justice system.

Under the juvenile justice provision, the young offender can be cautioned, charged, or offered assessment and counselling.

(19) Juveniles should be excluded from the CIN scheme and dealt with under the juvenile justice system.

1 2 3 4 5

(20) The CIN scheme probably hasn't affected the number of people receiving criminal records for a cannabis related offence.

1 2 3 4 5

(21) It is more appropriate to use education to reduce the rate of cannabis use in the community than giving people a criminal record for using the drug.

1 2 3 4 5

(22) It is appropriate that police can exercise their discretion in whether to issue a CIN or charge the person to prevent people exploiting the rules.

1 2 3 4 5