

For Immediate Release

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Ayahuasca improves mental health in first-time users

New study shows a dramatic reduction in psychiatric symptoms and improved quality of life

Barcelona — According to a recent scientific study published in the prestigious journal *Scientific Reports*, from the Nature Publishing Group, **study subjects experienced a notable decrease in psychological symptoms after their first ayahuasca experience**. The research, carried out by the scientific team at the International Center for Ethnobotanical Education Research and Service (ICEERS), **shows a significant and continuous reduction in the levels of depression and anxiety, and a notable improvement in the quality of life** six months following participation in an ayahuasca experience.

“We were able to show a **remarkable improvement in mental health and quality of life** after one experience with ayahuasca,” said Dr. José Carlos Bouso, the study’s principal investigator. “Considering that **depression is one of the most prominent health issues of our times**, these findings illustrate that this decoction, which has been **used by Indigenous people for healing for generations, has something to offer our modern world.**”

In order to determine whether improvements could be attributed to the use ayahuasca or to other variables, **scores from the ayahuasca-naïve participants were compared with those of a control group comprised of experienced users**. The study found **lower levels of depression in the group of regular ayahuasca session participants**. The fact that ayahuasca-naïve individuals had higher levels of depression than regular users, together with the improvement in depression scores after their first experience, confirms **the potential of ayahuasca to improve mood disorders**.

Data was collected through interviews and questionnaires, and variables were measured **using validated scales for assessing depression, psychopathology, psychological flexibility, personality, general health, and quality of life**. Tests were carried out prior to the first ceremony, as well as on two subsequent occasions: after one month and six months.

Study echoes findings of previous research

Other observational studies conducted with regular ayahuasca session participants have found **anxiolytic effects and an absence of psychopathology or neuropsychological impairment** in users. Additionally, further research found **antidepressant effects in patients with treatment-resistant major depression**. In a recently published clinical trial, antidepressant effects were also found after a single administration of ayahuasca.

The results of this new study point to **the potential of ayahuasca experiences for improving mood and quality of life of patients with psychological disorders**, without involving serious risks to their health.