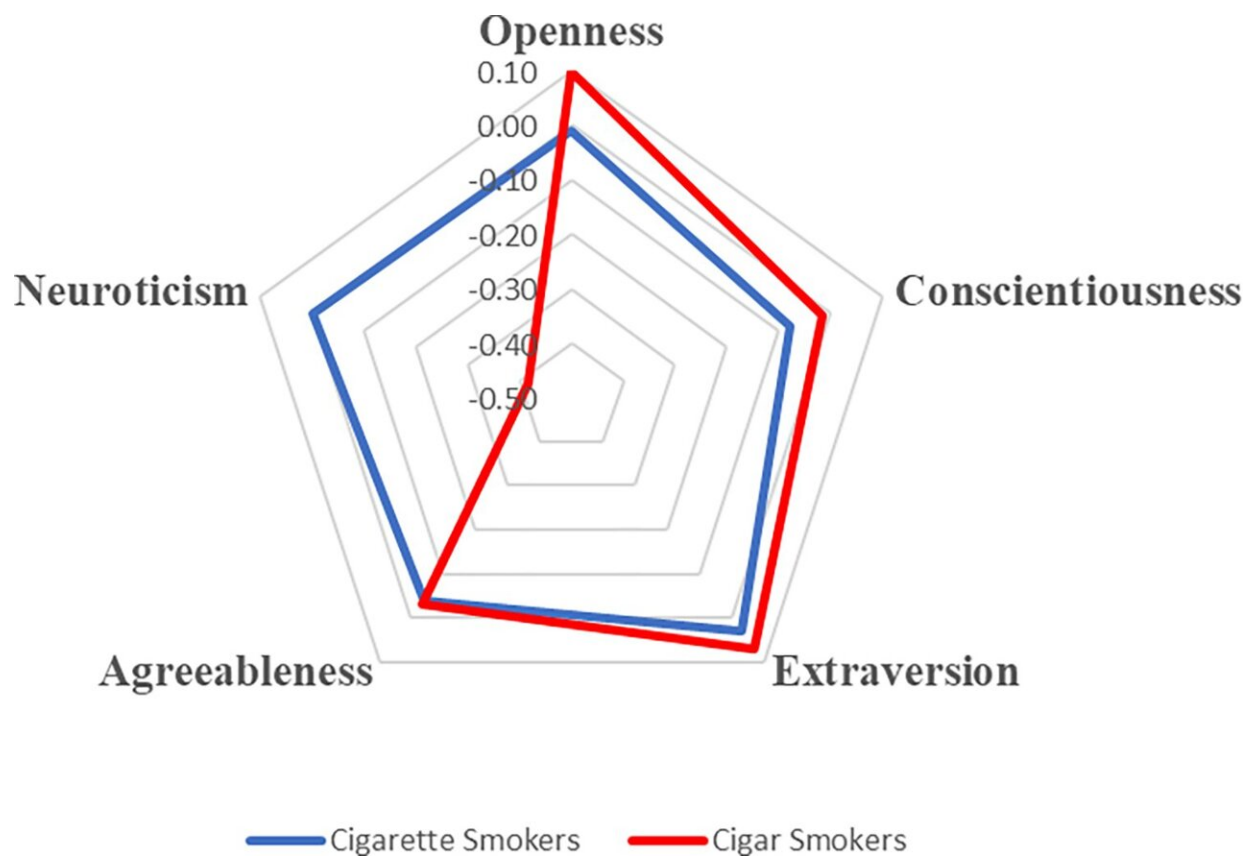


# Study finds smokers are on average more extraverted, but less conscientious and agreeable

July 3 2024



Personality profiles for cigar vs. cigarette smokers. Credit: Gruda, McCleskey, 2024, PLOS ONE, CC-BY 4.0 ([creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/))

Cigarette smokers, cigar smokers, and non-smokers each have distinct personality profiles, according to a study published July 3, 2024 in the open-access journal *PLOS ONE* by Dritjon Gruda from Universidade Catolica Portuguesa, Portugal, and Jim McCleskey from Western Governors University, U.S..

Tobacco use remains a formidable global public health challenge, responsible for more than 8 million deaths annually, including those attributed to second-hand smoke exposure. Emerging research underscores the critical role of psychological factors, including personality traits, in shaping tobacco consumption patterns.

To further explore this issue, Gruda and McCleskey examined the association between Big Five personality traits (openness, [conscientiousness](#), extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) and cigar or cigarette smoking in a sample of 9,918 [older adults](#) across 11 European countries.

The results showed that smoking is associated with lower scores in conscientiousness and agreeableness and higher extraversion scores than not smoking.

The authors speculate that relatively low conscientiousness among smokers may reflect a lack of self-discipline and disregard for long-term health risks, characteristic of more impulsive behaviors, while reduced agreeableness could help explain why smokers often persist despite societal disapproval. They also suggest that the higher extraversion observed may suggest that these individuals enjoy the social nature of smoking.

The analysis also determined personality differences between types of smokers, finding that cigar smokers tend to exhibit lower neuroticism and higher openness compared to both [cigarette smokers](#) and non-

smokers, underlining that the motivations and contexts of [tobacco use](#) are varied.

These findings suggest that [personality traits](#) are antecedents of smoking behavior, with implications for targeted public health interventions and [social policies](#) aimed at combating the global tobacco epidemic.

According to the authors, future research should explore these relationships in younger cohorts, potentially informing early intervention strategies that preempt the onset of smoking based on predisposition to certain personality types. Further studies could also expand the scope to include other forms of tobacco products such as chewing tobacco or more recent smoking trends such as e-cigarettes and vaping.

The authors add, "Basically what we found is: 'tell me what you smoke, and I'll tell you who you are.'"

**More information:** Hit me with your best puff: Personality predicts preference for cigar vs. cigarette smoking, *PLoS ONE* (2024). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0305634](#)

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