



ISSN: 0975-833X

Available online at <http://www.journalcra.com>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL  
OF CURRENT RESEARCH

International Journal of Current Research  
Vol. 12, Issue, 09, pp.13991-13995, September, 2020

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24941/ijcr.39440.09.2020>

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### ATTITUDES OF JAZAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TOWARDS KHAT ABUSE, KSA 2019

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#### ARTICLE INFO

##### Article History:

Received 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2020  
Received in revised form  
27<sup>th</sup> July, 2020  
Accepted 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2020  
Published online 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

##### Key Words:

Jizan, University,  
Student,  
Khat use Attitudes,  
drug

#### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to know the attitude of students at Jazan University towards Khat use in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, an analytical descriptive approach has been used, an electronic questionnaire has been developed to reveal the attitude of students towards Khat use, The questionnaire was applied to a random sample that estimated about (296) male and female students from the University of Jazan who were using Khat. The study showed that the proportion of male use is more than female use. the main reason for students to use Khat for the first time are the social events that some people exploit to spread such habits, and the current study indicated that male and female Khat users spend a long time of 4-6 hours per day spent chewing Khat. Which thought by respondents it does not negatively affect the academic level, but also it doesn't increase understanding. Also revealed that the main reason behind addiction to Khat use is to keep up with friends. However, it revealed that family disintegration is not a motivation for the student to use Khat, and one of the most important reasons that drive students to use Khat is the location of the city of Jizan near the Republic of Yemen. Likewise, the failure to apply punishment to users is among the trends that push students to use Khat. Also, the legal ruling that did not issue a clear ruling regarding the explicit prohibition of khat in some Arab countries is among the trends that motivate male and female students to abuse Khat. Researchers recommended: to eliminate this phenomenon more effort is needed for educating the individual about the danger of Khat on health, strengthen parents monitoring of their behavior and selection of family friends and conducting training seminars that explain the damages Khat, holding sporting events and competitions.

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Citation: Muath A. hazmi, Ali Suan Mugrabi, Abutalib Hassan Zarban et al. 2019. "Attitudes of Jazan University Students Towards Khat Abuse, KSA 2019", International Journal of Current Research, 12, (09), 13991-13995.

#### INTRODUCTION

Khat (pronounced "cot") is a natural stimulant from the Catha Edulis plant, found in the flowering evergreen tree or large shrub which grows in East Africa and Southern Arabia. It reaches heights from 10 feet to 20 feet and its scrawny leaves resemble withered basil.

Apparently it was taken socially to produce excitement, banish sleep, and promote communication. It was used as a stimulant to dispel feelings of hunger and fatigue. The habit of chewing Khat (Catha edulis) is highly prevalent in East Africa and Southwestern Arabian Peninsula. The fresh leaves and twigs of the Khat shrub have a stimulating amphetamine-like and euphoric effect when chewed. Khat consumption has substantially increased in decades. This is reflected in the recent issue of the World Drug Report (2001) which reported an increase of Khat chewing in five countries.

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The World Health Organization report has shown that khat use causes dependency. The developed countries pay great attention to drug prevention, not only from a humanitarian standpoint on the basis that the human being is the supreme value in life, but also from an educational, cultural, economic and psychological point of view as well, and the serious and mental psychological problems that drugs addiction constitute to the individual and the consequences of its use. Of impact on society as well, Saudi Arabia and social agencies have caught up with this boat and our upright government interested in preventing drug use and treating addicts makes it one of the countries that have significant contributions in developing the individual and collective culture and enhancing the positive role towards these bad practice. Khat is one of the narcotic plants that grows in eastern Africa and Yemen. The khat plant contains a semi-alkaline minumin called cathinone, which is similar to stimulant amphetamine. Yemen, which is widely used in abuse.

The traditional habit of Khat consumption was highly regulated socially: adult males (more seldom females) would gather and chew Khat together at a 'Khat party', usually at weekends and afternoons until the time of the evening prayer. Current habits, however, involve adolescents, who chew Khat in cafés which open throughout the day. The phenomenon of khat abuse started in recent years, "according to the study of chewing khat among students of higher education, Dr. Rashad Muhammad Al-Senussi, This spread among many citizens in the Jizan region of different ages and social classes, and the increased demand for khat abuse and their promotion, which drained a lot of money and affected negatively the physical, psychological, security, and religious aspects of these. It drained a lot of money and negatively affected physical, psychological, security, and religious aspects. There is a great debate in the jurisprudence and legal councils about khat to determine the jurisprudence and legal ruling in it, despite the inclusion of the World Health Organization in the list of narcotic substances about twenty years ago, and therefore we will address the extent of its abuse by students of Jazan University, and the health, psychological, economic, social and cultural implications.

The World Health Organization "khat" was listed in 1973 in the list of narcotic drugs, after the organization's six-year research showed that khat plant contains Norsido Vedrine and Cathrin similar in their effect on vitamins. Although the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia imposed strict penalties equal to those in force in the case of dealing with opium and hashish for anyone who transports or uses the substance "khat", however, khat in the southern region of the Kingdom is more widely traded, so that the youth of the region, especially the "Jizan" region, as he lives and coexists with him throughout his life until Khat chewing has become a habit, and Khat chewing sessions are usually held in social parties where friends meet after work, and students meet before tests in order to obtain happiness, alertness, excitement, and the ability to ensure greater achievement. As much information according to the study of Dr. Muhammad Muhammad Abu al-Khair2007, And that dealt with the topic "The trend towards khat abuse and its relationship to parental patterns, which was among the results of the study that 12% practice storage" chewing Khat "and 29% of students use Khat to increase focus and understanding during studying. Noting that studies on this topic did not provide accurate statistics for users Khat scientific research did not provide a specific rate for users.

In the study "Chewing Khat among students of higher education in the Jazan region" by Dr. "Rashad Muhammad Al-Senussi", the current prevalence of chewing Khat among higher education students was found to be 23.1%, which is much higher among males at 38.5% than females at 2.1% ( $P < 0.001$ ). The percentage of students who participated in khat education was 24.8% for males, 40.5%. This is a large percentage, the causes of this phenomenon must be addressed, and through this research we will try to work out statistics to clarify the true percentage of khat users, and we will address the great risks that the residents of Jazan city in general and the students of Jazan University in particular ignore. As for McGuire's view, the attitude is a hypothetical and underlying variable that is extracted from a set of related reactions towards a set of similar variables in certain aspects. Of course, these trends greatly affect the social behavior of the person and the trend is defined as the acquired psychological and nervous willingness to accept or reject Khat use, through the previous experiences and experiences that the individual is going through. A trend is considered (positive) if it involves acceptance (to different degrees for a specific topic or variable). And it is said about it (negative) trend if it involves rejection (to different degrees)

**Objective:** To study the attitude and factors affecting using khat among Gazan university student 2019

## METHODOLOGY

**Study design:** This is cross sectional study

**Study area:** Gazan university

Jazan University was established by Royal Decree No. 6616 / M / B issued on 12/5/1426 AH corresponding to 6/19/2005 AD, in Gazan area, KSA.

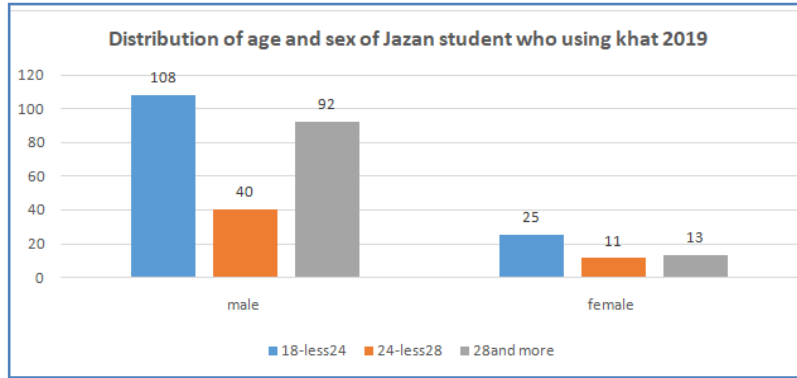
**Study population:** Gazan university student who using khat.

**Sample size:** All female and male students who using khat and agree to participate in the study about (320) were enrolled in his study and Study tools. Pre-constructed pre-tested questionnaire including primary variable (sociodemographic, educational level)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The current study has reached a set of results on the personal and functional characteristics of the study participant in-kind who are students of Jazan University in various specializations. The study revealed the following results:

There are statistical differences between those males and female who used khat, (246, by 83%). and (49, by 17%) consecutively, this finding is considered similar to the result of the study conducted in 2013 By Rashad Muhammad Al-Senussi and others the current prevalence of chewing Khat among higher education students is 23.1%, which is much higher among males at 38.5% than females at 2.1% ( $5 < 0.001$ ). Figure (1) it shows the distribution of age groups and sex of Jazan university student who use khat, the highest age group of both of females and male is between 18 to 24 years, may be this is age group of years of entry university and interrelate with classmates and colleagues.



Distribution of age and sex of Jazan university student who using khat 2019

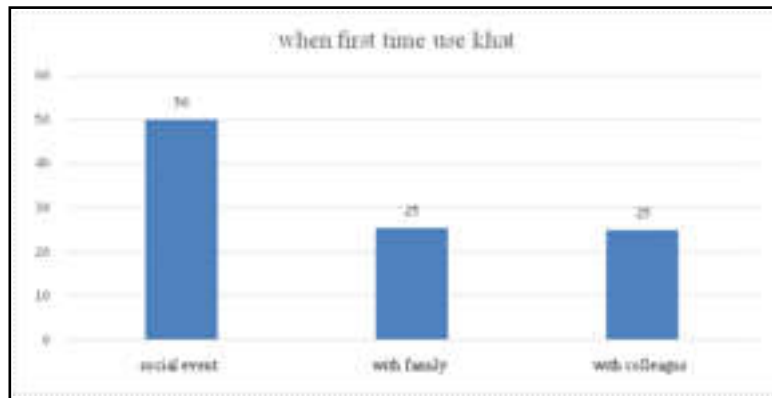


Figure (2) with whom you use khat first time

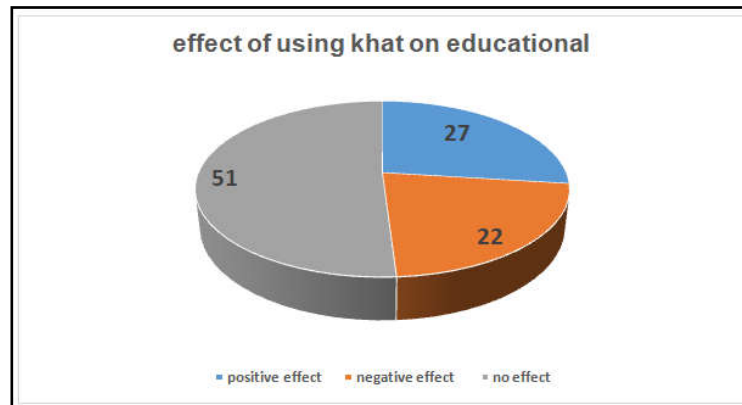


Figure (3) the effect of using khat on student educational performance

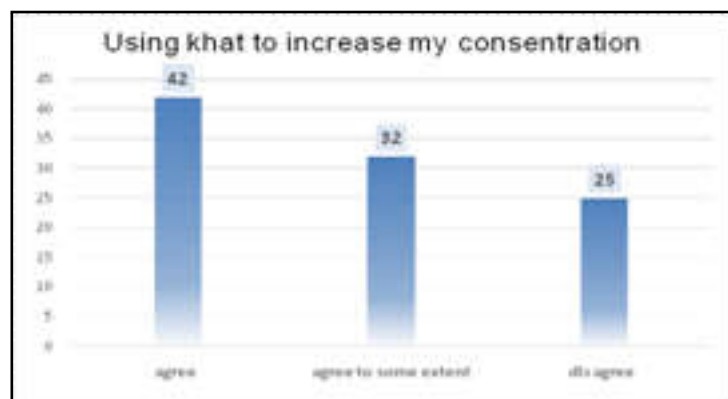
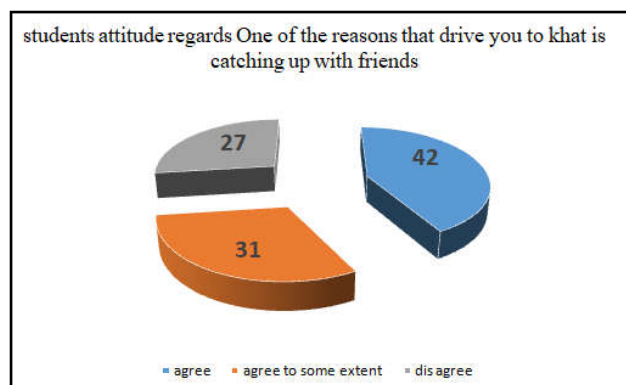
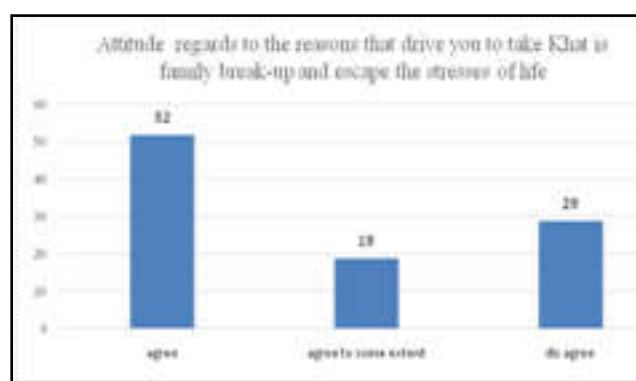


Figure (4) Gazan university student attitude regards to causes leading to use khat



**Figure (5) Attitude regards One of the reasons that drive you to khat is catching up with friends**



**Figure (6) Attitude regards to the reasons that drive you to take Khat is family break-up and escape the stresses of life**

Moreover the study showed that the proportion of the number of students using khat in the rural area is more than urban area, and these results can be explained by the educational level that varies between the residents of cities and villages. Regards to frequency of using khat about (49) student used khat on daily base while 113 use it rarely. Our study revealed that, (50%) from the student used khat first in social event and (25%) from the student use khat for the first time with their family and (25%) with their colleagues. Moreover it's clear from the study 69% of the student used khat in social event and 18% of student on daily base and 13% during exam period. In addition to this study revealed more than 40% of student spent about 4 to 6 hours chewing khat.

Regards to the effect of khat on educational performance our study revealed that more than (51%) believed that khat had no effect, 27% believed that khat had positive effect and 22% of student believed that khat had negative effect. Study disclosed that more than 40% of the Gazan university student declared they agree on using khat didn't improve their concentration in their study, while 25% of the students were disagree to this. This point agree with study conducted by Gasim Almhagi. More than 40% of gazan university students were believed that catching up with friends is one of drivers to use khat, while 27% were disagree. This finding is consistent with study conducted by Mohammed Jaafar aiming to find the relationship between attitude toward using khat and keep up with friend. 48% of Gazan university student declare that using khat family brake and life stress is not a reason for using khat, this finding is divergent to the study conducted by Abu alkhair et al, which aiming to assess the attitude of Gazan university student towards khat abuse and its relationship to psychological factors represented in their awareness of

parental patterns The study showed that there is no correlation between the trend towards khat use only due to inconsistent parental control. The current study concluded that the author suggested that the location of the city of Jizan, close to the Republic of Yemen, may be one of the main reasons that motivate male students to abuse khat and this point need further research for clarification, It also indicated that (54%) of the students approved that the religious roles is among the trends that drive students of Jazan University to use khat, as the Republic of Yemen, Somalia and some African countries. This study also showed that a large number of male and female students of Jazan University using khat had many attitude need to be addressed by detailed health promotion program. To eliminate this phenomenon by educating the individual about the danger of Khat on health, and strengthen parents monitoring of their behavior and selection of family friends and conducting training seminars that explain the damages Khat, holding sporting events and competitions. Closing of the Khat farms in Jizan, applying the penalties mentioned in the law to farmers and users alike

**Researchers recommended:** To eliminate this phenomenon more effort is needed for educating the individual about the danger of Khat on health, strengthen parents monitoring of their behavior and selection of family friends and conducting training seminars that explain the damages Khat, holding sporting events and competitions and Closing of the Khat farms in Jizan, applying the penalties mentioned in the law to farmers and users alike.

**Ethical consideration:** Approvals was taken from the Research Ethics Committee. All selected participants were informed about the purpose and details of the study, and asked to sign a consent form. Participants were informed that they have the right not to participate in the study or to withdraw from the study prior to completion without any consequences and that the data collected will be anonymous to protect their confidentiality. Then signed informed consent had been asked from all participants.

#### Acknowledgement

**Conflict of interest:** All authors declared no conflict of interest.

**Budget:** This research was funded by the researchers

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