

## **Factors influencing khat consumption among youth in Garowe District, Puntland, Somalia**

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### **Abstract**

This purpose of the study was to examine factors influencing khat consumption among youth in Garowe focusing one cost, unemployment, peer pressure and perceived benefits. Using descriptive research design, the study interviewed 90 youth, 14 female khat traders and 14 sports club leaders. The study found out that the cost of buying khat triggers chewing which youth see as cheap 6.66% strongly disagreed, 22.22% disagreed, other 6.66%, 38.9% agreed while 25.56% strongly agreed. Youth chew khat due to idleness which 16.67% of the respondents strongly agreed, other 47.78% responded agreed, 8.88% undecided, 17.78% disagreed while the rest 8.89% of the respondents reacted strongly disagree. Youth start chewing due to influence from their friends, the majority of 73.33% responded that they strongly agreed, other 23.33% replied agree, separately 2.22% replied disagree while 1.11% strongly disagreed. The study also found out that youth chewed to enhance the work performance so that 24.4% responded strongly agreed, 26.7% agreed, 16.6% undecided, correspondingly 19% disagreed, 13.3% strongly disagreed. In general, the study shows that cost of khat, unemployment, peer pressure and perceived benefits significantly influence and triggers youth to consume khat.

**Keywords:** khat consumption, cost of khat, unemployment, peer pressure, perceived benefits

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

Khat grows wild in countries bordering the Red Sea and along the east coast of Africa as well as in Madagascar. The people of these countries have chewed Khat for centuries. There are several names for the plant, depending on its origin: Chat, Qat, Qaad, Jaad, Miraa, Mairungi, Cat and Catha. In most of the Western literature, it is referred to as Khat. Khat is an evergreen shrub, which is cultivated as a bush or small tree. The leaves have an aromatic odour. The taste is astringent and slightly sweet. The plant is seedless and hardy, growing in a variety of climates and soils (Cox & Rampes , 2003). Khat can be grown in droughts where other crops have failed and also at high altitudes. Khat is harvested throughout the year. Planting is staggered to obtain a continuous supply (Luqman & Danowski,, 1976). Globally, the most significant Khat plantations are in the highlands of Ethiopia, Kenya and Yemen and these countries as well host the highest number of Khat chewers. For good influence and taste, Khat leaves are chewed fresh. Unlike other products, Khat is packaged using wet banana leaves in bundles of five and then put in wet sisal sacks so that the freshness in the leaves is not lost before reaching the consumer (Kafi & Mberia, 2016). Previously, Khat leaves were available only near to where they were grown. Recently, improved roads and air transport have allowed a much wider distribution. Khat is harvested in the early hours of the morning and sold in markets in late morning (Cox & Rampes , 2003). Globally, it is estimated that 10 million people consume Khat (NIDA, 2010). Several reports showed that the prevalence of Khat use differs according to age, gender, place of residence, and occupation.

In Somalia, Khat-chewing became a widespread problem in the mid1960s. Before 1960, Khat was grown on a limited scale and was chewed only in the northern areas of the country. The problem was initially limited to a small number of people (Elmi A. , 1983). Within past two decades the consumption of Khat has increased dramatically. Before 1980s Khat was mostly chewed on Thursdays and Fridays, in connection with particular rituals such as weddings, funerals, religious gatherings or readings (*e.g. Maulids*), and occasions when it was essential to stay awake such as during truck driving or preparing for exams (Hansen,, 2010). Somalia had made several efforts to control adverse impact of Khat. In 1921, and again in 1939, the cultivation, importation and possession of Khat were prohibited. Similarly, in 1956, the importation and possession of Khat were banned. These laws failed to bring results, because the public was not fully aware of the hazards of Khat-chewing and the people's degree of

compliance with those laws was very low. Another reason for their failure was the absence of a sound programme for Khat control. In contrast, the law of 1983 was enacted in much more favorable circumstances. The public was aware of the problem and many people were looking forward to strong measures against Khat consumption (Elmi, et al, 1987). The main type of Khat chewed in Puntland is called *Miraaw* which is imported from Kenya through the Gaalkao, Adado and Las'anod airports. From the airport, it follows through an effective transportation system of using high speed vehicles that ensure that delivery is made by road and in hours across Puntland before the active alkaloids disintegrate within 48 to 72 hours after harvest (Klein, et al., 2012). The second type is known as *Harari* and is imported seasonally from Ethiopia. It is transported on trucks which enter Somalia through Wajale town in Somaliland. Khat imported is owned by different cooperates except that which comes in through Las'anod airport which belongs to one company (Kafi & Mberia, 2016). According to Puntland Ministry of Finance, in the last seven years the consumption *Harari* Khat has been decreasing in Puntland although the taxation of *Harari* is lower than that of *Miraa* its consumption and trade is going to vanish for several reasons such as, *Harari* is seasonal, transportation is complicated which is mainly on land, the quantity of *Miraa* is more than that of *Harari* and the degree of drug is lower than *Miraa*.

Khat is a vital trade in Somalia and has been increasing exponentially costing millions of dollars annually. In 2012, Transitional Federal Government, Puntland and Somaliland spent more than USD 300 million of foreign exchange (Kafi & Mberia, 2016). In 2003, it was estimated that Puntland imported 2,500 tons of Khat (1,088 tons of Meeru and 1,456 tons of Hareeri) and exponentially increased into (24,012 tons of Meeru and 91,380 tons of Hareeri) in 2006 (MoPIC 2006). This is economic burden to the already fragile economy of the country and ignites the youth to be accessible to chew Khat since it's availability in the market increased. The main chewers of Khat are men and small number of women. Truck drivers, watchmen and students chew in order to stay awake and focused, casual laborers chew to relax after a long day, event organizers bring because participants want to socialize (Assefa M. , 2013, Megerssa, et al., 2014).

According to (UNDP, 2012), Khat is commonly consumed by youth in Puntland. It is predominantly consumed by males (11%) as compared to 4% of females consuming Khat. The older youth (25-29 years) are the main consumers of Khat compared to 4% of those aged 14-19 years. The growing trend in the consumption of *Khat* has been one of the major risk

behaviors among youth in Puntland, with one-third currently affected by it. It comes with serious health implications, and has been a major driver of poverty, conflict, unemployment and criminality (UN DP, 2012). The United Nations defines young people as those up to the age 18, while many government policies consider youth to be from 13 to 25 (Wyn & White, 1997). In other way, African Youth Charter (2006) youth or young people shall refer to every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. (Puntland National Youth Policy, 2011) defined youth the ages between 15 to 30 years old and comprises 70% of the total population in Puntland. So that, the study will define youth those aged between 15 to 30 years old.

Various influencing factors have been identified that follow, and increase the possibility of Khat use problems that can be described and conceptualized as personal, interpersonal and environmental factors (Megerssa, et al, 2014). Worldwide, drug abuse is associated with youth. For instance, Khat consumer is mainly associated with youth as different studies mentioned. However, none of these studies have identified which is the most significant of these factors. This study therefore is basically aimed to investigate the factors influencing khat consumption among the youth in Garowe, Puntland.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Khat consumption has been increasing time after time. Khat siphons away from Puntland resources a total of nine percent of the total volume and value of imports. This is equivalent to the amount of fuel or cars & trucks imports. In 2003, it was estimated that 2,500 tons of Khat were imported into Puntland (1,088 tons of Meeru and 1,456 tons of Hareeri); the imports likely exceeded 3,000 tons in 2005 (Ministry of Planning and Statistics, 2003) . The annual drain of foreign currency out of the country is estimated at US\$40 million annually. The resource out flow on account of Khat is well above the annual state budget (UNDP, ILO,& PI, 2005). Moreover, the Khat imported into Puntland in 2006 was (24,012 tons of Meeru and 91,380 tons of Hareeri) (MoPIC, 2006). The increasing import of Khat has adverse impact on youth and paves the way accessibility of consuming Khat. Khat is commonly consumed by youth in Puntland. It is predominantly consumed by males (11%) as compared to 4% of females consuming Khat. The older youth (25-29 years) are the main consumers of Khat compared to 4% of those aged 14-19 years. The growing trend in the consumption of khathas been one of the major risk behaviors among youth in Puntland, with one-third currently affected by it. It comes with serious health implications, and has been a

major driver of poverty, conflict, unemployment and criminality (UNDP, 2012). Acquisition of funds to pay for khat may lead to criminal behavior and even prostitution (Elmi, 1983).

A study conducted by (Ng'ethe, 2012) in Igembe District found out that khat is readily available and its accessibility is not restricted compared to alcohol, marijuana and cocaine. Majority of the respondents, at 61%, felt that khat is very easy to obtain while the majority of those who take khat were introduced to it by their family members, in fact results indicate that 56.3% take khat when at home, 21.1% when away from home and school while 8.5% and 1.4% at the shopping center and when in school respectively. Other contributing factors include the need to fit among friends according to 18.4% of the respondents. There is also the need to stay awake while reading according to 28% of the respondents while 23.2% take khat to cope with stressful situations and 11.2% to have the feeling caused by khat.

Drug abuses became worldwide problem related to the youth. In Puntland, the most common drug is khat which youth are getting involved which paves the way the gloomy future of the youth. Although some studies have been discussed about khat, there is no study dealing with youth and khat consumption. So that, identifying the factors influencing khat consumption among youth is vital similarly taking suitable actions to address the adverse impact of those factors is needed. This study examines factors influencing khat consumption among youth in Garowe.

### **1.3. Objectives**

To investigate factors influencing khat consumption among youth in Garowe district Puntland, Somalia

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Investigate the extent to which cost influences khat consumption among youth in Garowe, Puntland.
2. To identify the extent to which unemployment influences khat consumption among youth in Garowe Puntland.
3. Assess the extent at which peer pressure influences khat consumption among youth in Garowe Puntland.
4. Establish the extent to which perceived benefit influences khat consumption among youth in Garowe Puntland.

#### **1.4. Research questions**

1. To what extent does cost of khat influence on khat consumption among youth in Garowe Puntland?
2. To what extent does unemployment influence on khat consumption among youth in Garowe Puntland?
3. To what extent does peer pressure influence on khat consumption among youth in Garowe Puntland?
4. To what extent does perceived benefit influence on khat consumption among youth in Garowe Puntland?

The scope of this study was to examine the factors influencing khat consumption among youth in Garowe city of Puntland. The study chose Garowe because it is the capital of Puntland and hosts variety of people from all Puntland regions and can represent a good sample of whole regions of Puntland. The study targeted youth, Khat traders, and sports leaders to collect information such as general information of respondents, cost, unemployment, peer pressure, and performance benefits. The study was undertaken between August and October 2017.

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between the independent variables which are cost of khat, unemployment, peer pressure and perceived and the dependent variable which is Khat consumption among youth.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This study was conducted using descriptive research design and both qualitative and quantitative data was collected. Descriptive research studies are those studies which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group. One of the ways of collecting data for descriptive studies is the use of interview which involves securing information concerning a phenomenon under study from a sample of the concerned population (Kothari, 2004). Since the phenomena under study was cost of khat, unemployment, peer pressure and perceived benefit descriptive research design was applicable because it determines and report issues such as behaviors the way they occur in the environment. Quantitative approach helped to collect information about background and actions while the qualitative approach was used to collect data on behaviors and feelings from sample youth, and khat traders using questionnaire. Both qualitative and quantitative data was

collected concurrently using the same instrument, analyzes and findings was triangulated. Basing on the variables involving, this descriptive research was the most suitable design. From population of 26,410 youth between 15-30 years living in Garowe (UNFPA, 2014; Garowe Municipality, 2011), 14 female khat traders and 14 sports club leaders, the sample size was calculated using Slovin's formula (1960) at confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 5%.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \cdot e^2}$$

Where

n = sample size

N= population size

d = Level of precision or sampling error (confidence interval)

Which is 95%?

Substituting the equation:

$$n = \frac{26410}{1 + 26410 \times 0.05^2} = \frac{26410}{67.025} = 394$$

Sample size as 394

30% of the sample size of 394 was used to collect the questionnaire which was 118 respondents. The target respondents were 90 youths, 14 khat traders, and 14 sports club leaders. Using stratified sampling, the researcher divided Garowe into 8 villages and the respondents were randomly selected. The researcher used code numbers to select the respondents. For each village was given a specific code number which facilitated the selection of youth respondents. In formulating research instruments the researcher considered the objectives of the study and the research questions. Data was collected by use of questionnaires administered to youths in 8 Garowe villages, individual interview to khat traders, and focus group discussion to sports club leaders. The Questionnaire method was mainly employed in primary data collection. Structured interviews were also employed. Conducting the interviews helped getting deep understanding of the phenomena, overcome resistance and interruptions, formulate the questions differently, observe the conditions of the setting and collect supplementary comments as explained by (Kothari, 2004)

A pilot test was done with 20 questionnaires as recommended by (Kothari, 2004) in order to bring out the weaknesses in the interviews and effect improvements. Amendments were then made before the full study was commenced. Statistical Package for Social Sciences

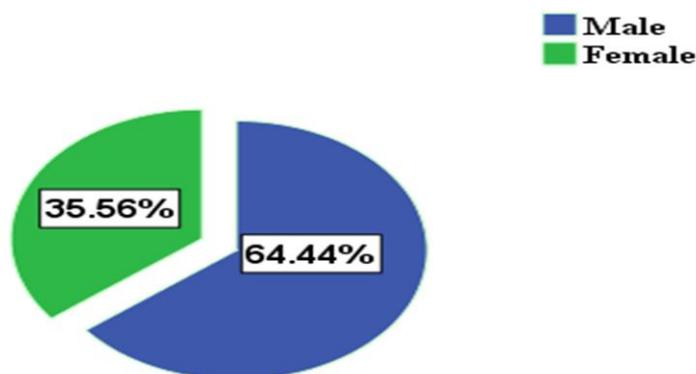
(SPSS) version 20.0 was used to analyze the raw quantitative and qualitative. SPSS is chosen because it provided a friendly interface and had ability to create table presentations of data and reporting with a lot of ease in correcting and cleaning large number entries. Descriptive statistical function with the form tables, figures, frequencies and percentages was performed and outputs was produced for the quantitative data. As with the qualitative data, the analysis involved coding and categorizing and then converting to identifiable features which was presented in the form of tables, frequencies and percentages. Information obtained from the qualitative data analysis was used to give meaning to the quantitative analysis by triangulating the two to produce meaningful results. The researcher also used Pearson's linear correlation co-efficiency to ascertain the degree of relationships between the variables and the T-test to determine the co-efficiency of determination.

### 3. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. *General Information of respondents*

##### 3.1.1. **General information of youth respondents**

Majority of the respondents with 64.44% were male while the other 35.56% of the respondents were female.



**Figure 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents**

The age breakdown of the youth respondents showed that 46.7% were the age group of 26-30 years old, 43.3% of the respondents were between 21-25 years old and the rest 10% were between 15-20 years old. The marital status of the respondents displays that 36.7% were married, respectively 53.3% were single, other 5.6% of the respondents were divorced while

4.4% of the respondents were widows. The education level of the youth respondents varied 44.4% of the respondents were either pursuing or pursued bachelor degrees, similarly, 42.2% had secondary school education 7.8% were having other education such as, Quranic education and so on 7.8% were masters and 2.2% were had primary education.

The occupation of the youth respondents was that 25.6% of the respondents were students, other 14.4% were self-employed youth, 27.8% of the youth respondents were academically skilled youth while 1.1% was team coach and the rest 31.1% were working other things, such as mechanical workshops, constructions etc.

### **3.2. Influence of cost on khat consumption among youth**

The youth finds that a cost of a bundle of khat in Garowe is cheap which 6.66% responded strongly disagreed, 22.22% of the respondent replied disagreed, other 6.66% of the respondent's undecided, in other way, 38.89% of the respondents agreed while the remaining 25.56% responded strongly agreed. The finding of this study is similar to the study by Ng'ethe (2012) in Igembe South District of Meru County Kenya which indicated that in respect to ease of obtaining Khat, 61% indicated it is very easy, 15.4% fairly easy. 9.5%, 4.4% and 2.2% on the other hand indicate it is impossible very difficult and fairly difficult to obtain Khat. The remaining 7.4% did not have any idea. Furthermore, the researcher has also conducted individual interview for some of the khat traders in Garowe town. Respondents were asked if they had a youth customer, they all responded that they had youth customers, then they were asked how difficult could youth buy khat. 41% responded very easy, 33.3% said fairly easy however 25% responded fairly difficult.

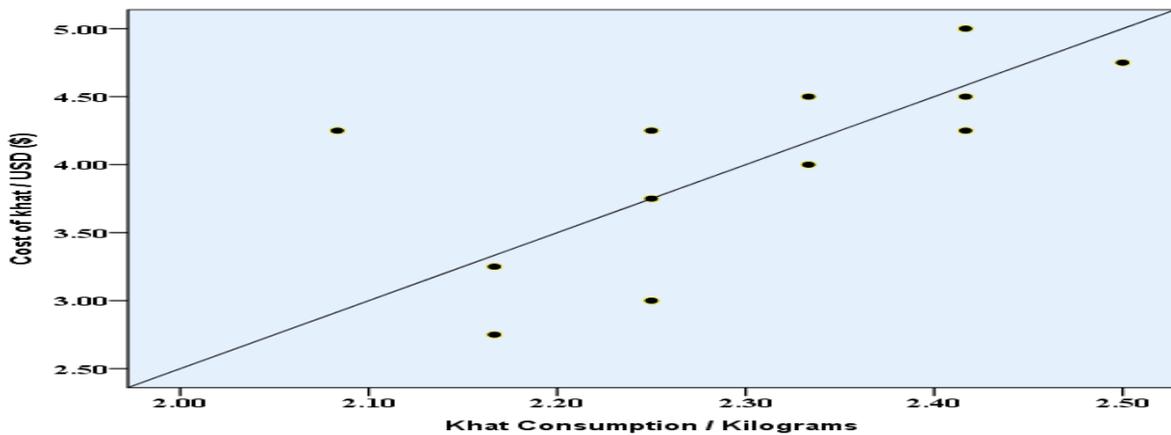
Compared to other drugs khat is cheaper which 15.6% responded strongly disagree while other 31% responded agreed, 17% said undecided 22% replied disagreed and 14.4% reacted strongly disagreed. As Ng'ethe (2012) found out in Igembe of Meru County in Kenya that ease of availability is a contributing factor to khat consumption. The khat is readily available and its accessibility is not restricted compared to alcohol, marijuana and cocaine. Majority of the respondents, at 61%, felt that khat is very easy to obtain. Both of the studies indicate that khat is easily attainable which is permitting to youth involve it. The researcher also facilitated focus group discussion with the youth which they discussed that khat is easy for youth to buy because it becomes cheaper time after time e.g. the price of khat in the noon is not similar to the khat of afternoon or night and they also mentioned that khat is the cheapest comparing to other drugs.

**Table 1: Compared to other drugs a bundle of khat is cheap**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	13	14.4
Disagree	14	15.6
Undecided	15	17
Agree	28	31
Strongly Agree	20	22
Total	90	100.0

The youth afford to buy a bundle of khat twice a week as 24.4% strongly agreed that they could buy a bundle of khat twice a week, 53.3% agreed that they can buy a bundle of khat twice a week, 11.1% said undecided, 7.8% disagreed while the remaining 3.3% strongly disagreed. The study supports the other study that declared youth earn enough pocket money to buy a khat which was conducted by Ng’ethe (2012) who found out in Igembe District of Meru County Kenya that students were able to buy a khat according to the pocket money given by their parents which majority of the respondents at 31.6% receive amounts between 1000 to 1499 Kenyan Shillings, 19.9% between 500 to 999 Kenyan Shillings, 17.7% between 2500 Kenyan Shillings and above while the remaining 11%, 9.6% and 5.1% amounts between 1500 to 1499 Kenyan Shillings, 2000 to 2499 Kenyan Shillings and below 500 Kenyan Shillings respectively. The remaining 5.1% thus receive no amount of pocket money. The researcher also led focus group discussion which handed down that youth can buy khat simply through making any step that they can get khat e.g. some of the youth call their relatives in abroad and mislead to send money, others ask for their friends and others spend their own money on khat. They also mentioned that youth buy khat for each other to assist each other.

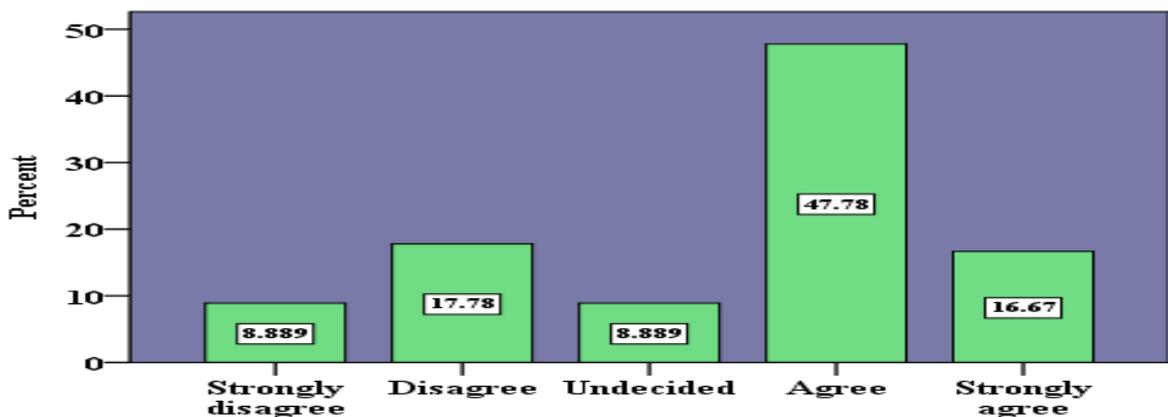
Khat is sold in small bundles which 58.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that khat is sold in a small bundle, 33.3% said they agreed, 4.4% undecided 1.1% disagreed and the remaining 2.2% responded they strongly disagreed.



**Figure 2: Relationship between cost of khat and khat consumption**

The researcher used the P-value or the sig. Value to determine the level of correlation between the variables. Since the r Pearson’s is 0.642 and its corresponding is 0.009 and the P-value is less than 0.01 therefore as shown in figure 3 there is a significant relationship between the cost of khat and the khat consumption, at a correlation significant rate of 0.01 level (1-tailed).

**3.3. Influence of unemployment on khat consumption among youth**



**Figure 3: I chew khat due to idleness**

The youth chew khat due to idleness which 16.67% of the respondents strongly agreed, other 47.78% responded agreed, 8.88% undecided, 17.78 disagreed while the rest 8.89% of the respondents reacted strongly disagree. The study is in line with a case of Bamburi location Kenya explored that parents allow their children to get involved in drug peddling due to lack of employment in the region; as long as parents received something, they did not care where the money came from. High unemployment rate ranked number one (4.56), followed by high poverty level (4.22) and lastly, by cheap cost of the drug (4.19) (Kasungu, et al, 2012). The

researcher also conducted individual interview for khat traders in Garowe town which majority of the respondents said that unemployment influences youth to consume khat because they spend most of their time searching and chewing khat. They believe that this paves the way youth to be addicted with khat. Some of the respondents responded that unemployment has low influence on khat consumption. They said that youth believe there is fewer opportunities in the country and they see chewing as a cure to the stress of unemployment. Few has said that unemployment does not influence khat consumption.

### 3.4. Influence of peer pressure on khat consumption among youth

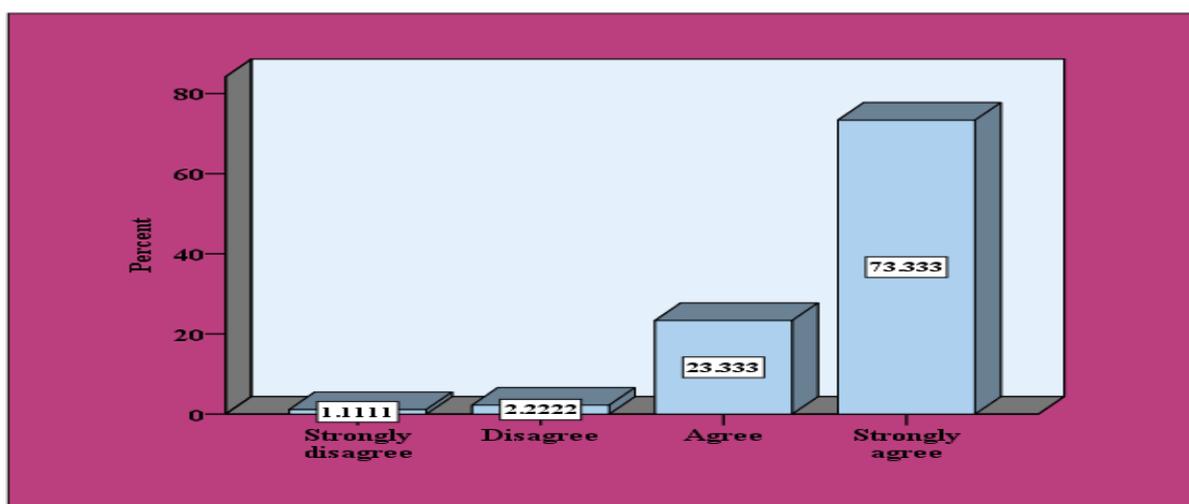


Figure 4: I started consuming khat due to influence from friends

Peer pressure is one of the motivation of commencing chewing khat as the study found out that youth start chewing due to influence from their friends, the majority of 73.33% responded that they strongly agreed, other 23.33% replied agree, separately 2.22% replied disagree while 1.11% strongly disagreed. Peer influence is a very important factor associated with risk behavior because individuals need a sense of belonging to social networks (Kidan, 2011). This study supports a study conducted by (Megersa, 2014) among students of the University of Ambo Woliso Campus students are asked if they have friends who have khat chewing behavior and how many of them are khat chewers. From the total 127 current Khat chewing students, the majority 118(92.3%) indicated that they have Khat chewing friends. It is also further supported by research conducted at Mekelle University (2011) among students which revealed that, 58.8% of the current Khat chewers were introduced by peer/friends who chew Khat. The study also found out in an individual interview of khat traders which khat traders were asked how likely peer pressure ignites youth to consume khat, 50% responded very likely, 33.3% said likely while 16.7% do not know.

Youth respondents were interrogated whether they chew khat because some of their family members consume khat as which exhibited that 12.2% strongly agreed, 31.1% agreed that they chew because members of their families consume other 26.7% replied undecided while other 14.4% disagreed and the rest 15.6% strongly disagreed that they chew because of their family backgrounds. This study somehow shows that family influence is medium compared to (Megersa, 2014) who found out that out of 127 khat chewers, only 34 (26.7%) of the students reported their family member chew Khat. However, family background influences the youth to consume khat because they perceive chewing as a habitual action. The study also asked the khat traders in an individual interview what was the reason youth continue chewing, 33.3% said to fit among their peers, another 33.3% said to pass time, 25% said curiosity and 8.3% responded other things. The researcher also led a focus group discussion which was discussed that youth mostly commence chewing with their friends chewing during festivals, graduation days, sports, trips etc.

Youth resume chewing khat to remain with their peers since 25.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that youth consume khat to stay with their peers, 46.7% agreed, 6.7% undecided, 13.3% disagreed and 7.8% of the respondents replied they strongly disagreed. The major reasons claimed for initiation and continuation of Khat chewing were peer pressure and stress reduction. This is an important indication to direct interventions towards decreasing the prevalence of this behavior since the major reasons were identified it is a problem half way solved (Megersa, 2014). A focus group discussion by Garowe youth stated that youth continue to chew to remain among the peer or show some respect to their friends because they spend most of their time each other.

**Table 2: I chew khat to remain with my peers**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	7.8
Disagree	12	13.3
Undecided	6	6.7
Agree	42	46.7
Strongly Agree	23	25.6
Total	90	100.0

### **3.5. Influence of perceived benefit on khat consumption among youth**

Youth were asked if khat is chewed to enhance the work performance so that 24.4% responded strongly agreed, 26.7% agreed, 16.6 % undecided, correspondingly 19% disagreed

while minor of 13.3% strongly disagreed that khat is chewed in the perception of performance enhancement. (Kafi & Mberia, 2016), conducted a study in Garowe Puntland found out that the majority of respondents (50.2%) chewed khat in order to enhance their working efficiency. These are also reported by (Gashaw & Getachew, 2014) who related the widespread use of khat in East Africa with the belief that it improves the capacity and counteracts with fatigue. The study also found out that 33.3% chew khat to enhance the work performance in an individual interview for khat traders in Garowe town. Furthermore, youth were questioned whether they chew khat to pass the time then 20% strongly agreed, other 38.9% agreed, whereas 14.44% said undecided also 23.3% disagreed and 3.33% strongly disagreed that youth chew khat to pass a time. The researcher also conducted an individual interview for khat traders in Garowe responded that 25% chew to pass time. (Kafi & Mberia, 2016) ranked the motivation of khat chewing in Garowe, chewing to pass time ranked third with the percentage of 18.2 but this study found out that majority of the respondents agreed they chew to pass and the difference may be that this study targeted youth who most of them are unemployed. Other study by (Megersa, 2014) seeks to establish the prominent reasons for current Khat chewing among students in Ambo Woliso Campus in Ethiopia found out that students chew khat to pass time with 19.7% which ranked 4 out of 9 options. In a focus group discussion, the youth mentioned that youth consume khat to kill the time instead hosting stress and depression.

**Table 3: I chew khat to relief fatigue**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly Disagree	5	5.6
Disagree	2	2.2
Undecided	12	13.3
Agree	53	58.9
Strongly Agree	18	20.0
Total	90	100.0

Table 1 demonstrates that 20% of the respondents strongly agreed that youth chew to relief fatigue, 58.9 with highest percentage agreed, whereas 13.3% said undecided furthermore 2.2% disagreed and 5.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed that khat is chewed to relief fatigue. The researcher also found out that 16.7% chew to relief fatigue after conducting individual interview for khat traders in Garowe.(Kafi & Mberia, 2016), the main motivation (50.2%) for chewing khat was to enhance work performance, other reasons were stress reduction (20.1%), pass time (18.2%) and fatigue reduction (11.5%). (Elmi A. , 1983) on a

study done in the eighties established that during those days, the main reasons to initiation were the desire to follow friends or family members (58.34%), socialize (41.34%) and get the pleasant stimulation given by khat (38%); improving working efficiency was at 18.20%. Others argue that moderate use improves performance and increases work output, owing to the stimulant and fatigue-postponing effects. The variances including the decades of time between the studies as well as the target populations which this study specified youth (15-30 years old) as the target population of the study.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **4.1. Summary of findings**

The findings of the study have been divided into four based on the factors influencing khat consumption among youth in Garowe. This study originates from the recognition that khat consumption constitute one of the persistent adverse impacts facing the future of the youth in Somalia. For this reason, it endeavored to descriptive conditions for the problem conducting study in Garowe town. For the purpose of the study, a review of the literature indicates that using the factors influencing khat consumption among youth could be an effective indicator for understanding the magnitude of the problem and the possible areas for investigation to understand what are the influences of cost, unemployment, peer pressure and perceived benefit on khat consumption among youth in Garowe.

##### **4.1.1. Influence of cost on khat consumption among youth**

Under this variable, youth were asked about the cost of khat and based on availability and affordability. They were asked that a bundle of khat is cheap which 6.7% responded strongly disagreed, 22.2% of the respondent replied disagreed, other 6.7% of the respondents' undecided, in other way, 38.9% of the respondents agreed while the remaining 25.6% responded strongly agreed. Furthermore, in an individual interview, the khat traders were also asked if they had a youth customer, they all responded that they had youth customers, then they were asked how difficult could youth buy khat. 41% responded very easy, 33.3% said fairly easy however 25% responded fairly difficult. Then the youth were asked if the bundle of khat is cheaper compared to other drugs, which 15.6% responded strongly disagree while other 31% responded agreed, 17% said undecided 22% replied disagreed and 14.4% reacted strongly disagreed. Ease of availability is a contributing factor to khat consumption. The researcher also conducted focus group discussion with youth sports leaders found out that

khat is easy for youth to buy. It has price trends which it become cheaper hour after hour e.g. the price of khat in the noon is more expensive than that of night they also mentioned that khat is the most accessible and cheapest drug. Youth were also asked whether they can afford to buy a bundle of khat twice a week which 24.4 strongly agreed that they could buy a bundle of khat twice a week, 53.3% agreed that they can buy a bundle of khat twice a week, 11.1% said undecided, 7.8% disagreed while the remaining 3.3% strongly disagreed. The researcher also led focus group discussion which handed down that youth can buy khat simply through making any step that they can get khat e.g. some of the youth call their relatives in abroad and mislead to send money, others ask for their friends and others spend their own money on khat. They also mentioned that youth buy khat for each other to assist each other. The study also asked the youth whether they can buy a khat in a small bundle which are cheap 58.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that khat is sold in a small bundle, 33.3% said they agreed, 4.4% undecided 1.1% disagreed and the remaining 2.2% responded they strongly disagreed.

Finally, Pearson's linear coefficient correlation was run to determine the relationship between the cost of khat and khat consumption. It found that cost of khat increases the chances for khat consumption among youth.

#### **4.1.2. Influence of unemployment on khat consumption among youth**

For this variable, the study focused on whether respondents chew khat due to idleness. Respondents answered that youth consume khat due to idleness 16.7% of the respondents strongly agreed, other 47.8% responded agreed, 8.9% undecided, 17.8 disagreed while the rest 8.9% of the respondents reacted strongly disagree. The researcher also conducted individual interview for khat traders in Garowe town which majority of the respondents said that unemployment influences youth to consume khat because they spend most of their time searching and chewing khat. They believe that this paves the way youth to be addicted with khat. Some of the respondents responded that unemployment has low influence on khat consumption. They said that youth believe there is fewer opportunities in the country and they see chewing as a cure to the stress of unemployment. Few has said that unemployment does not influence khat consumption. disagreed that youth consume khat to get employed.

#### **4.1.3. Influence of peer pressure on khat consumption among youth**

Under this variable, youth were asked who if they started consuming khat with their friends the majority of 73.3% responded that they strongly agreed, other 23.3% replied agree, separately 2.2% replied disagree while 1.1% strongly disagreed. Peer influence is a very

important factor associated with risk behavior because individuals need a sense of belonging to social networks (Kidān, 2011). The researcher also found out in an individual interview of khat traders which khat traders were asked how likely peer pressure ignites youth to consume khat, 50% responded very likely, 33.3% said likely while 16.7% do not know. The study also interrogated whether youth chew khat because some of their family members consume khat so that 12.2% strongly agreed, 31.1% agreed that they chew because members of their families consume other 26.7% replied undecided while other 14.4% disagreed and the rest 15.6% strongly disagreed that they chew because of their family backgrounds. The researcher also asked the khat traders in an individual interview what was the reason youth continue chewing, 33.3% said to fit among their peers, another 33.3% said to pass time, 25% said curiosity and 8.3% responded other things. Similarly, youth were asked if they chew khat to remain with their peers 25.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that youth consume khat to stay with their peers, 46.7% agreed, 6.7% undecided, 13.3% disagreed and 7.8% of the respondents replied they strongly disagreed. The major reasons claimed for initiation and continuation of Khat chewing were peer pressure and stress reduction. A focus group discussion by Garowe youth stated that youth continue to chew to remain among the peer or show some respect to their friends because most of their time they take with their friends.

#### **4.1.4. Influence of perceived benefits on khat consumption among youth**

The final variable of the study was to find out influence of perceived benefit on khat consumption among youth. The study asked the youth if they chew to enhance the work performance so that 24.4% responded strongly agreed, 26.7% agreed, 16.6% undecided, correspondingly 19% disagreed while minor of 13.3% strongly disagreed that khat is chewed in the perception of performance enhancement. Youth were questioned whether they chew khat to pass the time which 20% strongly agreed, other 39% agreed, whereas 14.4% said undecided also 23.3% disagreed and 3.3% strongly disagreed that youth chew khat to pass a time. The researcher also conducted an individual interview for khat traders in Garowe responded that 25% chew to pass time. Furthermore, a focus group discussion which the researcher has implemented, the youth mentioned that youth they chew to kill the time instead hosting stress and depression. The respondents were asked if they chew to relief fatigue which 20% of the respondents strongly agreed that youth chew to relief fatigue, 58.9 with highest percentage agreed, whereas 13.3% said undecided furthermore 2.2% disagreed and 5.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed that khat is chewed to relief fatigue. The

researcher also found out that 16.7% chew to relief fatigue after conducting individual interview for khat traders in Garowe.

## **5. Conclusions**

The conclusions coming out from the findings of the research that sought to find out the factors influencing khat consumption among youth in Garowe were summarized below based on the purpose of the study. The purpose of the study was to investigate factors influencing khat consumption among youth in Garowe Puntland Somalia.

The study found out that the cost of buying khat triggers consumption of the youth in Garowe, Puntland. Most of the youth finds a bundle of khat to be cheap while the drugs such as, marijuana, cocaine, alcohol, and heroine are illegal in Somalia. Khat is free to chew and is the most accessible drug in Somali market which can be found in a small bundle which the youth can buy khat. Youth manages to buy khat in different ways such as spending their pocket money, spending their wages or salary, sometimes friends buy each other while other times they buy khat on credit. These issues pave the way consumption of khat among the youth in Garowe.

Unemployment is one of the main challenges faced by the Somali youth. Majority of the respondents in this study were unemployed. Most of the respondents in the study said that most of the youth consume khat due to idleness because they have nothing else to do but only to spend most of their time on searching and chewing khat. Youth believe that there are few opportunities in the country and they have fewer hopes to better opportunities so that unemployment is one of the main initiators khat consumption among youth in Garowe.

According to the findings of the study, peer pressure is the most significant trigger of youth to chew. Majority of the respondents said that youth start chewing with their friends, youth commence consuming khat to celebrate holiday festivals such as Eids, national days, graduation ceremonies etc. the youth also mentioned that they consume khat to fit among their friends. Others said that they are respecting their friends so that they preferred to keep chewing. Youth also want to remain their peers so that it became necessary to chew to be similar to the other members of the group who are also chewing.

Youth believe that there are many benefits of chewing. Half of the respondents of the study claimed that they chew or youth chew to enhance their work. So, that they believe that

chewing enhances the efficiency of the work. Youth chew khat to stay alert at night while guarding while other consume the day to do a lot more job than usual. Youth also consume khat to pass time as majority of the respondents revealed in this study. They chew to kill the time rather than hosting a lot of stress and depression so that when they chew they get in euphoria atmosphere that eliminates anxiety and despair. Moreover, youth consume khat to relief fatigue after doing tough works. They believe that the euphoria of the khat reliefs the exhaustions gained from the work.

### **5.1. Recommendations**

The recommendations of this study are based on the conclusions of the challenges identified by the respondents who participated in the study. To address the problem of khat consumption among youth, the study recommends the following:

1. Controlling the pocket money and income earned given to youth.
2. Creating job opportunities and skill trainings to the youth
3. Enhancing youth recreational centers such as, sports to entertain youth to be alternatives of chewing.
4. Taking awareness and mobilization on adverse impact of khat consumption.

### **5.2. Suggestions for further research**

From the findings of this research, the researcher recommends follow up studies on the following topics:

1. Study should be done to evaluate the role of unemployment on khat consumption.
2. A study should be done on the factors that influence the youth to take each of the other drugs of abuse.
3. Same study can be conducted on another area to compare the findings

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