

The Doomed Future: An Analysis of The impact of ‘Muguka’ Abuse on University Students’ Academic Performance: A Case of Machakos and Kitui Counties, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The problem of *miraa* (khat) abuse and its derivatives has been an area of concern in Kenya in the last decade. The previous studies carried out in this area revealed that the abuse of *muguka*, a derivative of *miraa* has been on the increase at the university level in Kenya. The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of *muguka* abuse among university students in Machakos and Kitui Counties. Specifically, the study was set to establish the prevalence of *muguka* chewing at the university level according to gender and locality of students’ residence in Kenyan universities, to establish the relationship between *muguka* abuse and students’ academic performance and to find out the challenges faced by university students abusing *muguka*. The study used descriptive survey design. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used in the study. The sampling matrix comprised of 400 respondents; 344 students, 30 lecturers, 20 Heads of Departments and 6 student counselors. The study used two research instruments; a questionnaire and an interview. The data was analyzed using measures of central tendency. The findings of the study were; the prevalence of *muguka* abuse according to gender was male students 43.6% and female students 3.65%. The students residing outside the university hostels had a prevalence of 67.5% whereas those staying in the university hostels had a prevalence of 22.6%. The students abusing *muguka* faced variety of problems; poor academic performance poor class attendance and indiscipline problems. The study recommends that university managements should promote primary prevention of *muguka* abuse through strengthening the Counseling departments.

Keywords: Abuse, Academic Performance, Challenges, Prevalence

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