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EXPLORING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN KHAT USE AND PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOMS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Journal:	BMJ Open
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2022-061865
Article Type:	Original research
Date Submitted by the Author:	10-Feb-2022
Complete List of Authors:	Edwards, Betsy; University of Birmingham, Atkins, Naomi; University of Birmingham
Keywords:	PSYCHIATRY, MENTAL HEALTH, Substance misuse < PSYCHIATRY, PUBLIC HEALTH, Adult psychiatry < PSYCHIATRY
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Keywords: khat, psychiatric symptoms, mental health, review, meta-analysis

Word count (excluding title page, references, figures and tables): 3184

Abstract

Objectives: Consumption of the drug khat is high across East Africa and the South-Western Arabian Peninsula despite evidence for its adverse psychiatric effects. This systematic review aims to explore cross-sectional research in the field to determine the strength of the association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms.

Methods: Six databases were searched in October 2021 - Ovid Medline, Embase, APA PsycInfo, CINAHL, Scopus and Proquest - using the following search terms: "khat" OR "qat" OR "qaad" OR "catha" OR "miraa" OR "mairungi" AND "depression" OR "anxiety" OR "mania" OR "psych" OR "schiz*" OR "mental" OR "hallucinations" OR "delusions" OR "bipolar". Eligible studies were cross-sectional studies of any population or setting comparing the prevalence of psychiatric symptoms in long-term or dependent khat users with non-users. The quality of each study was appraised by the Newcastle-Ottawa scale. A meta-analysis was planned using a random effects model to produce an odds ratio with 95% confidence intervals - using the Mantel-Haenszel method - alongside an I² statistic to represent heterogeneity. The quality of this meta-analysis would be appraised using the GRADE scoring system.

Results: 35 studies were eligible for inclusion. Meta-analysis suggests that khat use is associated with an 122% increased prevalence of psychiatric symptoms (OR = 2.22, 95% CIs 1.76-2.79, p<0.00001, GRADE score: 'very low'). The high heterogeneity of the meta-analysis (I^2 =92%) suggests that variables not explored within this review also contribute to the differences between the studies, limiting confidence in the effect estimate.

INTRODUCTION

The stimulant drug khat consists of the buds and leaves of the plant *Catha edulis*, an evergreen shrub highly prevalent in East Africa and the South-Western Arabian Peninsula [1-2]. Ethiopia is the world's largest exporter of khat, however its consumption is highest in Yemen where up to 90% of adult males and 50% of adult females chew khat for three to four hours per day [3-5]. Within its local regions, khat chewing has been a cultural tradition for many generations and is thought to increase sociability, concentration, energy and spirituality [2, 6-7].

Psychiatric symptoms have been recognised as a consequence of khat use for several decades [8-9]. Milder psychological consequences related to its use include anxiety, restlessness, insomnia and dysphoric mood, all of which can reduce quality of life [2, 8-11]. More severe psychological harms associated with its use include psychosis and depression, which in some cases have resulted in acts of suicide and homocide [8-12]. Users most at risk of these sequelae are those abusing larger amounts of khat - some studies have provided evidence for a dose-dependent relationship - and those with pre-existing psychiatric disorders [8-10].

The association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms is supported by a large base of evidence, mostly of cross-sectional research. This systematic review aims to use these cross-sectional studies to investigate the strength of the identified association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms. This will help to guide further research in the field, and to evaluate the need for any widespread intervention for khat users, e.g. increased education about potential psychiatric side effects.

METHODS

The protocol for this systematic review can be found on Prospero, with registration number CRD42020224510 [13]. Originally, this systematic review had two objectives; to investigate the strength of the association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms, and secondly to investigate the role of trauma within this relationship. Due to the vast amount of literature in the field, the second objective was removed from the protocol to ensure that the findings would be suitable for one single review. It is recommended that a follow-up review should be conducted to explore the role of trauma.

This review followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines at all times [14]. Ethical approval was not necessary as only secondary data was used.

Patient and Public Involvement

No members of the public or patients were involved in the design of this systematic review.

Literature Search

A literature search was carried out independently by authors BE and NA in October 2021 using the following search terms:

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"khat" OR "qat" OR "qaad" OR "catha" OR "miraa" OR "mairungi" AND
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"depression" OR "anxiety" OR "mania" OR "psych" OR "schiz*" OR "mental" OR "hallucinations" OR "delusions" OR "bipolar"

These search terms encompass all previously reported psychiatric symptoms associated with khat, and include all predominant cultural variations of the term 'khat' as identified by the Medical Subject Headings Thesaurus (MeSH) [15]. Advice was provided by the library team at the University of Birmingham. Note that studies surrounding suicidality were excluded, as suicidality is often but not always associated with psychiatric dysfunction [16]. Disagreements between the authors were discussed in person. Removal of duplicates was automated for the databases Ovid MEDLINE, Embase and APA PsycInfo, and was performed manually for the remaining databases.

Six electronic databases were searched. Five of these were databases of published literature: Ovid MEDLINE, Embase, APA PsycInfo, CINAHL and Scopus. Additionally, Proquest was searched to obtain any relevant grey literature.

Study Eligibility

The literature search used the following inclusion criteria:

- Population: adults (aged 18+)
- Exposure: long-term or dependent khat use
- Comparator: no khat use or non-dependent khat use*
- Outcome: prevalence of psychiatric symptoms in khat users and prevalence of psychiatric symptoms in non-users

- Study design: cross-sectional studies; note that mixed-method studies are considered eligible but only the cross-sectional data will be considered for the review
- Language: all
- Publication type: must be a complete study but no restriction on publication status
- Setting: all

Each potentially eligible study was compared to a checklist of the above criteria to determine whether or not it should be included within the review.

*Note that non-dependent khat use was only considered a suitable comparator for studies where the exposure group were dependent khat-users, where both dependence and non-dependence were validated by a recognised tool such as the Severity of Dependence Scale (SDS).

The literature search used the following exclusion criteria:

- Population: children, animals
- Exposure: substance abuse other than khat
- Comparator: 'substance users' where khat use is not specifically described
- Outcome: neurobehavioural processes, withdrawal symptoms, suicide, substance use disorders
- Study design: any study design other than cross-sectional, e.g. case control, randomised controlled trial, case report, review
- Language: no exclusion criteria
- Publication type: unfinished studies including abstract only, conference abstracts, letters, retracted articles, book chapters
- Setting: no exclusion criteria

Data Collection and Quality Assessment

A summary of findings table - see Supplementary Material 1 - was created to present the following study features: population, sample, criteria for 'khat user', psychiatric measure, effect estimate. In addition, the quality of each primary study (e.g. risk of bias due to inadequate reporting methods or missing data) was assessed using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale (see Supplementary Material 2)[17-18]. Data was collected manually by both authors independently, with any disagreements between the independent assessments resolved by discussion.

Synthesis of Findings

The prevalence of khat-users and non-users with psychiatric symptoms from each study was entered into a meta-analysis using the software Revman, provided by the Cochrane organisation. After inputting all dichotomous values, this software created a forest plot of odds ratios, each with 95% confidence intervals, using the Mantel-Haenszel method [19]. A random effects model was used as this assumes that the outcome is normally distributed rather than always the same, hence attributing the differences between studies to both chance and genuine variation [19]. An I² statistic was given to indicate variability between studies, as this is again recommended by the Cochrane organisation [20].

A subgroup analysis will also be included, grouping studies investigating similar symptoms. An odds ratio and I² statistic will be provided for each subgroup, as well as a chi-squared test and p-value for overall subgroup differences.

A sensitivity analysis will be conducted to look for any studies that are prominent outliers. Each study will be removed from the meta-analysis one at a time, and the odds ratio, 95% confidence intervals, I² value and p-value reported within a table.

The quality of the meta-analysis was evaluated using the GRADE (Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluations) framework [21].

RESULTS

Included and Excluded Studies

The PRISMA flow chart in Figure 1 shows the number of studies included and excluded at each stage of the literature search [14]. When searching the relevant databases, 1641 results were found that included the relevant terms within their title or abstract. After removing duplicates, this number was reduced to 616.

Each title and abstract were screened, and 567 results were removed for the following reasons:

- 119 were not research studies, e.g. these included conference abstracts, letters, and newspaper/magazine articles
- 30 were animal studies
- 71 were reviews, including systematic reviews and meta-analyses
- 20 were case studies or case reports
- 4 were case control studies or randomised controlled trials
- 11 were qualitative studies
- 312 did not explore the relationship between khat use and psychiatric symptoms

49 studies were read in full in order to determine their eligibility. Of these, 14 were excluded for the following reasons:

- 9 explored both khat use and psychiatric symptoms but not their prevalence [22-30]
- 4 did not report khat-use alone, and instead reported substance use or equivalent [31-34]
- 1 only reported the prevalence of khat use alongside 'three or more psychiatric issues' [10]

35 studies were included in the final review [7, 35-68].

Summary of Included Studies

The summary of findings table – Supplementary Material 1 – contains the effect estimates of each individual study, alongside each study's characteristics (i.e., target population, sample, and methods of measuring khat use and psychiatric symptoms).

A subsequent table - Supplementary Material 2 - provides information regarding the quality of each primary study, assessed using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale [17-18]. According to Mekuriaw et al. 2020, a score of 5/10 indicates a medium-quality study whilst a score of

6/10 indicates a high-quality study [69]. In this systematic review, the average quality score was 6.8, with a range of 4-8. No issues due to missing data arose.

Symptoms Explored within Included Studies

The included studies explored a range of symptoms in association with khat usage. These have been grouped into the following subgroups:

- 12 studies explored symptoms of 'depression'; this subgroup includes 'depressive symptoms', 'feeling depressed', diagnoses of depression, and the presence of 'depressive episodes' within the last month
 - 6 studies explored symptoms of anxiety; this subgroup includes 'feeling anxious', 'obsession-compulsion', 'phobic anxiety' and diagnoses of anxiety disorders
- 16 studies explored symptoms of 'psychological distress'; this subgroup includes 'psychological stress', 'psychological distress', 'mental distress', and 'stress'
- 6 studies explored symptoms of psychotic disorders; this subgroup includes 'psychotic symptoms', 'psychosis', 'paranoid ideation', 'psychoticism', and diagnoses of 'schizophrenia'
- 1 study explored psychopathy
- 5 studies explored unspecified psychiatric symptoms and disorders; this subgroup includes common mental disorders', 'psychiatric dysfunction', 'mental illness' and 'mental problems that prevent employment or household tasks'
- No studies explored bipolar disorder or mania

Meta-Analysis

The meta-analysis of the 35 included studies can be seen in Figure 2. This meta-analysis suggests that khat use is associated with an 122% increased prevalence of psychiatric symptoms (OR = 2.22, 95% CIs 1.76-2.79, p<0.00001). All but one of the 35 studies were scored as at least medium or high-quality when assessed using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale; the remaining study scored 4/10 - where 5/10 is medium-quality - and had a very small weighting within the meta-analysis of 1.5%. The heterogeneity of this meta-analysis is 92%, which is classified as high [20-21].

Subgroup Analysis

The accompanying subgroup analysis - grouping studies investigating similar symptoms - shows that there is a statistically significant subgroup effect of p=0.04; usually, a p-value of less than 0.1 is regarded as a statistically significant subgroup effect [70]. This means that khat use has a varying association with the symptoms investigated.

The largest association found is between khat use and symptoms of psychological distress (OR = 2.56, 95% CIs 1.82-3.61, p<0.00001). A higher odds ratio can be found in the psychopathology category (OR = 6.10, 95% CIs 2.81-13.28), but as this is only comprised of one single study this has not been considered as a subgroup.

The two subgroups of symptoms with the lowest odds ratios are anxiety (OR = 1.68, 95% CIs 0.93-3.04) and psychotic symptoms/disorders (OR = 1.47, 95% CIs 0.93-2.30). As the confidence intervals cross the null value in both of these subgroups, this meta-analysis suggests that neither anxiety nor psychotic symptoms are associated with khat use.

Every subgroup - with the exception of psychopathy - has at least five studies to support it, a reasonable amount of supporting evidence. Most of these subgroups have a high level of

heterogeneity, apart from the subgroup of unspecified psychiatric symptoms/disorders, which has a heterogeneity of 0%.

Sensitivity Analysis

A sensitivity analysis of the meta-analysis data was conducted and can be seen in Supplementary Material 3. Each study was removed in turn and the odds ratio, confidence intervals, I² value and p-value recorded. Removing the depression data from Wondemagegn et al. 2017 caused the largest change in odds ratio, from 2.22 to 2.11. The I² value for heterogeneity remained at 91% or 92% regardless of which study was removed, and the p-value was always <0.00001.

GRADE Analysis

The meta-analysis shown in Figure 2 received a GRADE score of 'very low' [21]. As per guidance in the GRADE handbook, the score automatically starts as 'low', because the meta-analysis focuses on observational studies [21]. The score was then downgraded for the following two reasons: 'inconsistency of results' demonstrated by the high I² statistic, and 'indirectness of evidence' due to the differences between studies including populations investigated and methods of measuring khat use [21]. The score was not downgraded for publication bias, as despite occasional outliers, overall the funnel plot for the included studies was fairly symmetrical (see Figure 3).

DISCUSSION

Our findings suggest that khat use is associated with a 122% increased prevalence in overall psychiatric symptoms (OR = 2.22, 95% CIs 1.76-2.79, p<0.00001). When subgrouped into groups of similar symptoms, the strongest relationship is between khat use and psychological distress (OR = 2.56, 95% CIs 1.82-3.61, p<0.00001). Khat use and psychopathology potentially have a relatively large association as well (OR = 6.10, 95% CIs 2.81-13.28), however only one study investigated this symptom so more supporting evidence would be needed to make a conclusion. The subgroup analyses also found that the associations between khat use and anxiety, and khat use and psychotic symptoms/disorders is statistically insignificant (OR = 1.68, 95% CIs 0.93-3.04 and OR = 1.47, 95% CIs 0.93-2.30 respectively).

The overall prevalence of psychiatric symptoms and disorders within this systematic review is 29%. Most of the included studies were conducted in Africa, which the WHO estimates has a 5.5% prevalence of common mental disorders [71]. The prevalence of symptoms is higher in this review than expected, as many of the studies focus on populations with an increased risk of mental illness, e.g. students, migrants, combatants, refugees, prisoners and psychiatric outpatients [72-76].

This review has many methodological strengths, as it follows the PRISMA guidelines for systematic reviews [14]. However, the usefulness of the review is limited by the high heterogeneity of its meta-analysis (I²=92%)[20]. High heterogeneity indicates that the studies combined within the meta-analysis may be too different to meaningfully compare [20]. The differences in symptoms studied may have some contribution towards this, but the heterogeneity values of each subgroup analyses are also high, e.g. the depression subgroup has an I² value of 95%; as inconsistencies are present between studies investigating similar symptoms, other differences in variables must be present, which make the overall effect estimates uncertain. These differences may include the populations studied, the differences in

 defining khat use, and the varying methods of measuring psychiatric symptoms within the same subgroup. These variables should be investigated in future reviews.

Similarly, the meta-analysis of this systematic review has a GRADE score of 'very low', indicating that the effect estimate produced may be inaccurate [21]. Having said this, a large contributor to this low score is the focus on observational studies rather than experimental data, the latter of which would be both pragmatically and ethically inappropriate for this research topic [77]. It can therefore be argued that the GRADE method of scoring underappreciates the importance of observational research in certain fields including substance abuse.

This review provides evidence for a statistically significant association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms in general, and more specifically symptoms of depression and psychological distress. It would be useful for further research within this field to investigate the causality of this association, most probably through the use of cohort studies. This review provides evidence for a statistically significant association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms. It would be useful for further research in this field to investigate the causality of this relationship, most probably through cohort studies. Many researchers hypothesise that khat use is the cause of psychiatric symptoms, with its active ingredients distorting the brain's cytoarchitecture and therefore increasing one's vulnerability to mental illness [78-80]. Contrastingly, other researchers suggest that those with mental illness are more likely to chew khat as an attempt to self-medicate their symptoms [81]. Long-term cohort studies would be able to assess which variable predisposes the other, monitor psychiatric symptoms that take time to manifest, and investigate how the prevalence of psychiatric symptoms changes as the duration of khat use increases.

CONCLUSIONS

This review combines 35 cross-sectional studies in the field of khat use, and using metaanalysis suggests that khat use is associated with a 122% increase in the prevalence of psychiatric symptoms, particularly psychiatric distress. The high heterogeneity of the metaanalysis suggests that variables not explored within this review also contribute to the differences between the studies explored; these variables could provide a good focus for future research. Furthermore, the evidence base is unclear about causality within this relationship, another important focus for future research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to acknowledge Dr Keith Brain (University of Birmingham), who originally suggested the topic idea, and Dr Jesse Young (University of Melbourne) for his feedback and enthusiasm towards the project. The authors would also like to thank the library team at the University of Birmingham for their help with the literature search. Finally, the authors would like to thank the Leslie James Topham fund (University of Birmingham Medical School) for providing funding towards living costs whilst this research was conducted.

COMPETING INTERESTS

No competing interests.

FUNDING

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This review did not require ethical approval as no primary data was collected.

CONTRIBUTORSHIP STATEMENT

BE planned the review and created the protocol. BE and NA completed the independent literature searches. BE created the summary of findings table, and completed the meta-analyses including sensitivity and subgroup analyses. BE and NA independently assessed the quality of the included studies using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale, and BE completed the GRADE scoring. BE wrote the systematic review.

DATA SHARING STATEMENT

Raw data can be found within each primary research study using the references provided.

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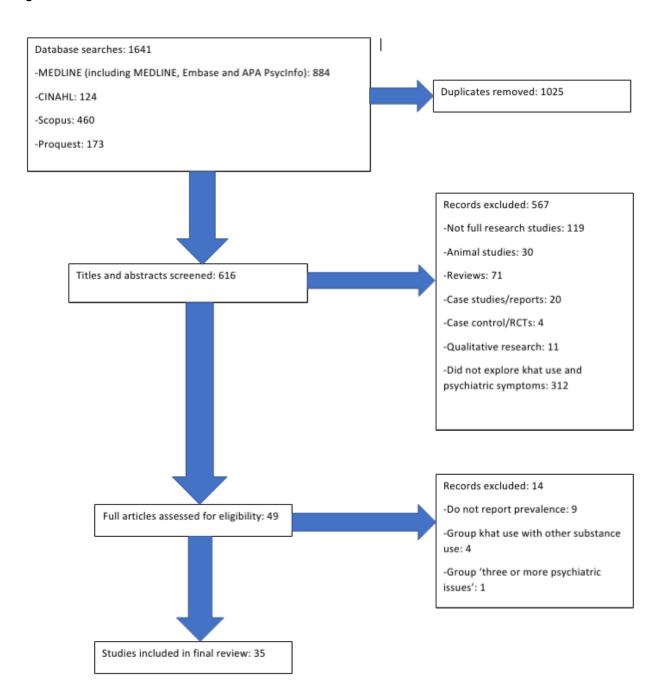
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Legends:

- Figure 1: PRISMA flow chart of included and excluded studies
- Figure 2: Meta-analysis of included studies
- Figure 3: funnel plot of included studies

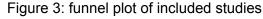
Figure 1: PRISMA flow chart of included and excluded studies

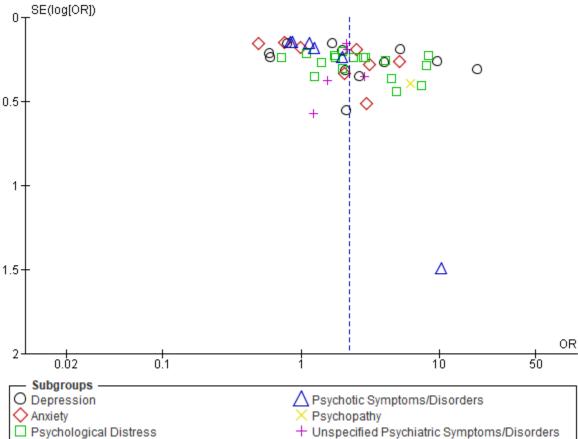


		sers	Non-us	sers		otudies Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
tudy or Subgroup	Khat us Events		Events		Weight	M-H, Random, 95% CI	M-H, Random, 95% CI
.1.1 Depression							
tnafie et al. 2020	41	207	80	271	2.2%	0.59 [0.38, 0.91]	
edaso et al. 2018 reyessa et al. 2008	36 71	48 1199	153 44	287 1432	1.9% 2.2%	2.63 [1.31, 5.26] 1.99 [1.35, 2.92]	
I-Setouhy et al. 2016	13	35	7	32	1.5%	2.11 [0.71, 6.23]	
laile and Sahile, 2021	67	108	40	276	2.1%	9.64 [5.77, 16.11]	
lambisa et al. January 2020	84	241	190	781	2.2%	1.66 [1.22, 2.27]	-
lelaku et al. 2021	37	56	99	204	2.0%	2.07 [1.11, 3.83]	
lossie et al. 2016	104	200	67	390	2.2%	5.22 [3.56, 7.65]	-
luman 2003	326	538	168	254	2.2%	0.79 [0.58, 1.08]	T
vondemagegn et al. 2017 eshaw and Mossie, 2017	108 54	172 145	15 27	182 209	2.0% 2.1%	18.79 [10.19, 34.65] 4.00 [2.36, 6.77]	
enebe et al. 2015	58	235	46	130	2.1%	0.60 [0.38, 0.95]	
ubtotal (95% CI)		3184		4448	24.7%	2.39 [1.34, 4.28]	•
otal events	999		936				
leterogeneity: Tau² = 0.98; Chi' est for overall effect: Z = 2.93 ((P < 0.0	0001); I²	= 95%		
.1.2 Anxiety							
tnafie et al. 2020	146	207	133	271	2.2%	2.48 [1.69, 3.64]	-
l-Setouhy et al. 2016	20	35	10	32	1.6%	2.93 [1.08, 8.00]	
lelaku et al. 2021	41	56	117	204	2.0%	2.03 [1.06, 3.91]	
luman 2003	203	538	141	254	2.2%	0.49 [0.36, 0.66]	<u></u>
luman 2003 luman 2003	410 248	538 538	194 135	254 254	2.2% 2.2%	0.99 [0.70, 1.41] 0.75 [0.56, 1.02]	<u> </u>
ondemagegn et al. 2017	79	172	26	182	2.1%	5.10 [3.05, 8.51]	
eshaw and Mossie, 2017	43	145	25	209	2.1%	3.10 [1.79, 5.37]	
ubtotal (95% CI)		2229		1660	16.6%	1.68 [0.93, 3.04]	◆
otal events leterogeneity: Tau² = 0.66; Chiï		l, df = 7 (781 P < 0.00	001); l²=	93%		
est for overall effect: Z = 1.72 (P = 0.09)						
.1.3 Psychological Distress draro et al. 2019	119	139	69	161	2.0%	7.93 [4.50, 13.99]	
uraro et al. 2019 tnafie et al. 2020	33	207	57	271	2.1%	0.71 [0.44, 1.14]	
elew et al. 1997	100	326	28	554	2.1%	8.31 [5.32, 13.00]	
achew et al. 2015	63	114	279	722	2.2%	1.96 [1.32, 2.92]	
amena et al. 2011	49	136	108	317	2.2%	1.09 [0.72, 1.66]	+
essie et al. 2013	59	185	34	245	2.1%	2.91 [1.80, 4.68]	
lajure et al. 2020 Iambica et al. March 2021	37 49	57 59	14 146	70 278	1.8% 1.9%	7.40 [3.33, 16.46]	
lambisa et al. March 2021 Iersi et al. 2017	35	108	78	462	2.1%	4.43 [2.16, 9.10] 2.36 [1.47, 3.78]	
elemu et al. 2020	70	111	145	293	2.1%	1.74 [1.11, 2.73]	
erebih et al. 2017	18	26	84	264	1.7%	4.82 [2.02, 11.53]	
lekuriaw et al. 2020	39	71	149	647	2.1%	4.07 [2.47, 6.73]	
lelaku et al. 2021	30	56	75	204	2.0%	1.98 [1.09, 3.61]	
oboka et al. 2015	52	93	124	296	2.1%	1.76 [1.10, 2.81]	
		72	98	324	2.1%	1.38 [0.81, 2.36]	
oboka et al. 2017	27	40	71	160			
oboka et al. 2017 ariku et al. 2017	19	40 145	71 41	168	1.9%	1.24 [0.62, 2.47]	
oboka et al. 2017 ariku et al. 2017 eshaw and Mossie, 2017		40 145 1945	71 41	168 209 5485	1.9% 2.1% 34.8%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52]	
oboka et al. 2017 ariku et al. 2017	19	145		209	2.1%		•
oboka et al. 2017 ariku et al. 2017 eshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI)	19 59 858 == 116.49	145 1945 3, df = 16	41 1600	209 5485	2.1% 34.8%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52]	•
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oboka et al. 2017 ariku et al. 2017 eshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events leterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect Z = 5.41 (.1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis	19 59 858 == 116.49 P < 0.000	145 1945 3, df = 16 01)	41 1600 (P < 0.0	209 5485 0001); I²	2.1% 34.8% = 86%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52]	•
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Page 19 of 31		136/bmjo			
1 2 3 4 5	ipplementary Mater	ial 1: Summary of Fir	ndings Table		136/bmjopen-2022-061865
7 Study 8	Population	Sample	Criteria for 'Khat User'	Psychiatric Measure*	Results of 5
Ahmed and 10 Emad 1998 12[35]	Somali immigrants living in Liverpool	Convenience sample of 52 Khat users = 27	Unspecified	GHQ-28	- 11/27 khat users & perienced psychiatric dysfunction, compared to 9/25 hon-users (p=0.72)
14Belew et al. 152000 [36] 16 17 18 19	Individuals aged 15+ from a specified community in Ethiopia	Random sample of 1200 participants Khat users = 326	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last 30 days	SRQ	- 100/326 khat-use perienced mental distress, compared to 28/55a fear-users (OR = 8.31, 5.20-13.31, p=0.00) - 89/294 long-term sees (over 2 years) experienced mental distress, compared to 28/554 never-users (OR = 8.14, 5.06-13.17, p=0.00)
21Numan 2003 22[37] 23 24 25	Yemeni population	Random sample of 800 participants Khat users = 67.9%	Frequent use – 4-6 days a week Heavy use – use everyday	SCL-90	- No significant differences (at p<0.05) in psychiatric symptoms: obsession-compulsion, depression, anxiety, paranoid ideation, symptoticism - Khat users had less phobic anxiety (37.7% vs 55.5%, p<0.05)
7Odenwald et 28al. 2005 [38] 29 30 31 32	'General population' of Somalia	Random sample of 4854 Khat users = 78% of those with psychiatric issues, 4% of those without	Number of bundles in previous week recorded	CIDI, PANSS	- More positive screened individuals (mental problems severe enough to provent employment or household tasks) chewed khat than regative screened individuals (46.6% vs 29.9%, p<0.001
35Deyessa et 36al. 2008 [39] 37 38 39	Women of reproductive age in rural Ethiopia	Random sample of 3200 Khat users = 40%	At least once per week	CIDI, ICD-10	- 5.9% of regular users had had a depressive episode in the last 12 months, compared to 3.1% of non-regular users (less than once per month) and 3.6% of non-users - AOR for regular vs non-users is 1.35 (0.92-1.99)

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Page 20 of 31

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Odenwald et al. 2009 [40] 8 10 1Damena et 3al. 2011 [41] 4 15 16 17	Armed combatants in Somali Adults in Jimma City, Ethiopia	8124 armed individuals (not random as still in conflict at time of study) Khat users = 36.4% Random sample of 1308 Khat users = 38%	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last week Uses WHO-validated substance abuse questionnaire, but unsure what is classified as 'khat user'	CIDI SRQ-20	- 8.9% of khat users experienced paranoid ideation compared to 2.6% of mon-users on 25 Lines of the compared to 2.6% of the c
8 Fulloch et 9 fulloch 2012 [42] 21 22 23 24	Adult Somali khat users living in South London	Secondary data based on 172 eligible Somali mental health patients Khat users = 47%	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last year	Diagnosis provided by service records	- 28/30 khat users (position of the compared to 2/30 non-users (position of the compared to the compared to the compared to the compared to 2/30 non-users (position of the compared to the compared to 2/30 non-users (position of the compared t
Dessie et al. 272013 [43]	Students in Ethiopia	Random sample of 413 Khat users = 43%	Anyone who has ever used khat	SRQ-20	- 59/185 khat users experienced mental distress compared to 34/245 non-pasers (AOR = 2.23, 1.14-4.35, p<0.05)
29Fekadu 2014 30[44] 31 32 33 34	Holy water users from Entoto St Mary Church, Ethiopia	409 individuals selected using systematic random sampling Daily khat users = 12.7%	Khat use recorded as 'never' or 'daily', although no indication of the duration of daily usage	BPRS	- 42/53 daily khat-see experienced mental illness compared to 208/363 non-users (AOR = 2.85, 1.42-5.70)
36Widmann et 37al. 2014 [7] 38 39	Male Somali refugees living in a disadvantaged	Convenience sample of 33 users and 15 comparable non-users	SDS	CIDI, MINI	- 24% of khat users had psychotic symptoms compared to 0% of non-chewers (p 0.044)
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Page 21 of 31			ВМЈ О	pen	cted by copyright, inc	136/bmjopen-202
1 2 3 4	urban settlement in Kenya	Khat users = 69%			yright, inc	7-2022-061
Dachew et 7 al. 2015 [45] 8 9 10	Undergraduate students from Gondar University, Ethiopia	872 patients selected using stratified, random sampling Current khat users = 16%	Questionnaire identifying 'current use'	SRQ-20		users had mental distress, compared of the com
2 3Soboka et al. 142015 [46] 15 16	HIV patients at a specified facility in South West Ethiopia	All eligible adults invited to participate Sample of 389 Khat users = 93	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last month	K-6	compared to 124 5 1.10-2.82)	Prienced psychological distress, 256 non-users (OR = 1.76, 256 non-users)
⁸ Zenebe et al. 20 ² 015 [47] 21 22 23 24	Psychiatric outpatients in Ethiopia	365 adult psychiatric outpatients of a specified hospital within 2-week study period Khat use = 64.4%	Anyone who has used khat within the last 30 days	Psychiatric diagnosis from psychiatric records	compared to 46/13	da major depressive disorder d
26 27El-Setouhy 2set al. 2016 29[48] 30	Jazan region of Saudi Arabia	Volunteer sample of 70 males Khat dependent = 52.2%	SDS	Q16	non-dependent uses (ers felt anxious compared to 10/32
Hersi et al. 22017 [49]	Students in Somaliland	Stratified random sample of 570 Khat users = 19%	Use in last 12 months	SRQ-20	1	reperienced psychological distress, from-users (AOR = 2.87,
35Hunduma et 36al. 2017 [50] 37 38	Adults in Ethiopia	Random sample of 968 Khat users = 48%	Khat use in last 3 months	SRQ-20	- 86/434 khat users ha	a common mental disorder, or non-users (OR = 2.16, 1.47-3.16)

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Page 22 of 31

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Kerebih et al. 2017 [51]	Medical students in Ethiopia	Stratified random sample of 305 Khat users = 9%	Anyone who has ever used khat	SRQ-20	- 18/26 khat users experienced mental distress compared to 84/264 non-esers (AOR = 6.91, 1.88-25.42, p=0.004)
Mossie et al. 2016 [52]	Adults in Ethiopia	Random sample of 650 Khat users = 34%	Khat use within the last 30 days	BDI	- 104/200 khat use had depression compared to 67/390 non-users (AOR = 20.07, 5.56-18.25)
Soboka et al. 12017 [53] 3 4 5	Adults with hypertension at a specified clinic in South West Ethiopia	All eligible adults invited to participate Sample of 396 Khat users = 79	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last month	K-6	- 27/72 current khaz-lisers experienced psychological distress, compared of 98/324 non-users
⁶ Tariku et al. ⁷ 2017 [54] 8 9	Students at a health sciences college in Ethiopia	Stratified random sample of 317 Khat users = 13%	Anyone who has ever used khat	Not specified	- 19/40 khat users experienced mental distress compared to 71/168 non-eserg (AOR = 2.29, 1.04-5.04)
1Wondemage 2gn et al. 32017 [55]	Adolescents and adults in Nekemte town, West Ethiopia	Random sample of 359 participants Khat users = 49%	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last 30 days	DSM-IV	- 108/172 users experienced depression compared to 15/182 non-users (AOR = 25.36, 12.13-53.05, p=0.000) - 79/172 users experienced anxiety compared to 26/182 non-users (AOR = 3.42, 3.04-9.96, p=0.000)
Syeshaw and Mossie 2017 8[56] 9 0	Staff of Jimma University, Ethiopia	Random sample of 363 Khat users = 41%	Anyone who has ever used khat	DASS-21	- 54/145 khat users had depression compared to 27/209 non-users (AOK = 2.99, 2.57-9.69) - 43/145 khat users had anxiety compared to 25/209 non-users (AOK = 2.94, 1.52-5.66) - 59/145 khat users had psychological stress compared to 41/209 non-users (AOR = 2.78, 1.49-5.21)
Bedaso et al. 2018 [57] 5 6	Prisoners in Ethiopia	Random sample of 335 Khat users = 14%	Unspecified, but appears to be chewing khat before incarceration	PHQ-9	- 36/48 khat users ad Sepression, compared to 153/287 non-users (AO): = 2.48, 1.05-5.86, p=0.039)
Adraro et al. 82019 [58]	Prisoners in Ethiopia	Random sample of 300 Khat users = 46%	Anyone who has ever used khat	SRQ-20	- 119/139 khat users experienced mental distress, compared to 69/16 non-users (AOR = 4.33, 2.02-9.27, p<0.001
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Ongeri et al. 2019 [59]	Khat-growing regions of Kenya	Random sample of 831 individuals aged 10+ Khat users = 36.8%	Unspecified	PSQ	- 18.6% of khat users experienced at least one psychotic symptom compared to 55.6% of non-users (p=0.26)
Atnafie et al. 102020 [60] 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	Khat chewers in Amhara region of Ethiopia	Convenience sample of 508 participants Khat dependent = 43%	SDS	DASS-21	- 33/207 khat-dependent users experienced stress compared to 57/27 (September 1.70, 0.98-2.95) - 146/207 khat-dependent users experienced anxiety compared to 133/2 (September 1.57-3.81) - 41/207 khat-dependent users experienced depression compared to 80/27 (September 1.57-2.61)
⁸ Hajure et al. ₂₀ 2020 [61] 21 22	Healthcare providers in Ethiopia	Convenience sample of 127 Khat users = 45%	Khat use in last three months	IES-R	- 37/57 khat users rienced psychological stress, compared to 14 benon-users (AOR = 5.74, 1.83-18.1, p<0.001)
³ Hambisa et ⁴ al. 2020 [62] ²⁵ ²⁶	Students in Ethiopia	Random sample of 1022 Khat users = 24%	Khat use within last month	BDI	- 84/241 khat users had depressive symptoms compared to 190/781 nongusers (OR = 1.60, 1.22-2.27)
28Kelemu et 29al. 2020 [63] 30 31 32	Students in Ethiopia	Random sample of 404 Khat users = 27%	Anyone who has ever used khat	SRQ-20	- 70/111 khat users experienced mental distress, compared to 145/293 none (AOR = 3.09, 1.74-5.50)
34Mekuriaw et 35al. 2020 [64] 36 37	Pregnant women in Ethiopia	Random sample of 845 Khat users = 11%	Investigates usage but unclear what quantifies a 'current khat user'	SRQ-20	- 39/71 khat users experienced mental distress, compared to 149/647 non-users (AOR = 3.57, 2.06-6.18, p=0.001)
⁸ Yitayih et al. ⁹ 2020 [65]	Prisoners in a correctional	Random sample of 336 Khat users = 138		PCL:SV	- 32/138 khat users met the criteria for psychopathy, compared to 9/191 in on-users

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	institution in Jimma, Ethiopia				- 16/138 khat users had mental illness, compared to
Haile and Sahile, 2021 [66]	Adult primary healthcare attendees in Ethiopia	Stratified and systematic random sample of 384 Khat users = 39%	Unspecified	PHQ-9	- 67/108 khat users have depressive symptoms, compared to 40/276 non-users (AOR = 5.43, 2.55-11.56, p<0.01)
Hambisa et 3al. 2021 [67] 4 5	Hospitalised patients in Ethiopia	Systematic sample of 337 Khat users = 18%	Unspecified; discusses 'current khat use' and 'khat use in the previous three months'	K10	- 49/59 khat users a perienced psychological distress, compared to 145 8 non-users (AOR = 4.16, 1.67-10.35)
Melaku et al. 72021 [68] 8 9 10 11	Medical students in Ethiopia	Systematic random sample of 260 Khat users = 22%	Anyone who has ever used khat	DASS-21	- 37/56 khat users and depression, compared to 99/204 non-users (OR 307, 1.11-3.83) - 41/56 khat users and anxiety, compared to 117/204 non-users (OR 30/30, 1.06-3.91) - 30/56 khat users and asychological stress, compared to 75/204 non-users (OR 1.99, 1.09-3.61)

*List of abbreviated screening tools: GHQ-28 (General Health Questionnaire-28, for mental disorders), RQ20 (Self-Reporting Questionnaire - 20 items, for mental distress), SCL-90 (Symptom Checklist - 90 items, for psychological symptoms), CIDI (Composite International Diagnostic Interview - for psychiatric disorders), PANSS (Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale - for schizophrenia), ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases, 10th revision), BPRS (Brief Psychiatric Rauge Scale - for depression, anxiety and hallucinations), SDS (Severity of Dependence Scale), MINI (Mini International Esychiatric Review), K-6 (Kessler Psychological Distress Scale - 6 questions), Q16 (Questionnaire 16 for neurotoxic symptoms), BDI Beck's Depression Inventory), DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition), DASS-21 (The Debression, Anxiety and Stress Scale - 21 Items), PHQ-9 (Patient Health Questionnaire - 9 items, for depression), PSQ (Psychosis Screening Questionnaire), IES-R (Impacts of Events Scale - Revised), DAST-10 (Drug Abuse Screening Test-10), PCL:SV (Psychogorath) Checklist: Screening Version), K10 (Kessler Psychological Distress Scale - 10 questions)

For peer review only - http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/guidelines.xhtml Stress Scale - 21 Items), PHO-9 (Patient Health Questionnaire - 9 items, for depression), PSO (Psychosis screening Questionnaire),

136/bmjopen-2022-061865

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Supplementary Material 2: Quality of assessment of primary studies using Newcastle-Ottawa scale [16-17].

Study	Selection (/5)	Comparabilit y (/2)	Outcome (/3)	Overall Score (/10)	Comments of 25 U.S. Eu.
Ahmed and Emad 1998 [21]	1	2	1	4	- Non-random sample - No justification of sample size - 100% response rate - Questionnaire described properties - Questionnaire described properties - No significant difference of the properties - No significant difference of the properties - No significant difference of the properties - Uses self-report - No details of statistical provided - No details of statistical provided - No pustification of sample size - Size - Output Description - No details of statistical provided - No justification of sample size - Size - Output Description - No details of statistical provided - No justification of sample size - Output Description -
Belew et al. 2000 [22]	3	2	2	7	- Insufficient details of from esponders; no baseline characteristics provided - Questionnaire described in limited detail but methods do define current, past and never that use
Numan 2003 [23]	3	1	1	5	- Sample size not justified 2 - Eight non-respondents executed because of incomplete data - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - Only controlled variable seems to be Yemeni nationality - No confidence intervals included
Odenwald et al. 2005 [24]	3	2	2	7	- Sample size not justified of - No details of non-responders - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - Uses clinical interviews - No confidence intervals included

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Deyessa et al. 2008 [25]	3	2	3	8	- Providers reasons for Fon Sesponders but not characteristics - Non-validated but des Fib and method of khat usage data collection - Clinical interview
Odenwald et al. 2009 [26]	2	2	2	6	- Sample size not justified - No details of non-responding of the Non-validated but desorth and method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Damena et al. 2011 [27]	4	1	1	6	- Providers reasons for ponts esponders but not characteristics - Uses WHO-validated the buse measurement tool despite definition of 'khat user's like unclear within the study - Only controlled variables lems to be region (Jimma City) - Uses self-report
Tulloch et al. 2012 [28]	4	2	2	8	- Entire eligible sample <u>nesed</u> - Missing information described method of khat usage data collection - No confidence intervals included
Dessie et al. 2013 [29]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but deseribed method of khat usage data collection - Uses self report
Fekadu 2014 [30]	2	2	2	6	- No details of non-respenders - Khat usage data collection described insufficiently: 'daily' or 'never' - Uses self-report
Widmann et al. 2014 [7]	2	2	3	7	- Opportunity sample - Sample size not justified - No details of non-responders - Clinical interview

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BMJ Open

 Page 28 of 31

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9 of 31				cted by	
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					- Uses self-report <u>no</u> 65
Hajure et al. 2020 [47]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but deserbed method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Hambisa et al. 2020 [48]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but desembled method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Kelemu et al. 2020 [49]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responding of the control of th
Mekuriaw et al. 2020 [50]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-respectively - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Yitayih et al. 2020 [51]	4	2	2	8	- Provides reasons for non-responders but not characteristics - Uses DAST-10 for khar abuse -Uses self-report
Haile and Sahile, 2021 [52]	3	2	2	7	- 100% response rate
Hambisa et al. 2021 [53]	2	2	2	6	- Providers reasons for converse but not characteristics - No description of what quantifies a 'current khat user' - Uses self-report
Melaku et al. 2021 [54]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report

Supplementary Material 3: Sensitivity Analysis

Study Excluded	Odds Ratio	95% CIs	l² Value (%)	P-Value
Depression		•	<u> </u>	
Atnafie et al. 2020	2.28	1.81-2.87	91	<0.00001
Bedaso et al. 2018	2.21	1.75-2.79	92	<0.00001
Deyessa et al. 2008	2.23	1.76-2.82	92	<0.00001
El-Setouhy et al. 2016	2.22	1.76-2.80	92	<0.00001
Haile and Sahile 2021	2.14	1.71-2.69	91	<0.00001
Hambisa et al 2020	2.24	1.77-2.84	92	<0.00001
Melaku et al. 2021	2.22	1.76-2.81	92	<0.00001
Mossie et al. 2016	2.17	1.73-2.73	91	<0.00001
Numan 2003	2.27	1.80-2.87	91	<0.00001
Wondemagegn et al. 2017	2.11	1.69-2.64	91	<0.00001
Yeshaw and Mossie 2017	2.19	1.74-2.76	92	<0.00001
Zenebe et al. 2015	2.28	1.81-2.87	91	<0.00001
Anxiety		•	•	•
Atnafie et al. 2020	2.22	1.75-2.80	92	<0.00001
El-Setouhy et al. 2016	2.21	1.75-2.79	92	<0.00001
Melaku et al. 2021	2.22	1.76-2.81	92	<0.00001
Numan 2003	2.29	1.83-2.86	91	<0.00001
Numan 2003	2.26	1.79-2.86	92	<0.00001
Numan 2003	2.27	1.80-2.87	91	<0.00001
Wondemagegn et al. 2017	2.18	1.73-2.74	91	<0.00001
Yeshaw and Mossie 2017	2.20	1.75-2.78	92	<0.00001
Psychological Distress				
Adraro et al. 2019	2.16	1.72-2.71	91	<0.00001

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Dachew et al. 2015 2.23 1.76-2.82 92 <0.00001 Damena et al. 2011 2.26 1.78-2.85 92 <0.00001 Dessie et al. 2013 2.21 1.75-2.79 92 <0.00001 Hajure et al. 2020 2.17 1.72-2.73 92 <0.00001 Hambisa et al. 2021 2.19 1.74-2.76 92 <0.00001 Hersi et al. 2017 2.22 1.75-2.80 92 <0.00001 Kelemu et al. 2020 2.3 1.77-2.82 92 <0.00001 Kerebih et al. 2017 2.19 1.74-2.76 92 <0.00001 Kerebih et al. 2017 2.19 1.74-2.76 92 <0.00001 Mekuriaw et al. 2020 2.19 1.74-2.76 92 <0.00001 Soboka et al. 2021 2.23 1.76-2.81 92 <0.00001 Soboka et al. 2015 2.23 1.76-2.81 92 <0.00001 Soboka et al. 2017 2.24 1.78-2.83 92 <0.00001 Tariku et al. 2017 2.24 1.78-2.83 92 <0.00001 Tariku et al. 2017 2.25 1.78-2.84 92 <0.00001 Psychotic symptoms/disorders Numan 2003 2.26 1.78-2.86 92 <0.00001 Numan 2003 2.27 1.80-2.87 91 <0.00001 Odenwald et al. 2019 2.25 1.78-2.85 92 <0.00001 Tulloch et al. 2019 2.25 1.78-2.85 92 <0.00001 Tulloch et al. 2019 2.25 1.78-2.85 92 <0.00001	Atnafie et al. 2020	2.27	1.80-2.87	92	<0.00001
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Dessie et al. 2013 2.21 1.75-2.79 92 <0.00001 2	Dachew et al. 2015	2.23	1.76-2.82	92	<0.00001
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Kelemu et al. 2020 2.23 1.77-2.82 92 <0.00001	Hambisa et al. 2021	2.19	1.74-2.76	92	<0.00001 g
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Soboka et al. 2017 2.24 1.78-2.83 92 <0.00001	Kelemu et al. 2020	2.23	1.77-2.82	92	<0.00001 <0.00001 <0.00001 <0.00001 <0.00001 <0.00001 co.00001 co.00001
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	Numan 2003	2.27	1.80-2.87	91	<0.00001 gg
	Odenwald et al. 2009	2.27	1.80-2.87	91	<0.00001 and
	Ongeri et al. 2019	2.25	1.78-2.85	92	
	Tulloch et al. 2012	2.14	1.70-2.68	91	<0.00001
Zenebe et al. 2015 2.23 1.76-2.82 92 <0.00001	Widmann et al. 2014	2.20	1.75-2.77	92	
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Yitayih et al. 2020 2.18 1.73-2.74 92 <0.00001 Unspecified psychiatric symptoms/disorders	Psychopathy	•	•	1	'
Unspecified psychiatric symptoms/disorders	Yitayih et al. 2020	2.18	1.73-2.74	92	<0.00001
	Unspecified psychiatric symptoms/	disorders	-	4	'

Ahmed and Emad 1998	2.24	1.78-2.83	92	<0.00001
Fedaku et al. 2014	2.21	1.75-2.79	92	<0.00001
Hunduma et al. 2017	2.22	1.76-2.81	92	<0.00001
Odenwald et al. 2005	2.23	1.76-2.82	92	<0.00001
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EXPLORING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN KHAT USE AND PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOMS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Journal:	BMJ Open
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2022-061865.R1
Article Type:	Original research
Date Submitted by the Author:	10-Jun-2022
Complete List of Authors:	Edwards, Betsy; University of Birmingham, Atkins, Naomi; University of Birmingham
Primary Subject Heading :	Mental health
Secondary Subject Heading:	Global health, Mental health, Public health
Keywords:	PSYCHIATRY, MENTAL HEALTH, Substance misuse < PSYCHIATRY, PUBLIC HEALTH, Adult psychiatry < PSYCHIATRY

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Keywords: khat, psychiatric symptoms, mental health, review, meta-analysis

Word count (excluding title page, references, figures and tables): 3284

Abstract

Objectives: Consumption of the drug khat is high across East Africa and the South-Western Arabian Peninsula despite evidence for its adverse psychiatric effects. This systematic review aims to explore cross-sectional research in the field to determine the strength of the association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms

Methods: Six databases were searched in October 2021 - Ovid Medline, Embase, APA PsycInfo, CINAHL, Scopus and Proquest - using the following search terms: "khat" OR "qat" OR "qaad" OR "catha" OR "miraa" OR "mairungi" AND "depression" OR "anxiety" OR "mania" OR "psych*" OR "schiz*" OR "mental" OR "hallucinations" OR "delusions" OR "bipolar". Eligible studies were cross-sectional studies of any population or setting comparing the prevalence of psychiatric symptoms in long-term or dependent khat users with non-users. The quality of each study was appraised by the Newcastle-Ottawa scale. A meta-analysis was planned using a random effects model to produce an odds ratio with 95% confidence intervals - using the Mantel-Haenszel method - alongside an I² statistic to represent heterogeneity. The quality of this meta-analysis was appraised using the GRADE scoring system.

Results: 35 studies were eligible for inclusion (total participants = 31893), spanning 5 countries (Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, UK). Meta-analysis suggests that khat use is associated with an 122% increased prevalence of psychiatric symptoms (OR = 2.22, 95% CIs 1.76-2.79, p<0.00001, GRADE score: 'very low').

Conclusions: The high heterogeneity of the meta-analysis is likely due to the wide variation between the studies within the evidence base. To perform a more accurate systematic review, further primary studies are needed with standardised measurements of variables, particularly khat consumption.

Strengths and Limitations of this Review

- Follows all guidelines listed in the PRISMA 2020 Checklist for systematic reviews
- Searches published and unpublished literature using search terms that include all commonly-used variations of 'khat' from around the world
- Includes both dependent and non-dependent khat use due to poor definitions of khat usage in primary research studies
- Includes both psychiatric symptoms and psychiatric disorders

INTRODUCTION

The stimulant drug khat consists of the buds and leaves of the plant *Catha edulis*, an evergreen shrub highly prevalent in East Africa and the South-Western Arabian Peninsula [1-2]. Ethiopia is the world's largest exporter of khat, however its consumption is highest in Yemen where up to 90% of adult males and 50% of adult females chew khat for three to four hours per day [3-5]. Within its local regions, khat chewing has been a cultural tradition for many generations and is thought to increase sociability, concentration, energy and spirituality [2, 6-7].

Psychiatric symptoms have been recognised as a consequence of khat use for several decades [8-9]. Milder psychological consequences related to its use include anxiety, restlessness,

insomnia and dysphoric mood, all of which can reduce quality of life [2, 8-11]. More severe psychological harms associated with its use include psychosis and depression, which in some cases have resulted in acts of suicide and homocide [8-11]. Users most at risk of these sequelae are those abusing larger amounts of khat - some studies have provided evidence for a dose-dependent relationship - and those with pre-existing psychiatric disorders [8-10].

The evidence base exploring the association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms - which consists mostly of cross-sectional studies - is currently small and insufficient [12]. Studies often vary in terms of populations and regions studied, measurement of khat use, symptoms explored and quality of methodology. Hence, results can be inconsistent, making it difficult for academics, policy makers and the public to understand the psychiatric risks of khat consumption. This systematic review aims to investigate the strength of the association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms by collating the evidence we have so far, in order to guide further research in the field and to evaluate the need for any potential interventions for khat users, e.g. increased education about potential psychiatric side effects.

METHODS

The protocol for this systematic review can be found on Prospero, with registration number CRD42020224510 [13]. Originally, this systematic review had two objectives; to investigate the strength of the association between khat use and psychiatric symptoms, and secondly to investigate the role of trauma within this relationship. Due to the vast amount of literature in the field, the second objective was removed from the protocol to ensure that the findings would be suitable for one single review. It is recommended that a follow-up review should be conducted to explore the role of trauma.

This review followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines at all times [14]. Ethical approval was not necessary as only secondary data was used.

Patient and Public Involvement

No members of the public or patients were involved in the design of this systematic review.

Literature Search

A literature search was carried out independently by authors BE and NA in October 2021 using the following search terms:

"khat" OR "qat" OR "qaad" OR "catha" OR "miraa" OR "mairungi" AND

"depression" OR "anxiety" OR "mania" OR "psych*" OR "schiz*" OR "mental" OR "hallucinations" OR "delusions" OR "bipolar"

These search terms encompassed all previously reported psychiatric symptoms associated with khat, and included all predominant cultural variations of the term 'khat' as identified by the Medical Subject Headings Thesaurus (MeSH) [15]. Advice was provided by the library team at the University of Birmingham. Note that studies surrounding suicidality were

excluded, as suicidality is often but not always associated with psychiatric dysfunction [16]. Disagreements between the authors were discussed in person. Removal of duplicates was automated for the databases Ovid MEDLINE, Embase and APA PsycInfo, and was performed manually for the remaining databases.

Six electronic databases were searched. Five of these were databases of published literature: Ovid MEDLINE, Embase, APA PsycInfo, CINAHL and Scopus. Additionally, Proquest was searched to obtain any relevant grey or unpublished literature. The full search strategy for each database can be found in Supplementary Material 1.

Study Eligibility

The literature search used the following inclusion criteria:

- Population: adults (aged 18+)
- Exposure: long-term or dependent khat use
- Comparator: no khat use or non-dependent khat use*
- Outcome: prevalence of psychiatric symptoms in khat users and prevalence of psychiatric symptoms in non-users
- Study design: cross-sectional studies; note that mixed-method studies are considered eligible but only the cross-sectional data will be considered for the review
- Language: all
- Publication type: must be a complete study but no restriction on publication status
- Setting: all
- Date of publication: all

Each potentially eligible study was compared to a checklist of the above criteria to determine whether or not it should be included within the review.

*Note that non-dependent khat use was only considered a suitable comparator for studies where the exposure group were dependent khat-users, where both dependence and non-dependence were validated by a recognised tool such as the Severity of Dependence Scale (SDS).

The literature search used the following exclusion criteria:

- Population: children, animals
- Exposure: substance abuse other than khat
- Comparator: 'substance users' where khat use is not specifically described
- Outcome: neurobehavioural processes, withdrawal symptoms, suicide, substance use disorders
- Study design: any study design other than cross-sectional, e.g. case control, randomised controlled trial, case report, review
- Language: no exclusion criteria
- Publication type: unfinished studies including abstract only, conference abstracts, letters, retracted articles, book chapters
- Setting: no exclusion criteria

Data Collection and Quality Assessment

A summary of findings table - see Supplementary Material 2 - was created to present the following study features: population, sample, criteria for 'khat user', psychiatric measure, effect estimate. In addition, the quality of each primary study (e.g. risk of bias due to inadequate reporting methods or missing data) was assessed using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale (see Supplementary Material 3) [17-18]. Data was collected manually by both authors independently, with any disagreements between the independent assessments resolved by discussion.

Synthesis of Findings

 The prevalence of khat-users and non-users with psychiatric symptoms from each study was entered into a meta-analysis using the software Revman, provided by the Cochrane organisation. After inputting all dichotomous values, this software created a forest plot of odds ratios, each with 95% confidence intervals, using the Mantel-Haenszel method [19]. A random effects model was used as this assumes that the outcome is normally distributed rather than always the same, hence attributing the differences between studies to both chance and genuine variation [19]. An I² statistic was given to indicate variability between studies, as this is again recommended by the Cochrane organisation [20].

A subgroup analysis was also included, grouping studies investigating similar symptoms. An odds ratio and I² statistic was provided for each subgroup, as well as a chi-squared test and p-value for overall subgroup differences.

A sensitivity analysis was conducted to look for any studies that are prominent outliers. Each study was removed from the meta-analysis one at a time, and the odds ratio, 95% confidence intervals, I² value and p-value reported within a table.

The quality of the meta-analysis was evaluated using the GRADE (Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluations) framework [21].

RESULTS

Included and Excluded Studies

The PRISMA flow chart in Figure 1 shows the number of studies included and excluded at each stage of the literature search [14]. When searching the relevant databases, 1641 results were found that included the relevant terms within their title or abstract. After removing duplicates, this number was reduced to 616.

Each title and abstract were screened, and 567 results were removed for the following reasons:

- 119 were not research studies, e.g. these included conference abstracts, letters, and newspaper/magazine articles
- 30 were animal studies
- 71 were reviews, including systematic reviews and meta-analyses
- 20 were case studies or case reports
- 4 were case control studies or randomised controlled trials
- 11 were qualitative studies
- 312 did not explore the relationship between khat use and psychiatric symptoms

49 studies were read in full in order to determine their eligibility. Of these, 14 were excluded for the following reasons:

- 9 explored both khat use and psychiatric symptoms but not their prevalence [22-30]
- 4 did not report khat-use alone, and instead reported substance use or equivalent [31-34]
- 1 only reported the prevalence of khat use alongside 'three or more psychiatric issues' [10]

35 studies were included in the final review [7, 35-68].

Summary of Included Studies

The summary of findings table – Supplementary Material 2 – contains the effect estimates of each individual study, alongside each study's characteristics (i.e., target population, sample, and methods of measuring khat use and psychiatric symptoms).

A subsequent table - Supplementary Material 3 - provides information regarding the quality of each primary study, assessed using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale [17-18]. According to Mekuriaw et al. 2020, a score of 5/10 indicates a medium-quality study whilst a score of 6/10 indicates a high-quality study [69]. In this systematic review, the average quality score was 6.8, with a range of 4-8. No issues due to missing data arose.

Symptoms Explored within Included Studies

The included studies explored a range of symptoms in association with khat usage. These have been grouped into the following subgroups:

- 12 studies explored symptoms of 'depression'; this subgroup includes 'depressive symptoms', 'feeling depressed', diagnoses of depression, and the presence of 'depressive episodes' within the last month
- 6 studies explored symptoms of anxiety; this subgroup includes 'feeling anxious', 'obsession-compulsion', 'phobic anxiety' and diagnoses of anxiety disorders
- 16 studies explored symptoms of 'psychological distress'; this subgroup includes 'psychological stress', 'psychological distress', 'mental distress', and 'stress'
- 6 studies explored symptoms of psychotic disorders; this subgroup includes 'psychotic symptoms', 'psychosis', 'paranoid ideation', 'psychoticism', and diagnoses of 'schizophrenia'
- 1 study explored psychopathy
- 5 studies explored unspecified psychiatric symptoms and disorders; this subgroup includes common mental disorders', 'psychiatric dysfunction', 'mental illness' and 'mental problems that prevent employment or household tasks'
- No studies explored bipolar disorder or mania

Meta-Analysis

The meta-analysis of the 35 included studies can be seen in Figure 2. This meta-analysis suggests that khat use is associated with an 122% increased prevalence of psychiatric symptoms (OR = 2.22, 95% CIs 1.76-2.79, p<0.00001). All but one of the 35 studies were scored as at least medium or high-quality when assessed using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale; the remaining study scored 4/10 - where 5/10 is medium-quality - and had a very small weighting within the meta-analysis of 1.5%. The heterogeneity of this meta-analysis is 92%, which is classified as high [20-21].

Subgroup Analysis

 The accompanying subgroup analysis - grouping studies investigating similar symptoms - shows that there is a statistically significant subgroup effect of p=0.04; usually, a p-value of less than 0.1 is regarded as a statistically significant subgroup effect [70]. This means that khat use has a varying association with the symptoms investigated.

The largest association found is between khat use and symptoms of psychological distress (OR = 2.56, 95% CIs 1.82-3.61, p<0.00001). A higher odds ratio can be found in the psychopathology category (OR = 6.10, 95% CIs 2.81-13.28), but as this is only comprised of one single study this has not been considered as a subgroup.

The two subgroups of symptoms with the lowest odds ratios are anxiety (OR = 1.68, 95% CIs 0.93-3.04) and psychotic symptoms/disorders (OR = 1.47, 95% CIs 0.93-2.30). As the confidence intervals cross the null value in both of these subgroups, this meta-analysis suggests that neither anxiety nor psychotic symptoms are associated with khat use.

Every subgroup has at least five studies to support it, a reasonable amount of supporting evidence. Most of these subgroups have a high level of heterogeneity, apart from the subgroup of unspecified psychiatric symptoms/disorders, which has a heterogeneity of 0%. Note that whilst psychopathology has been listed as a separate symptom, it is not to be considered as a subgroup as only one study investigated this.

Sensitivity Analysis

A sensitivity analysis of the meta-analysis data was conducted and can be seen in Supplementary Material 4. Each study was removed in turn and the odds ratio, confidence intervals, I² value and p-value recorded. Removing the depression data from Wondemagegn et al. 2017 caused the largest change in odds ratio, from 2.22 to 2.11. The I² value for heterogeneity remained at 91% or 92% regardless of which study was removed, and the p-value was always <0.00001.

GRADE Analysis

The meta-analysis shown in Figure 2 received a GRADE score of 'very low' [21]. As per guidance in the GRADE handbook, the score automatically starts as 'low', because the meta-analysis focuses on observational studies [21]. The score was then downgraded for the following two reasons: 'inconsistency of results' demonstrated by the high I² statistic, and 'indirectness of evidence' due to the differences between studies including populations investigated and methods of measuring khat use [21]. The score was not downgraded for publication bias, as despite occasional outliers, overall the funnel plot for the included studies was fairly symmetrical (see Figure 3).

DISCUSSION

Our findings suggest that khat use is associated with a 122% increased prevalence in overall psychiatric symptoms (OR = 2.22, 95% CIs 1.76-2.79, p<0.00001). When subgrouped into groups of similar symptoms, the strongest relationship is between khat use and psychological distress (OR = 2.56, 95% CIs 1.82-3.61, p<0.00001). The subgroup analyses also found that the associations between khat use and anxiety, and khat use and psychotic

symptoms/disorders is statistically insignificant (OR = 1.68, 95% CIs 0.93-3.04 and OR = 1.47, 95% CIs 0.93-2.30 respectively).

The overall prevalence of psychiatric symptoms and disorders within this systematic review is 29%. Most of the included studies were conducted in Africa, which the WHO estimates has a 5.5% prevalence of common mental disorders [71]. The prevalence of symptoms is higher in this review than expected, as many of the studies focus on populations with an increased risk of mental illness, e.g. students, migrants, combatants, refugees, prisoners and psychiatric outpatients [72-76].

This review has a strong, high-quality methodology, following all of the PRISMA guidelines for systematic reviews [14]. However, it can be argued that the evidence base surrounding khat use and psychiatric symptoms is too small to merit the pooling of data. This is reflected in the high heterogeneity of the meta-analysis conducted (I²=92%), which suggests that the studies analysed may be too different to meaningfully compare [20]; these differences are likely to include the wide variety of populations and regions studies, the differences in khat consumption measurement, and the differences in psychiatric symptom explored. It is also reflected in the low GRADE score of the meta-analysis, however this scoring system favours experimental rather than observational data, which would be both pragmatically and ethically inappropriate when investigating substance use [77].

Despite these concerns, this review is important as it is currently the largest systematic review of khat usage and psychiatric symptoms. A 122% estimated increased prevalence of psychiatric symptoms - in khat users - is easy for laypersons to understand, eliminating their need to evaluate various studies of varying quality against each other. Furthermore, the issues highlighted by this review are important for guiding further research. Whilst the results provided by this review are unlikely to be entirely accurate, they can provide a valid estimate until the evidence base expands enough to provide a systematic review with much lower heterogeneity.

One issue in particular is the variation in measuring khat consumption between studies. This review is limited as it has included both non-dependent and dependent khat use, which are likely to have varying association with psychiatric symptoms. Many studies simply described khat users as those who had chewed within the previous week or previous month, hence it was often difficult to distinguish between current users, long-term users and dependent users. This likely contributes to the high heterogeneity of the meta-analysis of this review, and should be considered in future primary and secondary research within this field.

Another limitation of this review is that it includes both psychiatric symptoms and psychiatric disorders under the term 'psychiatric symptoms'. Out of the 35 included studies, 28 measured psychiatric symptoms using screening tools, 5 measured psychiatric disorders using diagnostic tools, and 2 used a mixture of both screening and diagnostic tools. This may also have contributed to the high heterogeneity of the meta-analysis.

One final limitation of this review is that it cannot demonstrate causation between the two variables. It would be useful for future research to include cohort studies Many researchers hypothesise that khat use is the cause of psychiatric symptoms, with its active ingredients distorting the brain's cytoarchitecture and therefore increasing one's vulnerability to mental illness [78-80]. Contrastingly, other researchers suggest that those with mental illness are more likely to chew khat as an attempt to self-medicate their symptoms [81]. Long-term cohort studies would be able to assess which variable predisposes the other, monitor psychiatric symptoms that take time to manifest, and investigate how the prevalence of psychiatric symptoms changes as the duration of khat use increases.

 This review combines 35 cross-sectional studies in the field of khat use, and using metaanalysis suggests that khat use is associated with a 122% increase in the prevalence of psychiatric symptoms, particularly psychiatric distress. The high heterogeneity of the metaanalysis is likely due to the wide variation between the studies within the evidence base. To perform a more accurate systematic review, further primary studies are needed with standardised measurements of variables, particularly khat consumption. Furthermore, the evidence base is unclear about causality within this relationship, another important focus for future research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to acknowledge Dr Keith Brain (University of Birmingham), who originally suggested the topic idea, and Dr Jesse Young (University of Melbourne) for his feedback and enthusiasm towards the project. The authors would also like to thank the library team at the University of Birmingham for their help with the literature search. Finally, the authors would like to thank the Leslie James Topham fund (University of Birmingham Medical School) for providing funding towards living costs whilst this research was conducted.

COMPETING INTERESTS

No competing interests.

FUNDING

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This review did not require ethical approval as no primary data was collected.

CONTRIBUTORSHIP STATEMENT

BE planned the review and created the protocol. BE and NA completed the independent literature searches. BE created the summary of findings table, and completed the meta-analyses including sensitivity and subgroup analyses. BE and NA independently assessed the quality of the included studies using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale, and BE completed the GRADE scoring. BE wrote the systematic review.

DATA SHARING STATEMENT

 Raw data can be found within each primary research study using the references provided.

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Legends:

- Figure 1: PRISMA flow chart of included and excluded studies
- Figure 2: Meta-analysis of included studies
- Figure 3: funnel plot of included studies

Figure 1: PRISMA flow chart of included and excluded studies

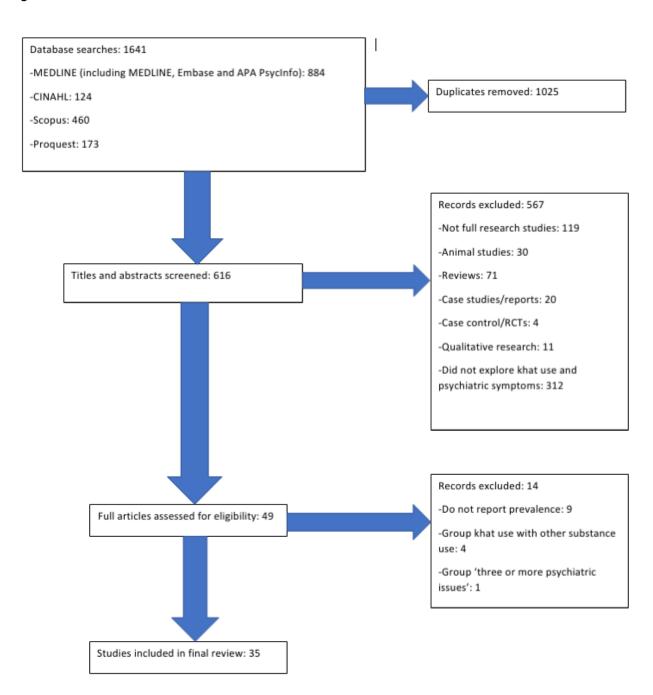
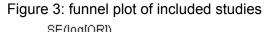
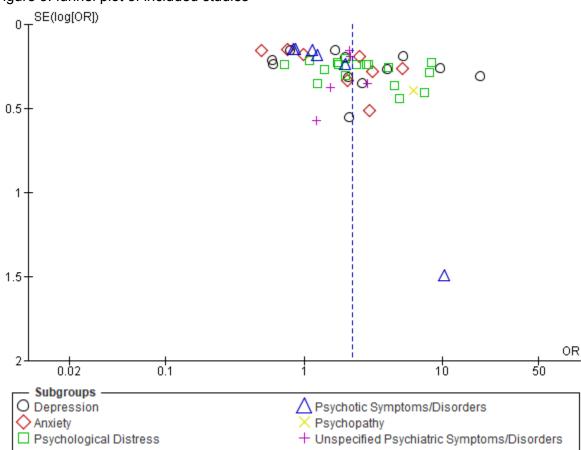


Figure 2: Mote analysis of included studies

	Khat us	sers	Non-us	sers		Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
tudy or Subgroup	Events		Events		Weight	M-H, Random, 95% CI	M-H, Random, 95% CI
1.1 Depression							
nafie et al. 2020	41	207	80	271	2.2%	0.59 [0.38, 0.91]	
edaso et al. 2018	36	48	153	287	1.9%	2.63 [1.31, 5.26]	
eyessa et al. 2008	71	1199	44 7	1432	2.2%	1.99 [1.35, 2.92]	
l-Setouhy et al. 2016 aile and Sahile, 2021	13 67	35 108	40	32 276	1.5% 2.1%	2.11 [0.71, 6.23]	
ambisa et al. January 2020	84	241	190	781	2.1%	9.64 [5.77, 16.11] 1.66 [1.22, 2.27]	
elaku et al. 2021	37	56	99	204	2.0%	2.07 [1.11, 3.83]	
ossie et al. 2016	104	200	67	390	2.2%	5.22 [3.56, 7.65]	
uman 2003	326	538	168	254	2.2%	0.79 [0.58, 1.08]	-
ondemagegn et al. 2017	108	172	15	182	2.0%	18.79 [10.19, 34.65]	
eshaw and Mossie, 2017	54	145	27	209	2.1%	4.00 [2.36, 6.77]	
enebe et al. 2015	58	235	46	130	2.1%	0.60 [0.38, 0.95]	
ubtotal (95% CI)		3184		4448	24.7%	2.39 [1.34, 4.28]	•
otal events	999		936				
eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.98; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 2.93 ((P < 0.0	0001); I²	= 95%		
1.2 Anxiety							
nafie et al. 2020	146	207	133	271	2.2%	2.48 [1.69, 3.64]	—
-Setouhy et al. 2016	20	35	10	32	1.6%	2.93 [1.08, 8.00]	
elaku et al. 2021	41	56	117	204	2.0%	2.03 [1.06, 3.91]	
uman 2003	203	538	141	254	2.2%	0.49 [0.36, 0.66]	
uman 2003	410	538	194	254	2.2%	0.99 [0.70, 1.41]	+
uman 2003	248	538	135	254	2.2%	0.75 [0.56, 1.02]	-
ondemagegn et al. 2017	79	172	26	182	2.1%	5.10 [3.05, 8.51]	
eshaw and Mossie, 2017	43	145	25	209	2.1%	3.10 [1.79, 5.37]	
ubtotal (95% CI)		2229		1660	16.6%	1.68 [0.93, 3.04]	•
otal events	1190		781	0043: 77	. 000		
eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.66; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 1.72 (i, af = 7 (r < 0.00	ມU1); l² =	93%		
1.3 Psychological Distress						7.00 ()	
draro et al. 2019	119	139	69	161	2.0%	7.93 [4.50, 13.99]	_
nafie et al. 2020	33	207	57	271	2.1%	0.71 [0.44, 1.14]	<u> </u>
elew et al. 1997	100	326	28	554	2.1%	8.31 [5.32, 13.00]	
achew et al. 2015 amena et al. 2011	63 49	114 136	279	722	2.2%	1.96 [1.32, 2.92]	
amena et al. 2011 essie et al. 2013	49 59	136	108 34	317 245	2.2% 2.1%	1.09 [0.72, 1.66]	[
essie et al. 2013 ajure et al. 2020	59 37	185 57	34 14	245 70	1.8%	2.91 [1.80, 4.68] 7.40 [3.33, 16.46]	
ambisa et al. March 2021	49	59	146	278	1.9%	4.43 [2.16, 9.10]	
ersi et al. 2017	35	108	78	462	2.1%	2.36 [1.47, 3.78]	
elemu et al. 2020	70	111	145	293	2.1%	1.74 [1.11, 2.73]	
erebih et al. 2017	18	26	84	264	1.7%	4.82 [2.02, 11.53]	
ekuriaw et al. 2020	39	71	149	647	2.1%	4.07 [2.47, 6.73]	
elaku et al. 2021	30	56	75	204	2.0%	1.98 [1.09, 3.61]	
oboka et al. 2015	52	93	124	296	2.1%	1.76 [1.10, 2.81]	
		72	98	324	2.1%	1.38 [0.81, 2.36]	+-
oboka et al. 2017	27						
oboka et al. 2017 ariku et al. 2017	27 19	40	71	168	1.9%	1.24 [0.62, 2.47]	
ariku et al. 2017 eshaw and Mossie, 2017		40 145		209	2.1%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52]	+-
ariku et al. 2017 eshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI)	19 59	40	71 41				-
ariku et al. 2017 eshaw and Mossie, 2017	19 59 858	40 145 1945	71 41 1600	209 5485	2.1% 34.8 %	2.81 [1.75, 4.52]	•
ariku et al. 2017 eshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 5.41 (19 59 858 F= 116.49 (P < 0.000	40 145 1945 I, df= 16	71 41 1600	209 5485	2.1% 34.8 %	2.81 [1.75, 4.52]	•
ariku et al. 2017 seshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau ² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis	19 59 858 i² = 116.49 (P < 0.000 sorders	40 145 1945 I, df = 16 01)	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0	209 5485 0001); I²	2.1% 34.8% = 86%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61]	•
ariku et al. 2017 seshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi set for overall effect: Z = 5.41 (1.1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003	19 59 858 i² = 116.49 (P < 0.000 sorders 228	40 145 1945 1, df = 16 01)	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0	209 5485 0001); I ² 254	2.1% 34.8% = 86%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56]	•
ariku et al. 2017 seshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003	19 59 858 i² = 116.49 (P < 0.000 sorders 228 269	40 145 1945 1, df = 16 01) 538 538	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136	209 5485 0001); l ² 254 254	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17]	+
ariku et al. 2017 seshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity. Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect. Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009	19 59 858 i² = 116.49 (P < 0.000 sorders 228 269 263	40 145 1945 1, df = 16 01) 538 538 538	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136 136	209 5485 0001); I* 254 254 254 254	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12]	*
ariku et al. 2017 subtota (195% CI) ubtota (195% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009 ngeri et al. 2019	19 59 858 F = 116.49 (P < 0.000 sorders 228 269 263 57	40 145 1945 0, df = 16 01) 538 538 538 306	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136 136 82	209 5485 0001); F 254 254 254 254 525	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12] 1.24 [0.85, 1.79]	*
ariku et al. 2017 seshaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009 ngeri et al. 2019	19 59 858 i² = 116.49 (P < 0.000 sorders 228 269 263	40 145 1945 1, df = 16 01) 538 538 538	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136 136	209 5485 0001); * 254 254 254 254 525 30	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2% 0.8%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12] 1.24 [0.85, 1.79] 196.00 [25.77, 1490.50]	
ariku et al. 2017 subtota (195% CI) ubtota (195% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009 ngeri et al. 2019	19 59 858 F = 116.49 (P < 0.000 sorders 228 269 263 57 28	40 145 1945 I, df = 16 01) 538 538 538 538 306 30	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136 136 82 2	209 5485 0001); F 254 254 254 254 525	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12] 1.24 [0.85, 1.79] 196.00 [25.77, 1490.50] 10.33 [0.56, 191.82]	**************************************
ariku et al. 2017 subtova and Mossie, 2017 subtova (95% CI) otal events etertogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi estr for overall effect: Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009 ngeri et al. 2019 sildmann et al. 2014 enebe et al. 2014	19 59 858 F = 116.49 P < 0.000 sorders 228 269 263 57 28 8	40 145 1945 I, df = 16 01) 538 538 538 306 30 33	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136 136 82 2	209 5485 0001); ² 254 254 254 254 525 30 15	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2% 0.8% 0.5%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12] 1.24 [0.85, 1.79] 196.00 [25.77, 1490.50]	
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ariku et al. 2017 ishaw and Mossie, 2017 ibhotal (95% Cl) tal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect. Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009 ngeri et al. 2019 illoch et al. 2012 idmann et al. 2014 enebe et al. 2015 ibhotal (95% Cl) stal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.25; Chi	19 59 868 F = 116.49 P < 0.000 sorders 228 269 263 57 28 8 97 950 F = 40.15,	40 145 1945 1, df = 16 01) 538 538 538 306 30 33 235 2218	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136 136 82 2 0 34	209 5485 00001); ² 254 254 254 525 30 15 130 1462	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2% 0.8% 0.5% 2.1% 12.3%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12] 1.24 [0.85, 1.79] 196.00 [25.77, 1490.50] 10.33 [0.56, 191.82] 1.98 [1.24, 3.17]	
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ariku et al. 2017 subtava and Mossie, 2017 subtava and Mossie, 2017 subtava (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi set for overall effect. Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009 ngeri et al. 2019 alloch et al. 2012 didmann et al. 2014 enebe et al. 2015 subtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.25; Chi set for overall effect. Z = 1.66 (1.5 Psychopathy tayih et al. 2020 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Not applicable est for overall effect. Z = 4.66 (19 59 858 F= 116.49(P < 0.0000 sorders 228 269 263 57 28 8 97 950 F= 40.15, (P = 0.10)	40 145 1945 4, df = 16 (01) 538 538 538 306 30 33 235 2218 4f = 6 (P	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136 136 136 82 2 0 34 489 < 0.000	209 5485 0001); F 254 254 254 525 30 15 130 1462 01); F = 1	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2% 0.5% 2.1% 12.3%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12] 1.24 [0.85, 1.79] 196.00 [25.77, 1490.50] 10.33 [0.56, 191.82] 1.98 [1.24, 3.17] 1.47 [0.93, 2.30]	
ariku et al. 2017 sehaw and Mossie, 2017 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009 ngeri et al. 2019 ulloch et al. 2012 (idmann et al. 2014 nebe et al. 2015 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Tau² = 0.25; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 1.66 (1.5 Psychopathy tayih et al. 2020 ubtotal (95% CI) otal events eterogeneity: Not applicable est for overall effect: Z = 4.56 (1.6 Unspecified Psychiatric	19 59 858 F= 116.49(P < 0.0000 sorders 228 269 263 57 28 8 97 950 F= 40.15, (P = 0.10)	40 145 1945 4, df = 16 (01) 538 538 538 306 30 33 235 2218 4f = 6 (P	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 99 136 136 136 82 2 0 34 489 < 0.000	209 5485 0001); F 254 254 254 525 30 15 130 1462 01); F = 1	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2% 0.5% 2.1% 12.3%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12] 1.24 [0.85, 1.79] 196.00 [26.77, 1490.50] 10.33 [0.56, 191.82] 1.98 [1.24, 3.17] 1.47 [0.93, 2.30] 6.10 [2.81, 13.28] 6.10 [2.81, 13.28]	
ariku et al. 2017 subtotal (95% CI) total events etterogeneity: Tau² = 0.43; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 5.41 (1.4 Psychotic Symptoms/Dis uman 2003 uman 2003 denwald et al. 2009 ngeri et al. 2019 ulloch et al. 2012 idmann et al. 2014 denbed et al. 2015 ubtotal (95% CI) total events etterogeneity: Tau² = 0.25; Chi est for overall effect: Z = 1.66 (1.5 Psychopathy tayih et al. 2020 ubtotal (95% CI) total events eterogeneity: Not applicable eterogeneity: Not applicable eterogeneity: Not applicable eterogeneity: Not applicable eterogeneity overall effect: Z = 4.56 (1.6 Unspecified Psychiatric med and Emad 1998	19 59 858 F= 116.49 P < 0.000 sorders 228 269 263 57 28 8 97 950 F= 40.15, P = 0.10) 32 32 (P < 0.000 Symptom	40 145 1945 4, df = 16 01) 538 538 306 30 235 2218 df = 6 (P	71 41 1600 (P < 0.0 9 9 136 136 82 2 0 34 489 < 0.000 9 9	209 5485 0001); F 254 254 525 30 1462 201); F = 191 191	2.1% 34.8% = 86% 2.2% 2.2% 2.2% 0.5% 2.1% 12.3% 85%	2.81 [1.75, 4.52] 2.56 [1.82, 3.61] 1.15 [0.85, 1.56] 0.87 [0.64, 1.17] 0.83 [0.62, 1.12] 1.24 [0.85, 1.79] 196.00 [25.77, 1490.50] 10.33 [0.56, 191.82] 1.98 [1.24, 3.17] 1.47 [0.93, 2.30] 6.10 [2.81, 13.28] 6.10 [2.81, 13.28]	**************************************
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Supplementary Material 1: Search strategies

Ovid MEDLINE, Embase and APA PsycInfo	Search Strategy
#1	Khat.ab or khat.ti or qat.ab or qat.ti or qaad.ab or qaad.ti or catha.ab or catha.ti or miraa.ab or miraa.ti or mairungi.ab or mairungi.ti
#2	Depression.ab or depression.ti or anxiety.ab or anxiety.ti or bipolar.ab or bipolar.ti or mania.ab or mania.ti or psych*.ab or psych*.ti or schiz*.ab or schiz*.ti or mental.ab or mental.ti or hallucinations.ab or hallucinations.ti or delusions.ab or delusions.ti
#3	1 and 2
CINAHL	
#1	TI khat OR AB khat OR TI qat OR AB qat OR TI qaad OR AB qaad OR TI catha OR AB catha OR TI miraa OR AB miraa OR TI mairungi OR AB mairungi
#2	TI depression OR AB depression OR TI anxiety OR AB anxiety OR TI bipolar OR AB bipolar OR TI mania OR AB mania OR TI psych* OR AB psych* OR TI schiz* OR AB schiz*
#3	TI mental OR AB mental OR TI hallucinations OR AB hallucinations OR TI delusions OR AB delusions
#4	2 OR 3
#5	1 AND 4
Scopus	
#1	(TITLE (khat) OR ABS (khat) OR TITLE (qat) OR ABS (qat) OR TITLE (qaad) OR ABS (qaad) OR TITLE (catha) OR ABS (catha) OR TITLE (miraa) OR ABS (miraa) OR TITLE (mairungi) OR ABS (mairungi))
#2	(TITLE (depression) OR ABS (depression) OR TITLE (anxiety) OR ABS (anxiety) OR TITLE (bipolar) OR ABS (bipolar) OR TITLE (mania) OR ABS (mania) OR TITLE (psych*) OR ABS (psych*) OR TITLE (schiz*) OR ABS (schiz*) OR TITLE (mental) OR ABS (mental) OR TITLE (hallucinations) OR ABS (hallucinations) OR TITLE (delusions) OR ABS (delusions))

#3	1 AND 2	
Proquest		
#1	ab(khat) OR ti(khat) OR ab(qat) OR ti(qat) OR ab(qaad) OR ti(qaad) OR ab(catha) OR ti(catha) OR ab(miraa) OR ti(miraa)	
#2	ab(mairungi) OR ti(mairungi)	
#3	ab(depression) OR ti(depression) OR ab(anxiety) OR ti(anxiety) OR ab(bipolar) OR ti(bipolar) OR ab(mania) OR ti(mania) OR ab(psych*) OR ti(psych*)	
#4	ab(schiz*) OR ti(schiz*) OR ab(mental) OR ti(mental) OR ab(hallucinations) OR ti(hallucinations) OR ab(delusions) OR ti(delusions)	
#5	1 OR 2	
#6	3 OR 4	
#7	5 AND 6 (limit: full texts only)	

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45 46 47 Supplementary Material 2: Summary of Findings Table

Study	Population	Sample	Criteria for 'Khat User'	Psychiatric Measure*	Results of 25
Ahmed and 15 (15 (15 (15 (15 (15 (15 (15 (15 (15	Somali immigrants living in Liverpool	Convenience sample of 52 Khat users = 27	Unspecified	GHQ-28	- 11/27 khat users (p=0.72)
4Belew et al. 52000 [36] 6 7 8 9	Individuals aged 15+ from a specified community in Ethiopia	Random sample of 1200 participants Khat users = 326	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last 30 days	SRQ	- 100/326 khat-users Eperienced mental distress, compared to 28/55 from users (OR = 8.31, 5.20-13.31, p=0.00) - 89/294 long-term (OR = 2 years) experienced mental distress, compared to 28/554 never-users (OR = 8.14, 5.06-13.17, p=0.00)
21Numan 2003 2737] 23 24 25	Yemeni population	Random sample of 800 participants Khat users = 67.9%	Frequent use – 4-6 days a week Heavy use – use everyday	SCL-90	- No significant differences (at p<0.05) in psychiatric symptoms: obsession-compulsion, depression, anxiety, paranoid ideation, symptoticism - Khat users had less phobic anxiety (37.7% vs 55.5%, p<0.05)
Odenwald et al. 2005 [38] 9 0 1 1 2 3	'General population' of Somalia	Random sample of 4854 Khat users = 78% of those with psychiatric issues, 4% of those without	Number of bundles in previous week recorded	CIDI, PANSS	- More positive screened individuals (mental problems severe enough to provent employment or household tasks) chewed khat than regative screened individuals (46.6% vs 29.9%, p<0.001
5Deyessa et 6al. 2008 [39] 7 8 9	Women of reproductive age in rural Ethiopia	Random sample of 3200 Khat users = 40%	At least once per week	CIDI, ICD-10	- 5.9% of regular users had had a depressive episode in the last 12 months, compared to 3.1% of non-regular users (less than once per month) and 3.6% of non-users - AOR for regular vs non-users is 1.35 (0.92-1.99)

Page 23 of 38			136/bmjopen-20			
1 2					3	-202 righ
Odenwald et al. 2009 [40]	Armed combatants in Somali	8124 armed individuals (not random as still in conflict at time of study) Khat users = 36.4%	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last week	CIDI	compared to 2.6%	65 on 25 July 20 Enseig
Damena et 3al. 2011 [41] 14 15 16	Adults in Jimma City, Ethiopia	Random sample of 1308 Khat users = 38%	Uses WHO-validated substance abuse questionnaire, but unsure what is classified as 'khat user'	SRQ-20	distress, compa chewers (less t	a the chewers experienced mental to 108/317 short-term khat wo years), and 153/747 non-users and a to a t
⁸ Tulloch et ¹⁹ Tulloch et ²⁰ al. 2012 [42] ²¹ ²² ²³ ²⁴	Adult Somali khat users living in South London	Secondary data based on 172 eligible Somali mental health patients Khat users = 47%	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last year	Diagnosis provided by service records	2/30 non-users (p<	://bmjopen.bi
Dessie et al. 22013 [43]	Students in Ethiopia	Random sample of 413 Khat users = 43%	Anyone who has ever used khat	SRQ-20		experienced mental distress compared (AOR = 2.23, 1.14-4.35, p<0.05)
29Fekadu 2014 30[44] 31 32 33 34	Holy water users from Entoto St Mary Church, Ethiopia	409 individuals selected using systematic random sampling Daily khat users = 12.7%	Khat use recorded as 'never' or 'daily', although no indication of the duration of daily usage	BPRS	illness compare 1.42-5.70)	sers experienced symptoms of mental states are experienced symptoms.
36Widmann et 37al. 2014 [7] 38 39 40	Male Somali refugees living in a disadvantaged	Convenience sample of 33 users and 15 comparable non-users	SDS	CIDI, MINI	- 24% of khat users 0% of non-chewers	Bibliogra
42 43 44 45		For peer re	eview only - http://bmjopen.k	omj.com/site/abou	t/guidelines.xhtml	phique de l

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	urban settlement in Kenya	Khat users = 69%			2-0618 t, inclu
Dachew et al. 2015 [45]	Undergraduate students from Gondar University, Ethiopia	872 patients selected using stratified, random sampling Current khat users = 16%	Questionnaire identifying 'current use'	SRQ-20	- 63/114 current khat users had mental distress, compared to 279/722 nonsusers (OR=1.96, 1.32-2.92, p=0.02)
² Soboka et al. ² 2015 [46] ⁵ ⁶	HIV patients at a specified facility in South West Ethiopia	All eligible adults invited to participate Sample of 389 Khat users = 93	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last month	K-6	- 52/93 khat-users compared to 1247.56 non-users (OR = 1.76, 1.10-2.82)
Zenebe et al. 2015 [47] 1 2 3 4	Psychiatric outpatients in Ethiopia	365 adult psychiatric outpatients of a specified hospital within 2-week study period Khat use = 64.4%	Anyone who has used khat within the last 30 days	Psychiatric diagnosis from psychiatric records	- 58/235 khat users had a major depressive disorder compared to 46/13 man-users (AOR = 1.43, 0.74-2.77) - 97/235 khat users had schizophrenia compared to 34/130 non-users (AOB = 0.87, 0.45-1.68)
El-Setouhy æt al. 2016 9[48] 0	Jazan region of Saudi Arabia	Volunteer sample of 70 males Khat dependent = 52.2%	SDS	Q16	- 13/35 dependent sers felt depressed compared to 7/32 non-dependent users (QR = 2.30, 0.7-6.8) - 20/35 dependent sers felt anxious compared to 10/32 non-dependent users (QR = 3.50, 1.2-10.0)
¹ Hersi et al. ² 2017 [49]	Students in Somaliland	Stratified random sample of 570 Khat users = 19%	Use in last 12 months	SRQ-20	- 32% of khat user experienced psychological distress, compared to 1 % in non-users (AOR = 2.87, 1.26-6.56)
5Hunduma et 6al. 2017 [50] 7	Adults in Ethiopia	Random sample of 968 Khat users = 48%	Khat use in last 3 months	SRQ-20	- 86/434 khat users had a common mental disorder, compared to 48/469 non-users (OR = 2.16, 1.47-3.16)
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Page 25 of 38		136/bmjope cted by col			
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Kerebih et al. 2017 [51]	Medical students in Ethiopia	Stratified random sample of 305 Khat users = 9%	Anyone who has ever used khat	SRQ-20	- 18/26 khat users experienced mental distress compared to 84/264 non-esers (AOR = 6.91, 1.88-25.42, p=0.004)
Mossie et al. 8 2016 [52]	Adults in Ethiopia	Random sample of 650 Khat users = 34%	Khat use within the last 30 days	BDI	- 104/200 khat users had depression compared to 67/390 non-users (AOR = 20.07, 5.56-18.25)
Soboka et al. 2017 [53] 13 14 15	Adults with hypertension at a specified clinic in South West Ethiopia	All eligible adults invited to participate Sample of 396 Khat users = 79	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last month	K-6	- 27/72 current khaz-Beers experienced psychological distress, compared of the sychological distress, compared of the sychological of the sycholog
⁷ Tariku et al. ⁷ 2017 [54] 18 19 20	Students at a health sciences college in Ethiopia	Stratified random sample of 317 Khat users = 13%	Anyone who has ever used khat	Not specified	- 19/40 khat users and ienced mental distress compared to 71/168 non-ascra (AOR = 2.29, 1.04-5.04)
21Wondemage 22gn et al. 232017 [55] 24	Adolescents and adults in Nekemte town, West Ethiopia	Random sample of 359 participants Khat users = 49%	Anyone who has chewed khat within the last 30 days	DSM-IV	- 108/172 users experienced depression compared to 15/182 non-users (AOR = 25.36, 12.13-53.05, p=0.000) - 79/172 users experienced anxiety compared to 26/182 non-users (AOR = 3.42, 3.04-9.96, p=0.000)
25 Yeshaw and 27Mossie 2017 28[56] 29 30	Staff of Jimma University, Ethiopia	Random sample of 363 Khat users = 41%	Anyone who has ever used khat	DASS-21	- 54/145 khat users had depression compared to 27/209 non-users (AOR = 2.99, 2.57-9.69) - 43/145 khat users had anxiety compared to 25/209 non-users (AOR = 2.94, 1.52-5.66) - 59/145 khat users had psychological stress compared to 41/209 non-users (AOR = 2.78, 1.49-5.21)
32Bedaso et al. 342018 [57] 35 36	Prisoners in Ethiopia	Random sample of 335 Khat users = 14%	Unspecified, but appears to be chewing khat before incarceration	PHQ-9	- 36/48 khat users ad Sepression, compared to 153/287 non-users (AO): = 2.48, 1.05-5.86, p=0.039)
³⁷ Adraro et al. ³⁸ 2019 [58] ³⁹	Prisoners in Ethiopia	Random sample of 300 Khat users = 46%	Anyone who has ever used khat	SRQ-20	- 119/139 khat users experienced mental distress, compared to 69/16 non-users (AOR = 4.33, 2.02-9.27, p<0.00 g
41 42 43 44 45		For peer ro	eview only - http://bmjopen.b	omj.com/site/about	raphii que de de t/guidelines.xhtml

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Ongeri et al. 2019 [59]	Khat-growing regions of Kenya	Random sample of 831 individuals aged 10+ Khat users = 36.8%	Unspecified	PSQ			sperienced at least one psychotic 5.6% of non-users (p=0.26)
Atnafie et al. 102020 [60] 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	Khat chewers in Amhara region of Ethiopia	Convenience sample of 508 participants Khat dependent = 43%	SDS	DASS-21	compared to 57/27 0.98-2.95) - 146/207 khat-dep compared to 133/2 1.57-3.81) - 41/207 khat-depe	settinement Superte	t users experienced stress a-dependent users (AOR = 1.70, ant users experienced anxiety an-dependent users (AOR = 2.47, t users experienced depression a-users (AOR = 6.28, 1.67-23.61)
18 Hajure et al. 202020 [61] 21 22	Healthcare providers in Ethiopia	Convenience sample of 127 Khat users = 45%	Khat use in last three months	IES-R	- 37/57 khat users		rienced psychological stress, hon-users (AOR = 5.74, 1.83-18.1,
²⁴ al. 2020 [62] ²⁵ ²⁶	Students in Ethiopia	Random sample of 1022 Khat users = 24%	Khat use within last month	BDI			depressive symptoms compared s (OR = 1.60, 1.22-2.27)
28Kelemu et 29al. 2020 [63] 30 31	Students in Ethiopia	Random sample of 404 Khat users = 27%	Anyone who has ever used khat	SRQ-20	to 145/293 non	ilar technolo	erienced mental distress, compared as (AOR = 3.09, 1.74-5.50)
34Mekuriaw et 35al. 2020 [64] 36 37	Pregnant women in Ethiopia	Random sample of 845 Khat users = 11%	Investigates usage but unclear what quantifies a 'current khat user'	SRQ-20	- 39/71 khat users (to 149/647 non p=0.001)	uxparaygence usayence	rienced mental distress, compared s (AOR = 3.57, 2.06-6.18,
³⁸ Yitayih et al. ³⁹ 2020 [65]	Prisoners in a correctional	Random sample of 336 Khat users = 138	DAST-10	PCL:SV	- 32/138 khat users compared to 9/	_	the criteria for psychopathy, ion-users
42 43 44 45		For peer r	eview only - http://bmjopen.l	bmj.com/site/abo	out/guidelines.xhtml	inique de i	

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	institution in				- 16/138 khat users hat mental illness, compared to
4	Jimma, Ethiopia				15/191 non-us∉s 🛣
Haile and	Adult primary	Stratified and	Unspecified	PHQ-9	- 67/108 khat users hard depressive symptoms, compared
Sahile, 2021	healthcare	systematic random			to 40/276 non-users (AOR = 5.43, 2.55-11.56,
8 [66]	attendees in	sample of 384			p<0.01)
9 10	Ethiopia	Khat users = 39%			luly 20 Enseig
Hambisa et	Hospitalised	Systematic sample	Unspecified; discusses	K10	- 49/59 khat users ienced psychological distress,
al. 2021 [67]	patients in	of 337	'current khat use' and		compared to 14528 non-users (AOR = 4.16,
14	Ethiopia	Khat users = 18%	'khat use in the		1.67-10.35)
15			previous three months'		oac upe xt a
Melaku et al.	Medical students	Systematic	Anyone who has ever	DASS-21	- 37/56 khat users Eag B epression, compared to 99/204
$\frac{7}{2}$ 2021 [68]	in Ethiopia	random sample of	used khat		non-users (OR ♣5₺7, 1.11-3.83)
19		260			- 41/56 khat users and anxiety, compared to 117/204
20		Khat users = 22%			non-users (OR 33, 1.06-3.91)
2 1					- 30/56 khat users fad sychological stress, compared to
2 2					75/204 non-use (R = 1.99, 1.09-3.61)
.3 *I	ist of abbreviated so	creening tools: GHO-	28 (General Health Quest	tionnaire-28 for	mental disorders). SRO 20 (Self-Reporting

*List of abbreviated screening tools: GHQ-28 (General Health Questionnaire-28, for mental disorders), SRQ 20 (Self-Reporting Questionnaire - 20 items, for mental distress), SCL-90 (Symptom Checklist - 90 items, for psychological symptoms), CIDI (Composite International Diagnostic Interview - for psychiatric disorders), PANSS (Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale - for schizophrenia), ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases, 10th revision), BPRS (Brief Psychiatric Rauge Scale - for depression, anxiety and hallucinations), SDS (Severity of Dependence Scale), MINI (Mini International Esychiatric Review), K-6 (Kessler Psychological Distress Scale - 6 questions), Q16 (Questionnaire 16 for neurotoxic symptoms), BDI Beck's Depression Inventory), DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition), DASS-21 (The Debression, Anxiety and Stress Scale - 21 Items), PHQ-9 (Patient Health Questionnaire - 9 items, for depression), PSQ (Psychosis Screening Questionnaire), IES-R (Impacts of Events Scale - Revised), DAST-10 (Drug Abuse Screening Test-10), PCL:SV (Psychografied Checklist: Screening Version), K10 (Kessler Psychological Distress Scale - 10 questions)

For peer review only - http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/guidelines.xhtml Stress Scale - 21 Items), PHO-9 (Patient Health Questionnaire - 9 items, for depression), PSO (Psychosis screening Questionnaire),

136/bmjopen-2022-061865

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Supplementary Material 3: Quality of assessment of primary studies using Newcastle-Ottawa scale [17-18].

Study	Selection (/5)	Comparability (/2)	Outcome (/3)	Overall Score (/10)	Comments of 25
Ahmed and Emad 1998 [21]	1	2	1	4	- Non-random sample registration of sample registration registration of sample registration registration registration registration registration registration reg
Belew et al. 2000 [22]	3	2	2	7	- Insufficient details of bondesponders; no baseline characteristics provided in limited detail but methods do define current, past and bever khat use
Numan 2003 [23]	3	1	1	5	- Sample size not justified - Eight non-respondents excluded because of incomplete data - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - Only controlled variable seems to be Yemeni nationality - No confidence intervals in luded
Odenwald et al. 2005 [24]	3	2	2	7	- Sample size not justified

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9 of 38				BMJ Open	136/bmjopen-202
					collection
Deyessa et al. 2008 [25]	3	2	3	8	- Providers reasons for non-responders but not characteristics - Non-validated but desagged method of khat usage data collection - Clinical interview
Odenwald et al. 2009 [26]	2	2	2	6	- Sample size not justified a - No details of non-respectives: - Non-validated but desembled method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Damena et al. 2011 [27]	4	1	1	6	- Providers reasons for pongresponders but not characteristics - Uses WHO-validated that use measurement tool despite definition of 'khat user being unclear within the study - Only controlled variable seems to be region (Jimma City) - Uses self-report - No confidence intervals included
Tulloch et al. 2012 [28]	4	2	2	8	- Entire eligible sample sect Missing information descussed - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - No confidence intervals included
Dessie et al. 2013 [29]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection

				BMJ Open	Page 3 Page 3 Page 3 Page 3 Page 3 Page 3
					- Uses self report
Fekadu 2014 [30]	2	2	2	6	- No details of non-responders - Khat usage data collection described insufficiently: 'daily' or 'never' - Uses self-report
Widmann et al. 2014 [7]	2	2	3	7	- Opportunity sample (Section 2) - Sample size not justified by - No details of non-responding size of Clinical interview
Dachew et al. 2015 [31]	2	2	2	6	- Justification of samples to unsatisfactory - No details of non-respondent of the control of th
Soboka et al. 2015 [32]	3	2	2	7	- All eligible participants in vited to participate - Limited description of responders (gender only) - Non-validated but deserbled method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Zenebe et al. 2015 [33]	3	2	3	8	- No details of non-respenders - Non-validated but deserbed method of khat usage data collection - Medical records used 9, 25
El-Setouhy et al. 2016 [34]	4	2	2	8	- Volunteer sample; no non-gesponders - Uses self-report
Hersi et al. 2017 [35]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data

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					collection in the collection of the collection o
Hunduma et al. 2017 [36]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but desembled method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Kerebih et al. 2017 [37]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but deserbed method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Mossie et al. 2016 [38]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-respectives - Non-validated but desembled method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Soboka et al. 2017 [39]	2	2	2	6	- Invited all eligible participants - Does not discuss whether sample size is large enough for conclusions to be drawns - No details of non-responders - Non-validated but desembled method of khat usage data collection - Unclear if all variables are self-reported
Tariku et al. 2017 [40]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-respenders - Non-validated but deserbed method of khat usage data collection - Uses self report
Wondemagegn et al. 2017 [41]	3	1	3	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection

					- Only one community studed but no other controlled variables
Yeshaw and Mossie 2017 [42]	2	2	2	6	- Sample size not justified - No details of non-responding restriction - Non-validated but deserged method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Bedaso et al. 2018 [43]	3	2	2	8	- 100% response rate - Limited description of the transfer of
Adraro et al. 2019 [44]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-respectives - Non-validated but desertibed method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Ongeri et al. 2019 [45]	2	2	2	6	- No details of non-responders - No description of what quantifies a 'current khat user' - Uses self-report
Atnafie et al. 2020 [46]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-respenders - Non-validated but deserbed method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Hajure et al. 2020 [47]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Hambisa et al. 2020 [48]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders

3 of 38				BMJ Open	136/bmjopen-202
					- Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Kelemu et al. 2020 [49]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but deserbled method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Mekuriaw et al. 2020 [50]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-respectives - Non-validated but deserted method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report
Yitayih et al. 2020 [51]	4	2	2	8	- Provides reasons for new sponders but not characteristics - Uses DAST-10 for khas abuse -Uses self-report
Haile and Sahile, 2021 [52]	3	2	2	7	- 100% response rate - No description of what quantifies a 'current khat user' - Uses self-report
Hambisa et al. 2021 [53]	2	2	2	6	- Providers reasons for from tesponders but not characteristics - No description of what quantifies a 'current khat user' - Uses self-report
Melaku et al. 2021 [54]	3	2	2	7	- No details of non-responders - Non-validated but described method of khat usage data collection - Uses self-report

Supplementary Material 4: Sensitivity Analysis

Study Excluded	Odds Ratio	95% CIs	l² Value (%)	P-Value
Depression		•	<u> </u>	
Atnafie et al. 2020	2.28	1.81-2.87	91	<0.00001
Bedaso et al. 2018	2.21	1.75-2.79	92	<0.00001
Deyessa et al. 2008	2.23	1.76-2.82	92	<0.00001
El-Setouhy et al. 2016	2.22	1.76-2.80	92	<0.00001
Haile and Sahile 2021	2.14	1.71-2.69	91	<0.00001
Hambisa et al 2020	2.24	1.77-2.84	92	<0.00001
Melaku et al. 2021	2.22	1.76-2.81	92	<0.00001
Mossie et al. 2016	2.17	1.73-2.73	91	<0.00001
Numan 2003	2.27	1.80-2.87	91	<0.00001
Wondemagegn et al. 2017	2.11	1.69-2.64	91	<0.00001
Yeshaw and Mossie 2017	2.19	1.74-2.76	92	<0.00001
Zenebe et al. 2015	2.28	1.81-2.87	91	<0.00001
Anxiety		•	•	•
Atnafie et al. 2020	2.22	1.75-2.80	92	<0.00001
El-Setouhy et al. 2016	2.21	1.75-2.79	92	<0.00001
Melaku et al. 2021	2.22	1.76-2.81	92	<0.00001
Numan 2003	2.29	1.83-2.86	91	<0.00001
Numan 2003	2.26	1.79-2.86	92	<0.00001
Numan 2003	2.27	1.80-2.87	91	<0.00001
Wondemagegn et al. 2017	2.18	1.73-2.74	91	<0.00001
Yeshaw and Mossie 2017	2.20	1.75-2.78	92	<0.00001
Psychological Distress				
Adraro et al. 2019	2.16	1.72-2.71	91	<0.00001

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Atnafie et al. 2020	2.27	1.80-2.87	92	<0.00001
Belew et al. 2000	2.15	1.72-2.69	91	<0.00001
Dachew et al. 2015	2.23	1.76-2.82	92	<0.00001
Damena et al. 2011	2.26	1.78-2.85	92	<0.00001
Dessie et al. 2013	2.21	1.75-2.79	92	<0.00001 <0.00001 <0.00001 g
Hajure et al. 2020	2.17	1.72-2.73	92	
Hambisa et al. 2021	2.19	1.74-2.76	92	<0.00001 copyright,
Hersi et al. 2017	2.22	1.75-2.80	92	
Kelemu et al. 2020	2.23	1.77-2.82	92	<0.00001
Kerebih et al. 2017	2.19	1.74-2.76	92	<0.00001 g
Mekuriaw et al. 2020	2.19	1.74-2.76	92	<0.00001
Melaku et al. 2021	2.23	1.76-2.81	92	<0.00001 g
Soboka et al. 2015	2.23	1.77-2.82	92	<0.00001
Soboka et al. 2017	2.24	1.78-2.83	92	<0.00001
Tariku et al. 2017	2.25	1.78-2.84	92	<0.00001
Yeshaw and Mossie et al. 2017	2.21	1.75-2.79	92	<0.00001
Psychotic symptoms/disorders				ling,
Numan 2003	2.26	1.78-2.86	92	
Numan 2003	2.27	1.80-2.87	91	ق 0.00001>
Odenwald et al. 2009	2.27	1.80-2.87	91	<0.0001
Ongeri et al. 2019	2.25	1.78-2.85	92	<0.00001
Tulloch et al. 2012	2.14	1.70-2.68	91	<0.00001 co
Widmann et al. 2014	2.20	1.75-2.77	92	<0.00001
Zenebe et al. 2015	2.23	1.76-2.82	92	<0.00001
Psychopathy			<u> </u>	
Yitayih et al. 2020	2.18	1.73-2.74	92	<0.00001
Unspecified psychiatric symptoms/	disorders		•	<u>.</u>

Ahmed and Emad 1998	2.24	1.78-2.83	92	<0.00001
Fedaku et al. 2014	2.21	1.75-2.79	92	<0.00001
Hunduma et al. 2017	2.22	1.76-2.81	92	<0.00001
Odenwald et al. 2005	2.23	1.76-2.82	92	<0.00001
Yitayih et al. 2020	2.24	1.77-2.82	92	<0.00001
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PRISMA 2020 Checklist

Page 37 of 38		BMJ Open	cted b	136/bmiope	
PRIS	SMA	2020 Checklist	<ે ∶	niopen-2022-0	
Section and Topic	Ite m#	Checklist item	nclud	61865	Location where item is reported
6 TITLE	111 //		<u> </u>	25 C	Toportoa
7 Title	1	Identify the report as a systematic review.	g :	, ,	Title, page 1
8 ABSTRACT				Ŭ	
9 Abstract	2	See the PRISMA 2020 for Abstracts checklist.	Ens		Abstract page 2
10 INTRODUCTION			sei	7 20	
1 Rationale	3	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of existing knowledge.	seigne s relate	122	Introduction, pages 2-3
12 Objectives	4	Provide an explicit statement of the objective(s) or question(s) the review addresses.	ىقق	D	Introduction, page 3
METHODS			0 = :	≨ ∣	
¹⁴ Eligibility criteria 15 16 17 18 19	5	Specify the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the review and how studies were grouped for the syntheses.	Superieur (ABE text and data mi	from	Inclusion/exclusion: methods (study eligibility) page 4 Grouping for synthesis: results (symptoms explored within included studies): page 6
20 Information 21 sources	6	Specify all databases, registers, websites, organisations, reference lists and other sources searched or consulte studies. Specify the date when each source was last searched or consulted.	호 호 ·		Methods (literature search), page 3
22 Search strategy 23	7	Present the full search strategies for all databases, registers and websites, including any filters and limits used.	Al trai	nione	Methods (literature search), page 3
24 Selection process 25 26	8	Specify the methods used to decide whether a study met the inclusion criteria of the review, including how man screened each record and each report retrieved, whether they worked independently, and if applicable, details tools used in the process.			Methods (literature search), page 3-4
27 Data collection 28 process	9	Specify the methods used to collect data from reports, including how many reviewers collected data from each they worked independently, any processes for obtaining or confirming data from study investigators, and if appl automation tools used in the process.			Methods (data collection and quality assessment), page 4-5
Data items	10a	List and define all outcomes for which data were sought. Specify whether all results that were compatible with e domain in each study were sought (e.g. for all measures, time points, analyses), and if not, the methods used to results to collect.	ochnolo	de which	Methods (data collection and quality assessment), page 4-5 and supplementary material 1
33 34 35 36	10b	List and define all other variables for which data were sought (e.g. participant and intervention characteristics, f Describe any assumptions made about any missing or unclear information.	inding.	sources).	Methods (data collection and quality assessment), page 4-5 and supplementary material 1
Study risk of bias sessessment sessessment	11	Specify the methods used to assess risk of bias in the included studies, including details of the tool(s) used, hor reviewers assessed each study and whether they worked independently, and if applicable, details of automation the process.	n tool	used in	Methods (data collection and quality assessment), page 4-5 and supplementary material 1
4 Effect measures 42 43 44	12	Specify for each outcome the effect measure(s) (e.g. risk ratio, mean difference) used in the synthesis or prese results.	2	hique de	Methods (data collection and quality assessment), page 4-5 and supplementary material 1
45 Synthesis	13a	Describe the processes used to decide which studies where blighter on jeach synthesis (e.g., tablitating the study	inter	/e ntion	Methods (study eligibility),



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PRISMA 2020 Checklist

Section and	Ite	Checklist item	Location where item is
Topic	m #	Checklist item	reported
methods		characteristics and comparing against the planned groups for each synthesis (item #5)).	page 4
	13b	Describe any methods required to prepare the data for presentation or synthesis, such as handling of missing statistics, or data conversions.	NA
	13c	Describe any methods used to tabulate or visually display results of individual studies and syntheses. Or use in the second second syntheses. Or use in the second syntheses.	Methods (data collection an quality assessment), page 4-5 and supplementary material 1
	13d	Describe any methods used to synthesize results and provide a rationale for the choice(s). If meta-analysis was performed, describe the model(s), method(s) to identify the presence and extent of statistical heterogeneity, and software parallels.	Methods (synthesis of findings), page 5
	13e	Describe any methods used to explore possible causes of heterogeneity among study results (e.g. subgroup analysis, meta-regression).	Methods (synthesis of findings), page 5
	13f	Describe any sensitivity analyses conducted to assess robustness of the synthesized results.	Methods (synthesis of findings), page 5
Reporting bias assessment	14	Describe any methods used to assess risk of bias due to missing results in a synthesis (arising from reporting bases).	Methods (data collection and quality assessment), page 4-5 and supplementary material 1
Certainty assessment	15	Describe any methods used to assess certainty (or confidence) in the body of evidence for an outcome.	Methods (synthesis of findings), page 5
RESULTS		en ain	
Study selection	16a	Describe the results of the search and selection process, from the number of records identified in the search to the review, ideally using a flow diagram.	Results (included and excluded studies) pages 5-6 Figure 1
	16b	Cite studies that might appear to meet the inclusion criteria, but which were excluded, and explain why they were excluded.	Results (included and excluded studies), pages 5-
Study characteristics	17	Cite each included study and present its characteristics.	Results (summary of included studies) pages 5-6, Supplementary material 1
Risk of bias in studies	18	Present assessments of risk of bias for each included study.	Results (summary of included studies) pages 5-6 Supplementary material 2
Results of individual studies	19	For all outcomes, present, for each study: (a) summary statistics for each group (where appropriate) and (b) an effect estimate and its precision (e.g. confidence/credible interval), ideally using structured tables or plots.	Results (summary of included studies) pages 5-6 Supplementary material 1
Results of syntheses	20a	For each synthesis, briefly summarise the characteristics and risk of bias among contributing studies.	Results (GRADE analysis) page 7
	20b	Present results of all statistical syntheses conducted. If meta-analysis was done, present for each the summary estimate and its precision (e.g. confidence/credible interval) and measures of statistical heterogeneity. If comparing groups, describe the direction of the effect.	Results (meta-analysis) page 6, Figure 2
	20c	Present results of all investigations of possible causes of heterogeneity among study results.	Results (subgroup) page 6-7, Figure 3
	20d	Present results of all sensitivity analyses conducted to: Assess the tobustness iof the synthesized results and	Results (sensitivity analysis

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PRISMA 2020 Checklist

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Section and Topic	Ite m#	Checklist item	22-06 ht, in	Location where item is reported
			51865 cludir	page 7, supplementary material 3
Reporting biases	21	Present assessments of risk of bias due to missing results (arising from reporting biases) for each synthes	or 25	Results (summary of included studies) pages 5-
Certainty of evidence	22	Present assessments of certainty (or confidence) in the body of evidence for each outcome assessed.	July 2022. I Enseignen	Results (meta-analysis) page 6, Figure 2, results (GRADE Analysis) page 7
DISCUSSION			ner ate	
Discussion	23a	Provide a general interpretation of the results in the context of other evidence.	d t Do	Discussion, pages 7-8
	23b	Discuss any limitations of the evidence included in the review.	Downled to te	Discussion, pages 7-8
	23c	Discuss any limitations of the review processes used.	× ug og	Discussion, pages 7-8
	23d	Discuss implications of the results for practice, policy, and future research.	loaded Superie	Discussion, pages 7-8
OTHER INFORMA			d e f	
Registration and protocol	24a	Provide registration information for the review, including register name and registration number, or state the registered.	<u>¤.</u> ₩	Methods page 3
	24b	Indicate where the review protocol can be accessed, or state that a protocol was not prepared.	nin S	Methods page 3
	24c	Describe and explain any amendments to information provided at registration or in the protocol.	<u> </u>	Methods, page 3
Support	25	Describe sources of financial or non-financial support for the review, and the role of the funders or sponsor	ors in the review.	Acknowledgements pages 8-9, and funding page 9
Competing interests	26	Declare any competing interests of review authors.	ning,	Competing interests, page
Availability of data, code and other materials	27	Report which of the following are publicly available and where they can be found: template data collection from included studies; data used for all analyses; analytic code; any other materials used in the review.	forms date extracted simi	References pages 9-14
From: Page MJ, M 10.1136/bmj.n71	cKenzie	JE, Bossuyt PM, Boutron I, Hoffmann TC, Mulrow CD, et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guidelin For more information, visit: http://www.prisma-statement.org/	ar teormental, 2025 a for rechnologie	reviews. BMJ 2021;372:n71.
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