

**EXPERIENCES OF MIRA CONSUMPTION ON MENTAL HEALTH: THE CASE  
SOMALI YOUTH REFUGEES LIVING IN KISENYI CENTRAL DIVISION,  
KAMPALA**

**MOHAMUD BARKHAD SAID**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
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## DECLARATION

I MOHAMUD BARKHAD SAID Reg. No: **S22B15/051** hereby declare that this is my original work which has been produced with the guidance of my supervisor, it is not plagiarized and has not submitted for any award.

Signature: .....  


Date: .....  
05-06-2025

**APPROVAL**

This dissertation has been supervised and approved by me and is therefore ready for submission to Uganda Christian university.

Signature:

  
.....

Date: 05/06/2025

DR. NAREEBA PETER

## **DEDICATION**

Thanks to God who has blessed me with the wonderful family and friends who have provided me with all the support that has enabled me to progress academically and in life.

I also dedicate my research to my brothers and sisters who have supported me to accomplish my study.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	ii
APPROVAL .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
DEDICATION .....	iv
<b>CHAPTER ONE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Background .....	1
1.2 Problem Statement .....	3
1.3 Research Objectives .....	3
1.4 Research Questions .....	4
1.5 Scope of the Study .....	4
1.6 Purpose of the Study .....	5
1.7 Justification of the Study .....	5
1.8 Significance of the Study .....	5
1.9 Theoretical Framework .....	6
1.10 Conceptual Frame Work .....	6
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	7
2.2 Psychological factors that influence Mira consumption. ....	7
2.3 Social economic factors influencing Mira consumption. ....	9
2.4 Ways of promoting mental health among Mira consumers. ....	11
2.5 Literature Gap .....	13
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	14
3.2 Research design .....	14
3.3 Area of study .....	14

3.4 Source of information .....	15
3.5 Study Population .....	15
3.6. Sample selection .....	15
3.7 Key informants. ....	16
3.8 Procedure for data collection .....	16
3.8.1 In-depth interviews.....	16
3.9 Ethical considerations .....	16
3.10 Data processing and analysis .....	17
3.11 Methodological constraints and how they will be addressed.....	17
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>18</b>
4.0 Introduction .....	18
4.1 Demographic information .....	18
<b>FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS .....</b>	<b>20</b>
4.2.0 Introduction .....	20
4.2.1 To explore the psychological factors that influences Mira consumption among the .....	20
4.2.2 To examine the social economic factors influencing Mira consumption among the .....	23
4.2.3 To establish ways of promoting mental health among Mira consumers. ....	24
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>26</b>
5.0 Introduction .....	26
5.1 Conclusion .....	26
5.2 Recommendations .....	26
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: BUDGET .....</b>	<b>35</b>

## ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the experience of Mira consumption on mental health of Somali youths residing in Kisenyi central Kampala. Mira is progressively being used by youth in the community, particularly peer groups and ceremonies mainly outside parental control. This research was carried out to investigate the social-economic and psychological factors of Mira use and suggest intervention towards enhancing mental well-being among the consumed. The aim in this research division is to comprehend the ways in which Mira users experience mental well-being in the Somali youth in Kisenyi; by examining how cultural practices and mental outcomes interface, the research aims to produce a detailed information of the Mira consumers and how they impacted disadvantaged community with an eye toward intervention development. The method I have used during my research is qualitative design, data was gathered through using of interviews as well as to interact with individuals particularly snowball sampling techniques to help locate one another. This study employs a qualitative research design in which non numerical data are supported to gain a deeper understanding of experience, attitude, beliefs and identify prospective future participants from the community. This method is especially helpful in accessing hard to reach communities an example being Somali youth who use Mira in Kisenyi. Furthermore obtaining in depth information regarding the attitudes, beliefs and experiences of Somali youth as far as using Mira is concerned. The research concluded that Mira use is not only an adaptive reaction to socio-economic problems but also linked to mental health complication among youths. The research calls for swift action through the implantation of mental health sensitization and education programs for the community. The research suggest that social workers implement ongoing educational outreach while policy makers and the government strengthen more stringent drug control legislation in a bid to reduce youth Mira use.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 Introduction**

chapter one contains the research topic, background of my research, problem statement research questions, research objectives, purpose of the study, scope of the study, justification of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, the conceptual framework and research gap. The subject of study is, “Experiences of Mira consumption on mental health: The case of Somali youths refugee living in Kisenyi Central Division, Kampala”.

### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

Globally. Silava et al., 2022 says that Mira is a seedless, evergreen, tiny and a brushy plant it is a plant that is cultivated primarily in east Africa and Yemen. Mira is also known as various locations such as Mira, African salads, in African tea and mairungi primarily in Uganda (Etan, 2017. p.30). Ten million people were found to use Mira among the regions of East Africa, the Middle East, Asia, United States of America, Australia and the whole of Europe to regain the state of stimulation and dried leaves of Mira can also be inhaled via smoking and alcohol consumption (Etana, 2017).

Continental level, Mira is an evergreen shrub and found at a high elevation in the region spreading from Eastern Africa to Southern Africa and on the Arabian Peninsula. The historical background is done to give an overview on the history of the Mira consumption as discussed below. At the continental level it proven to be true that Mira is considered as a cash crop and by the year 2003 Ethiopian was ranked number one among the leading nations as top Mira producers in the African continent and in the world. N Carrier, 2003 traces the paths and journeys of a single substance the edulis plant stimulant. Mira is the name of this substance that in Kenya. In 1986, the evidence was able to show that Mira has a lot of

significance for the people who inhale its social life and functions. Mira's leaves are eaten by a minimum of five within the African continent (Etana, 2017, p.30).

National, the overview of the history and progress of Mira usage in Uganda, and the aim is to determine the impact and the degree to which the youths are engaged and impacted by Mira consumption. In Uganda, the history of Mira consumption to a larger extent was confined to the classical application of Mira more commonly referred to as mairungi on the main lands of Uganda. What so ever, Mira consumption in Uganda lacks accurate data as to exactly when Mira use started taking hold in the deeper communities and parts of Uganda (Admassie, 2017). Ever since those years Mira consumption kept on expanding in different countries such as Uganda.

### **Conceptual background**

Term Mira consumption means the act of consuming, eating, drinking something and the quantity consumed. Psychological well-being refers to a state of psychological wellness that allows individuals to deal with the stress of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. Any person between the age bracket of 15 years and 24 years is considered a young person regardless prejudice to others. Mira is known as the crop which constitutes the longer stalks that is sold as the handfuls of leaves from the tips of the plant.

### **Contextual background**

The study was conducted in a neighborhood commonly referred to as Old Kampala but especially Kisenyi, Central Division which is predominantly occupied by my population of study interest who are the Somali Youths. The neighborhood was chosen because it also contains many youths who consume Mira within the community.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The consumption of Mira among young people is still high among the female and male nonetheless the female takes the highest percentage (25%) as recorded by Igaboka (2023) where by issues focusing on peer influence, availability, and social context for instance unemployment and economic adversity, familial pressure and migration youth in diaspora such communities like those of Kisenyi can have issues of identity and belonging and Mira can act as a bridge to the cultural roots, guiding them through life's challenges between two cultures that drive them into the consumption of Mira which has consequences on their psychological, mental and social make-up. These youth arrive at the Mira via a network in that in case one person accesses the substance, it is then pushed from one person to another and the cycle continues. This consumption occurs at the ceremonies mostly weekends and evenings when parents are not in charge of what their kids are doing which so much influences drug abuse specifically Mira consumption. Thus, this study seeks to analyze the mental health issues related to Mira consumption, the social determinants of the Mira consumption, and the psychological consequences of Mira use among the youth in Somalia Kisenyi, central Division.

## **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- i. To explore the psychological factors that influences Mira consumption among the Somali Youths in Kisenyi Central Division.
- ii. To examine the social economic factors influencing Mira consumption among the Somali youths in Kisenyi Central Division.
- iii. To establish way of promoting mental health among Mira consumers the Somali youth in Kisenyi Central division

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- i. What are the psychological factors of Mira consumption among the Somali Youths in Kisenyi, Central Division?
- ii. What are the social-economic factors influencing Mira consumption among Youths in Kisenyi, Central Division?
- iii. What are the ways of promoting mental health among the youth in Kisenyi Central division?

## **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

### **CONTENT SCOPE**

The study was conducted and finalized under the supervision of my research aims that I developed and they include; To examine the social factors influencing Mira consumption among the Somali Youths in Kisenyi, Central division; To explore the psychological impacts of Mira use among Somali Youths in Kisenyi Central Division.

### **Geographical scope.**

The study conducted in Kisenyi Central Division Kampala, which is highly populated occupied by the Somali Youths and other groups of people though my research focused the Somali youths. Most of the youths in Kisenyi use Mira but the largest percentage were of the Somali youth who are my study population and the location was suitable for me to be successful in my data collection. The young people who use Mira do so because they feel less occupied due to the communities around them starting from Social Centre Village.

## **Time scope**

Time period is the duration during which the research was carried out and hence my research shall be carried out in the three-week period whereby data week was for one week collection, compilation and analysis of data was carried out in the second week and the third week was purely be for making a final report for my research and presentation.

## **1.6 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this research was to determine how the process of Mira consumption on mental health of the Somali youth in Kisenyi, Central Division.

## **1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

This research was carried out because of the available facts that several Somali youths are mentally impacted by Mira use among the communities of Kisenyi Central Division more especially Social Centre Village. The need was to find out the factors contributing to Mira consumptions and justification as to why the researcher carried out this research study.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The following are the beneficiaries of the research study.

To the Somali Youths. This research was carried out to create awareness among the Somali youths who consume Mira and to understand the factors influencing them to consume Mira. The ways how they were able to overcome the factors influencing them consume alcohol shall also be provided to enable the youths to fight against the factors.

To the community leaders. This research was helpful to the community leaders such as the chairpersons to be aware of the challenges of Mira consumption among the Somali youths in Kisenyi.

To the law enforcers such as police. The research was discussed way through which the Somali youths access Mira and so hopefully the police will possibly be able to end the distribution of Mira consumption. The policy makers. The research was of significance to the policy makers who I believe were able to come up with policies that reduce Mira consumption having borrowed knowledge from my research study.

To the mental health caregivers. The report of my research discussed the mental health challenges and issues that encountered by the Somali youths in Kisenyi and so the mental health caregivers was able to utilized the information that helped the youths.

## **1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The ecological systems theory informed this study. As Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) posits, that a person can never be observed in isolation but, in a succession of systems from the micro, mezzo, meso, Macro and the Chrono levels. This includes the family, neighbours, the community, the different institution which all have a hand in the physical, social and moral being of an individual. This will explore the social, psychological, effects of the Mira Consumption patterns of the youth in Kisenyi.

## **1.10 CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK**

The dependent variables. the research study has dependent variables such as depression, anxiety and Mental breakdown which develop basing on the independent variables. The independent variables. The independent variables include the peer influence and the environment which leads to mental health challenges identified as the dependent variable because the environment where the youths live can influence them to consume Mira hence the above challenges. The main independent variable is consuming Mira which means that the independent variables are dependent on the amount of Mira consumed by the Somali Youths.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Here in this chapter, I am presenting the available information compiled from the existing literature of various researchers. The literature reviewed is just that which is pertinent to my research study and the review is still done based on the objectives which had been set to direct the research study.

#### **2.2 Psychological factors that influence Mira consumption.**

Mira consumption is a significant public health concern among Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division, Kampala. While research has explored the social and economic factors influencing Mira consumption, there is a need to examine the psychological factors that contribute to this behavior. Studies have shown that Mira consumption is really persistent among the Somali youths living in Uganda (Ogwell et al., 2015) and many Somali youths were reported to be consuming Mira (Kaggwa et al., 2017). Lema et al., 2023 presents reasons such as motivation of self and peer influence, pro-environment and social values, feeling of concern and responsibility for the environment for consumption purposes are part of the psychological factors that give rise to Mira consumption among the youths in Spain where some of them apply to the context of Uganda.

Tapia et al., 2017 illustrates some of the determinants that affect Mira consumption among the youth and among those he emphasized the social behaviors, inter-personal relationships

and mental illnesses are central in shaping the youths to drink alcohol in both then United States of America and Uganda.

Newton and Sabbah, 2023 calls for the psychological issues concerned with ethnic and racial affect Mira consumption among the youths. Miranda et al., 2019 states that the parenting stress onto the children is part of the psychological factors that force the youths to consume Mira with a sense that it will relieve their stress from parents who are tough on their children. The teens who have families with autism spectrum disorder and face prejudices from the community tend to consume Mira to overcome the challenge of prejudice hence leading to the regular use of Mira by the troubled young people.

Bade, 2017 discusses that the youth chew Mira so that they can pass time instead of going through a lot of stress and depression so that when they get to eliminate anxiety and despair hence all that becoming psychological factors that affect Mira consumption.

Research also shows that social pressure is related to treatment motivation and plays an important role in treatment engagement in youths with problematic substance use (Goodman, 2011). Persons with substance use disorders suffer in extreme with their feelings, either being overwhelmed with painful affects and seeming not to feel their emotions at all (J Stern, 2015). Self-esteem and body image. Low self-esteem and negative body image have been linked to substance use among adolescents (Hawkins et al, 1992). Somali youths in Kisenyi may experience low self-esteem and negative body image due to cultural and societal pressures. Mira consumption may be utilized to enhance self-esteem and body image (Martin &Winters, 2021). Peer influence and social norms are significant indicators of substance use among adolescents (Hansen et al., 1987). Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division Kampala may be influenced by peers who have been using Mira and may perceive Mira consumption as a normative behavior (Gibbons & Gerrard, 1997).

Cultural and traditional factors may also influence Mira consumption among Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division. For example, Mira may be used in traditional ceremonies or as a form of social bonding (Kleinman, 1980). The study conducted in Ethiopia found that Mira consumption was associated with increased symptoms of anxiety and depression (Alem et al., 2017). The literature under the this first objective suggests that psychological factors such as stress, self-esteem, peer influence and cultural traditional factors may contribute to Mira consumption among Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division Kampala. Therefore, research is so much needed to explore these factors in a more depth and to enable development of effective interventions to prevent and treat Mira consumption among Somali youths.

### **2.3 Social economic factors influencing Mira consumption.**

Muhumed (2024), requires Mira to be easily consumed and available since it is a main source of income for the government and numerous individuals are employed to distribute Mira to the youth and other groups hence influencing its usage among the youth. Hassan 2015. Presents these social economic factors as affecting Mira consumption among the youth and they include variables such as unemployment and employment status. The Somali youths who have jobs can afford Mira and take it when they should and those who are unemployed also spend most of their time-consuming Mira instead of looking for jobs. Julius 2022, states that the families whose members particularly the youths who exchanged Mira to other youths for consumption recorded increased household income hence identification of Mira usage among the Somali youth. The unemployment rates in Uganda were also part as the social economic factors that influenced and still influencing Mira consumption since most of the youths have entered Mira business due to shortage of employment. Osman 2024 is a prime example of the job opportunities that the Mira traders guarantee to the youths are social economic factors that affect Mira consumption and, in the process, trading it they learn how

to consume it hence the eagerness for a job leading the youths into use of Mira. One of the limited studies done in Uganda identified Somali youth who reported more those with higher stress and anxiety scores were more likely to utilize Mira (Kaggwa et al., 2018).

Bade, 2017 showed that the heightened idleness influences Somali youth to use Mira because they have nothing else to do but just waste the majority of their time on searching and chew Mira and they also chew Mira so that they can boost the working output since the youths that Mira adds them special energy to do all the hard tasks assigned to them. Only that potential to obtain energy to perform work in order to earn money significantly influences use of Mira.

Research has showed that poverty and unemployment are significant signs of substance use among the Somali youths (Hawkins et al., 1992). Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division may experience poverty and unemployment due to various factors such as conflict, displacement and lack of economic opportunities. Mira consumption may be used as a coping mechanism to manage stress and negative emotions associated with poverty and unemployment (Khatzian, 1997).

The educational factors are critical factors in influencing social mobility and economic opportunities (Bourdieu, 1977). The Somali youths in Kisenyi Central Division, Kampala may have limited access to education and economic opportunities, leading to feelings of frustration and hopeless. Mira consumption may be used as a way to escape from these feelings and to temporarily experience a sense of pleasure and relaxation (Zinberg, 1984).

The family and social support are critical factors in determining an individual's ability to cope with stress and negative emotions (Cohen et al., 2015). Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division may experience family and social support that is inadequate or unstable, leading to increased vulnerability to Mira consumption (Wills & Shiffman, 1985).

Cultural and traditional factors may also influence Mira consumption among Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division Kampala. That is to say Mira can be utilized in traditional ceremonies and as a form of social bonding (Kleinman, 1980).

The study conducted in Kenya found that Somali youths who reported higher levels of social isolation were more likely to use Mira (Mwanga et al.,2018). In the end it's clear that social economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, education, family and social support, cultural and traditional factors including other factors may contribute to Mira consumption among Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division Kampala.

#### **2.4 Ways of promoting mental health among Mira consumers.**

Mental health is a critical concern among Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division Kampala particularly those who consume Mira. Research has showed that Mira consumption is associated with a range of mental health problems like anxiety, depression and psychosis (Khatzian, 1997). Therefore, it is very crucial to establish ways of promoting mental health among Mira consumers like the Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division Kampala.

Bade 2017 documents that involving the Mira consumers in sporting activities and mobilizing on adverse impact of Mira consumption which will entertain the youths to and become the alternatives for chewing Mira thus assisting in the promotion of mental health among the Mira customers. Abdisalan and Abdullahi, 2022 submitted in their article that they addressed the youths and teaching them the consequences of drug and alcohol abuse, the most critical role to aiding the mental health of the Somali adolescent is the availability of the family to provide time to the children. Umulkheir and Mohamed, 2018 corroborates that demonstrating empathy and positive attitude towards the youth who utilize Mira and are suffering from mental health problems. The researchers believed that positive attitude and compassion towards them would promote mental health among the Mira customers since they felt cared

for and loved which can have an impact they were be able to heal by themselves. Ensuring proper diagnosis and management of the mental health illnesses in the including the development of mental health services and facilities followed by ongoing psycho education would be the best way of promoting mental health within the Mira consumers. Sambali, 2018 showcased that establishing policies and legislations would be best in enhancing mental well-being for the Somali young people who utilize Mira. The policies would be of an importance because the policies promote awareness about mental illnesses caused through consumption of Mira. Then the legal frameworks like laws could threaten the youths who utilized Mira in order to desist from indulging in such activities thus enhancing mental health. The Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is an effective approach in promoting mental health among substance users like the Somali youths who consume Mira (Beck et al., 1993). The cognitive Behavirial Therapy can aid individuals identify and challenge negative thought patterns and behaviours related with Mira consumption among the Somali youths in Kisenyi Central Division Kampala. Cultural competence is essential when promoting mental health among Mira consuming Somali youths (Kleinman, 1980). Cultural competence involves understanding the cultural values, beliefs and practices of the Somali community and incorporating these into mental health promotion interventions. The family-based interventions can play a critical role in promoting mental health among Mira consuming Somali youths (Stanton & Shadish, 1997). Family-based interventions can help individuals develop coping skills and provide support and encouragement for recovery.

Peer support groups can provide a safe and supportive environment for Mira consuming Somali youths to share their experiences and receive support from peers (Davidson et al., 1999). Peer support groups can help individuals to develop social skills, build self-esteem and promote recovery.

Community-based interventions can play a critical role in promoting mental health among Mira consuming Somali youths (Hawkins et al., 1992). Community-based interventions can provide access to mental health services, promote social support and encourage community involvement in mental health promotion.

The reviewed literature suggested that Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, family-based interventions, peer support groups, community-based interventions and cultural competence are effective ways of promoting mental health among Mira consumers who are Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division Kampala.

## **2.5 LITERATURE GAP**

Based on the literature that have been reviewed, it was clear that there was limited information on research concerning Mira studies and research which means that those that are available are a bit old to be used as sources for the literature review in my research study.

The limited sources about research carried out on Mira studies in Uganda which was a challenge to find out a way of carrying out such a study in a more Ugandan centred context which shows the gap in the literature.

The literature reviewed was more focusing on countries such as Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia which shows the gap that Ugandans have not focused much on Mira yet it also challenges and negatively impacts the lives of the youths and maybe Ugandans aren't aware of the Mira as a drug that is dangerous drug.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter includes the methodology adopted during the data collection of the experiences of Mira use on the mental well-being of Somali adolescents in Kisenyi. The chapter also included the data gathering methods, the data gathering tools, the kind of data to be gathered in the field, the kind of research to be amassed, data procedures collection, and research plan and data processing and analysis.

#### **3.2 Research design**

This study employed the qualitative research design type. This included the collection of non-numerical data so as to be in a position to understand the experiences, attitudes and beliefs of the individuals living in the society. It included the use of data gathering techniques like; interviews, observation and focus group discussion in a bid to comprehend the research issues successfully.

#### **3.3 Area of study**

The research was carried out in Kisenyi, which is mostly described as a community setting. Central Division but more precisely in Social Centre Village which was dominated by my target population of the study are the Somali Youths living in Social Centre Village area had been chosen because it also contains many Somali youths who are taking a lot of Mira within the community.

### **3.4 Source of information**

This research was obtained its data from both the primary and the secondary data sources for example the present research articles on Mira consumption and published research documents based on Mira consumption as a research study. For the primary sources, the selected youths, parents of Somali youths and local leaders were posed the questions and they were provided the information required. However, the textbooks and written reports was reviewed while in field. This was provided the researcher with the necessary information to achieve the research goals.

### **3.5 Study Population**

The sample population was all Somali youth employed and residing at Social Centre Village and Musajja Lubwa. The study population was a subset of the target population are available for analysis from which the sample was actually drawn (Kara, 2014).

### **3.6. Sample selection**

The snow ball sampling technique was used during this research study. Kircherr (2018), defines snow ball sampling as a non-probability method where new units are recruited by other units to form parts of a sample. The research participants were asked to assist researchers to identify other potential subjects. This was done because the research participants knew the exact number and youths consuming Mira and they also knew where the consumers where to be found. Therefore, through this, the researcher located the participants with ease due to the assumed help to be acquired from the research participants. The predicted sample size is 20 Somali youths and 5 local leaders' respondents.

### **3.7 Key informants.**

The key informants in this study are the local leaders because they have information regarding the challenge of Mira consumption among Somali youths in Kisenyi zone.

### **3.8 Procedure for data collection**

The researcher was given a letter of introduction from the school of social sciences and an institutional approval letter from Kisenyi zone leaders. The researcher hereby requests the consent from the participants in the long and agree on the terms and conditions to provide me with the necessary details.

#### **3.8.1 In-depth interviews.**

This was a qualitative data collection technique that was employed in gathering the qualitative data via the in-depth interviews with the selected number of participants (Rutledge 2020). Here, the aimed was uncover the issues detailed from the participants. Open ended questions were asked during the interviews which provided a chance for the researcher to investigate all the information required. Papers, pencils, recorders especially for the fast-speaking participants. But other than the recordings, there was assurance from the participants particularly on the confidentiality of their information. Also, the pseudo names were used instead of the real names. This allowed the researcher to input the different issues as the respondents reply to the open-ended queries of the study.

### **3.9 Ethical considerations**

Throughout the study, the following ethical issues will be taken into consideration. Ethical approval: The researcher sought clearance from the university authorities. Community outreach. The researcher made initial visits to the community with the purpose of establishing a relationship through creating rapport with community leaders and instructing them on the

objective of the study. Confidentiality This was encountered during the interaction with the respondents. Pseudo names used used while interacting. The researcher seek permission from Kisenyi and the leaders of Central division to be permitted to receive information.

### **3.10 Data processing and analysis**

The narrative analysis was used during the data analysis process. This involved looking in detailed and explanation of human experience and motivation through examination of the participants and presenting them in a narration way. However, these narratives were broadly and effectively analysed so as to get the meaningful data at hand.

### **3.11 Methodological constraints and how they will be addressed.**

Methodological limitations and how these was overcome. The following problems were encountered by the researcher while collecting the data; Limited resources. This resulted from the facilitation of transport to the field and also provision of facilitation for the research assistants, research officers and participants as well as the different stake holders in Kisenyi zone. This was solved by proper planning and drafting a budget in order to prepare for the resources efficiently.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The chapter presents and analyses the study's findings which focused at Examining "Experiences of Mira consumption on mental health: The case of Somali youths living in Kisenyi Central Division, Kampala." Analysis in research interprets the collected data into findings by bringing structure, order and meaningful information (John, 2015). The researcher therefore interpreted the raw data into meaningful information and interpretation through categorizing the information into themes. The qualitative information was analysed from the interview guides and presented as seen below.

#### **4.1 Demographic information**

The researcher focused at three aspects of the respondents and these included the age, gender and level of education to fully understand the respondents who participated or contributed to the data and findings that the researcher was described after explaining the following characteristics of the respondents below.

##### **Gender**

The number of respondents was majorly occupied by the male gender where eighteen of them were male and the females were seven in total. The way the gender of male and female participated it was evident that it's the boys who commonly consume Mira in their community as the findings will further reveal in the chapters that will follow.

## **Age**

The age of respondents was majorly ranging from 25-30 years who were 15 then one ranging between 31-35 years and also one ranging between 41 years and above and the other respondents were not comfortable to share their age to the researcher and not even on the interview guide.

## **Level of education**

The secondary level dominated the education level with a total of nine people who had completed the secondary level and eight respondents had completed the tertiary level with a total number of respondents being eight as earlier stated. Those that had completed primary level were three and those that had completed the other levels of education were two.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.2.0 Introduction**

In this section the researcher presents the findings from the respondents that desired to respond to the research questions. The researcher also discusses the findings based on the interpretations and answers acquired from the field of data collection and subheadings are based on the research objectives.

### **4.2.1 To explore the psychological factors that influences Mira consumption among the Somali youths.**

Under this objective the researcher explored the psychological factors that influenced the Somali youths to consume Mira and below are the findings well discussed as they were collected from the respondents.

Mira consumption has led to low levels of education and influenced domestic violence and the respondents also reported that the youths use Mira to cope with stress and anxiety. The respondents claimed that the fact that many Somali youths have not accessed school which implied that they had or experienced low levels of education which limited their knowledge about Mira usage and its effects hence the influence for consuming Mira is always high. The usage of Mira consumption was reported by the respondents that it is further triggered by the domestic violence that the Somali youths encountered at home because they never obeyed their parents after consuming Mira and hence increased dependence on Mira consumption.

***Quotation from respondent two** “I have witnessed many Somali youths that have faced domestic violence especially when the parents found out that the children have started using Mira. Instead of finding aid for them they instead punish them rather than seeking counsellors to counsel their children, this leads to increased Mira consumption.”* The

domestic violence that was witnessed by the respondents affected the Somali youth's psychological health which so much influenced them to become addicted to consumption of Mira as a way of coping with the domestic experiences they encountered at home.

The limited access to social services for the youths more especially the education services which leads to early school dropouts among the Somali youths hence learning poor behaviours of consuming Mira. This response is almost similar to the feedback in the last paragraph as it's also linked to concerns to do with limited access to education services. The concern was connected to the failed policies such as the Universal Primary Education and the Universal Secondary Education policies which were proposed and enacted to provide free education to the beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries were both girls and boys of school going age in both Primary and secondary but the services that were meant to be provided for free turned out to be payable as years went past yet many households could not afford even the little money that was asked for by the government and government aided schools. This influenced school dropouts hence the children and especially the Somali youths learnt drug use behaviors during the time they spent out of school and among those drugs the Somali consumed Mira so much which continues to negatively impact their mental health.

Cultural factors were one of the major influences where by almost all Somali youths have grown up seeing their elders consuming it and so they learn and end up addicted to Mira consumption.

**Quote from respondent 10** *"I consume Mira to be accepted by my friends."* Telling from the respondent's quotation, many Somali youths claimed and were reported by their parents that they learnt and became addicted to consumption of Mira due to peer pressure and influence as many especially the younger Somalis who wanted to fit into certain groups. It was said that

the groups that Somali youths wanted join demanded them to be capable of consuming and dealing in Mira as a test to pass in case one was to be accepted hence becoming addicted to Mira consumption.

The family members and friends of the Somali youths who consume Mira were often stressed about their wellbeing and whether they will excel in academics. Based on the findings from the respondents its clear that not the youths who consumed Mira who were affected but also the relatives because they were consistently disturbed by the fact that their children were consuming Mira. Consumption of Mira worried the relatives, friends and other family members because the youths were performing poorly academically due to Mira affecting their brains hence leading to stress among the relatives.

The research also discovered the relationship between stress and Mira consumption from the field during data collection based on the responses gathered from the researcher's respondents.

The relationship between stress and Mira consumption is that Mira was consumed as a coping mechanism and away of escaping from the pressure of the Somali youths' daily live while stress led to an increased consumption of Mira which later created a cycle of dependence and negative mental health due to addiction of Mira consumption which elaborated the relationship towards Mira consumption.

***Quote from respondent four.*** “Unemployment because I am always bored with no work to do so I start chewing Mira to cope up with the unemployment stress.” It is not surprising that unemployment was cited as a key factor because it encouraged idleness which influenced the Somali youths to gang up with wrong people who taught them behaviours of consuming Mira hence becoming addicts.

#### **4.2.2 To examine the social economic factors influencing Mira consumption among the Somali Youths.**

For the above objective the researcher presents and discusses the findings examined on the social economic factors that influenced the consumption of Mira among the Somali youths and below is what the researcher was able to gather from the research respondents.

##### **Social economic factors.**

*Quote from respondent six* “Families with money tend to spoil kids who later turn into youths who consume Mira and those with no money tend to collaborate with gangs and hence adopting Mira consumption behaviours”. The money that some of the Somali’s households have enables the youths to purchase Mira products for consumption especially for their leisure. Those that whose families and households have low income have to deal in illegal trading of Mira to earn money hence getting used to consuming it as they always have to test it before selling it to the buyers.

The Somali youths that are educated always aware of the effects of Mira consumption and those that weren’t educated had less knowledge about the effects of Mira consumption either physical or mental.” The youths that were educated claimed that they consumed Mira because it boosted their energy and kept their brains sharp to capture the contents that were taught in class. The youths in schools and those that had graduated continued to consume Mira even when they knew the consequences of consuming Mira.

Poverty and the low levels of family income influence family conflicts such as domestic violence. Poverty is a complex and multifaceted concept that refers to the lack of access to resources, capabilities necessary for individuals, families and communities to achieve a minimum standard of living (World Bank, 2018). Therefore, it’s believed that the Somali

youths started consuming Mira due to the economic factor of poverty whereby they had to depend on Mira to manage the stress that came with poverty since they claimed that Mira relieved stress.

Some Somali youths came from very low-income status households yet they are loaded with a lot of family responsibilities thus being forced to consume Mira in order to do more work and earn more money to support their families. Apart from consuming Mira for more energy, the Somali youths were also consuming Mira because it was part of the products, they sold to meet the demands of their family members as part of the responsibilities entitled to them at a younger age. It was through the process of looking for money which influenced many of the youths to consume Mira because the responsibility psychologically tortured the youths and the only way to overcome it was to consume Mira.

Illiteracy leads to lack of jobs as well as limited resources and people use most of the money to buy Mira instead of using to cater for the family. The Somali youths used illiteracy as an excuse that exposes them to circumstances that led them to consume Mira as they became lazier due to unemployment that came as a result of illiteracy because they failed to find employers due to illiteracy.

#### **4.2.3 To establish ways of promoting mental health among Mira consumers.**

The researcher under this objective focused at investigating ways that were possible to be implemented to promote the mental health of the Somali youths who consume Mira. The findings from the respondents revealed the following ways of how to promote mental health among Somali youths.

***Quote from respondent four.*** “I believe families shape the backgrounds of children so the mental health of the youths depended on how they were brought up and groomed and social

support groomed the youths' character and how they interacted with the environment around them." The respondent who was quoted seemed to suggest that families were the first systems that could be initiated as a way of promoting mental health among Mira consuming youths.

Helping to build the youths' confidence, providing counselling to the youths and giving them good role models. Counselling is a professional relationship between a trained counsellor and a client, aimed at promoting mental health, wellness and personal growth (Corey, 2017). The respondents especially the key informants were confident that counselling would be the best way of promoting the mental health of the Somali youths because the approach provides therapies that can aid the clients to heal from their mental illnesses such as stress that led many to consumption of Mira.

**Quote** "Mental health can be promoted by educating the Somali youths and their parents about the side effects of Mira consumption together with helping them to seek counselling." The respondents believed that mental health could be promoted via education programs aimed at creating awareness about the side effects of Mira consumption amongst the parents and Somali youths who were believed not to have any knowledge concerning dangers of Mira consumption. Campaigning and creating awareness that is against Mira consumption and keeping the family together was also urged by the respondents that it was the other way of promoting mental health as the Somali youths would feel loved and cared for which encouraged proper behaviours hence not consuming Mira.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

The chapter provides a conclusion to the study, areas for further research and the recommendations for the different readers and department that maybe concerned.

#### 5.1 Conclusion

The researcher concludes that Mira is a source of income to the public especially those that are unemployed where the cases are so many in Uganda where the study was conducted specifically in Kisenyi. The researcher found out that many youths who work and deal in selling Mira products end up learning how to consume it because they are at times encouraged by their customers to test it before they buy hence becoming addicts of the substance. The researcher further concludes that unemployment has contributed greatly in influencing the youths to consume Mira at the younger age which puts today's generation to a risk of experiencing mental illnesses.

#### 5.2 Recommendations

##### **To social workers.**

Both the social worker students and practitioners should carry out constant education programs about the dangers of Mira consumption among the youths in Kisenyi. The researcher believes that the programs of this nature would easily aid in the fight against Mira consumption among the youths in the area of study.

### **To the policy makers and government.**

The researcher recommends that both policy makers and the government should focus at ensuring that the available laws and policies against the youth's use of illegal drugs are strict and always applied unlike today where the youths can easily access the drugs freely. The researcher still recommends that more strict laws and policies should be designed and implemented to ensure that the youths and children don't get access to drugs like Mira which alternate their minds and end up damaging the mental health of the youths.

### **To the medication service providers.**

The researcher recommends that the government hospitals and the medical doctors should establish clinics in the communities of Kisenyi to help treat the youths who are suffering from Mira consumption and their mental health is at risk.

### **To the councilors.**

The researcher recommends that the counselors should carry out constant counseling service and talks to the youths who are both consuming and those that aren't consuming to ensure that the children don't get attracted and addicted to the drug.

### **Area for further research.**

The researcher recommends the future researchers to carry out a study on the contribution of the Family structures to the youth's consumption of Mira in Kisenyi Central Division.

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## APPENDICES

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

Dear sir/madam,

I am **MOHAMUD BARKHAD SAID** a student at Uganda Christian University conducting research on **EXPERIENCES OF MIRA CONSUMPTION ON MENTAL HEALTH: THE CASE SOMALI YOUTHS REFUGEE LIVING IN KISENYI CENTRAL DIVISION, KAMPALA.**

Will ensure total confidentiality of the information given to me during this research. This research will contribute to the award of my bachelor's degree in Social Work and Social Administration so I humbly ask you for your cooperation.

Thank you very much.

#### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please tick the most appropriate answer

1. Gender?

a) Male                       b) Female

2. Age?

a) 25-30 Yars                       b) 31-35 years

c) 36-40 years                       d) 41-above

3. What is your level of education?

a) Primary                       b) Secondary

c) Tertiary                       d) others specify.....

**SECTION B: To explore the psychological factors that influences Mira consumption among the Somali youths in Kisenyi, central division.**

1. What is the role of self-esteem and body image in Mira consumption among the Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division?
2. How do these factors influence Mira consumption among the youth?
5. What is the relationship between stress and Mira consumption among the Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division?
7. What do you think leads to the above psychological factors that influence the Somali youths to consume alcohol?

**SECTION C: to examine the social economic factors influencing Mira consumption among the Somali youths in Kisenyi central division.**

9. Which social economic factors influence the consumption of Mira among youth?
10. How does family income influence Mira consumption among Somali youths in Kisenyi, Central Division?
11. What is the impact of education level on Mira consumption among Somali youths in Kisenyi Central Division?

**SECTION D: To establish way of promoting mental health among Mira consumer Somali youth in Kisenyi central division**

13. What are the roles of family and social support in promoting mental health among Mira consumer Somali youths?
14. What are the most effective ways to address stigma and discrimination related to mental health and Mira consumption among the Somali youths?
15. How can mental health among Mira youth consumer be promoted?

*THANKS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION.*

**APPENDIX: 2**

**BUDGET**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>COST</b>
Letter from LC1 chairperson	Ush. 10,000
Transport	Ush. 200,000
Accommodation	Ush. 300,000
Interview guide printing	Ush. 30,000
Data collection support team	Ush. 400, 000
Printing Report	Ush. 100,000
Airtime	Ush. 20,000
Data analysis	Ush. 30,000
Binding	Ush. 30,000
Meals	Ush. 150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1, 270,000</b>