

ADVERSE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF KAMESHWARI MODAKA: A CASE STUDY IN COLOMBO DISTRICT USING THE CHALLENGING EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE VIA ONLINE SURVEY

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“Kameshwari Modaka” (KM), an Ayurvedic drug traditionally used for its aphrodisiac properties, has recently been misused in Sri Lanka, particularly among youth seeking ecstasy-like effects. This study investigated the psychedelic experiences, specifically "bad trips", associated with KM misuse using the Challenging Experience Questionnaire (CEQ). From January to March 2024, an online survey gathered responses with a snowball sampling technique from 102 participants in the Colombo district (average age: 28.59 years; 96% male, 4% female). Results showed KM induces mild challenging experiences, including fear, isolation and, physical distress, with an average CEQ score of 21.31%. Most participants (60.8%) reported no or mild bad trip symptoms, but 13.7% experienced severe bad trips. Paranoia was significantly elevated compared to other serotonergic psychedelics ($p < 0.05$), suggesting potential psychological risks. KM's psychoactive effects are attributed to its high cannabis content, which can lead to acute psychosis and addiction in chronic use, especially with doses surpassing the therapeutic range of 3-6 g. Findings highlight the need for caution and regulatory measures in KM use, especially among younger demographics, despite the limitations of small sample size, lack of brand-specific data, recall bias, and variations in KM dosage of the present study. Further research is essential to explore demographic, psychological, and dosage-related factors influencing these adverse reactions. Clinical studies should validate findings and clarify KM's pharmacological mechanisms.

Keywords: Bad trips, Challenging Experience Questionnaire, “Kameshwari Modaka”, Psychedelic