

# Abstract

**Background:** In recent years it has been possible to note the increasing popularity of a psychoactive substance called kratom. It is a substance that is not legislated in the Czech Republic, which can affect its easy availability for users of all ages. At the same time, there are not enough studies in our country or abroad to research kratom or its use and potential risks.

**Objectives:** The main objectives of this work describe the use of kratom among students at Prague universities and to find out if there was a link between use of kratom and the use of other addictive substances. Furthermore, the thesis also looked at how students perceived the risks associated with the use of this substance.

**Methods:** The research was executed by quantitative data collection via an online questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was distributed by social network Facebook. The sample consisted of 1,496 respondents studying at Prague universities. The data was imported to Microsoft Excel. Afterwards it was organized and processed. Subsequently, a portion of the data was evaluated by using the Jamovi app.

**Results:** A research of 1,496 students was found that 12% used kratom in their lives. The use of kratom in the last year was registered in 135 (9%) students and in 53 (4%) students in the last month. The study suggests that users in the research sample are most likely to consume a green type of kratom and choosing kratom powder mixed with water as the most common use. Nearly half of respondents, or 43% to be precise, think there are no risks associated with kratom use and 75% perceive that kratom is addictive. Analysis of the data revealed that there was a link between the use of kratom and other addictive substances. When comparing lifetime prevalence, nicotine had an odds ratio of 0.0448. An odds ratio of 0.320 was observed for meth and amphetamines to investigate prevalence of use in the last year and an odds ratio of 0.100 was observed in the last month for alcohol.

**Conclusion:** The research provides new data of kratom use in a research sample of students at Prague universities. This is one of the first studies in the Czech Republic to research this substance separately. The work can serve as a warning to the increasing interest in kratom, or a basis for further research and legislate.

**Key words:** kratom, university, student, drug use, questionnaire survey, prevalence