

Medical and Legal Marijuana: A Must for all Nations

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36347/sajb.2025.v13i03.003>

| Received: 26.12.2024 | Accepted: 31.01.2025 | Published: 11.03.2025

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Abstract

Review Article

The use of marijuana for medical or recreational use or both can be considered a global occurrence. The health benefits of marijuana use in many instances over shadow its detrimental effects. Instead of continuously incarcerating individuals for marijuana use a case is made its global legalization. This short communication outlines the reasons and conditions for using marijuana for medical purposes as well as a compelling assessment for legalizing marijuana use and making it a revenue earner for the government. Small countries with the climatic conditions suitable for the growth of marijuana are encouraged to grow marijuana as a revenue earner.

Keywords: Legal, medical, revenue earner, prohibition, agriculturally, drugs, alcohol, recreational.

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INTRODUCTION

The use of marijuana is now a global concern. The proven medical values of marijuana usage means that it should be incorporated into prescription medication. Marijuana has been used to help with pain, stabilize blood sugar levels in diabetes, reduces side effects associated with cancer and HIV aids, reducing nausea and vomiting, treating migranes and seizures (MacMillian, 2023; Wilson and Leonard, 2019; Marijuana Care Clinic, 2023. From a psychiatric perspective recreational users say that marijuana usage relieves stress and relaxes them, in addition to alleviating anxiety (MacMillian, 2023).

Some countries have taken steps to make marijuana available as prescription medication and others have made the use of marijuana legal. Because of its wide spread and global use it has become very common place in its usage. A wise decision would be to capitalize on the wide use of marijuana in most countries as a revenue earner for the government-in a similar manner as cigarettes and alcohol. In the United States of America those federal states where marijuana have been legalized and made available for medicinal purposes legal marijuana sales have raised hundreds of millions - to billions of dollars in tax revenue in addition to job growth and investment opportunity (Krishna, 2023; Yakowicz, 2021).

Many countries still have the use of marijuana as being illegal and impose very strict penalties for its

use. This means that many individuals continually have problems with law enforcement because of their addictions. Just as with “prohibition” in the early days of the U.S.A with alcohol, reforms should be made in all countries to accept the use of marijuana as a legal norm and decriminalize its use.

Marijuana can be grown agriculturally for medical purposes as is done in some states of United States of America federal system. Small countries with the appropriate climatic conditions for growing marijuana and capitalize on its revenue earning power. The legalization of marijuana would/should eliminate the profits of the lucrative illicit trade. The global market for marijuana both legal and illegal is estimated to be worth around \$40-50 billion US dollars (Fortune Business Insights, 2022; Statista, 2023). As a revenue earner for governments on a global scale marijuana taxes and tariffs should net billions of dollars in a similar manner as the federated states in the United States of America. Prohibition of alcohol in the U.S.A was enacted for the period 1920-1933 (Thornton, 1991; Wynn, 2020). It was enacted with the idea that it would reduce crime, solve social problems, reduce the burden created by prisons and poorhouses and improve the health and hygiene of the United States of America population (Thornton, 1991). Prohibition was a total failure because it removed a significant source of revenue and greatly increase government spending (Thornton, 1991). Prohibition led to many drinkers switching to opium, marijuana, patent medicines, cocaine and other dangerous substances they would have avoided if alcohol was available (Thornton,

1991). Corruption increased during prohibition for the production and selling of illegal alcohol (Wynn, 2020).

The making of recreational marijuana usage legal means that many under privilege and poor individuals who have become addicted due to no cause of their own would not be incarcerated (Personal Observation). As with alcohol and tobacco use there should be a legal age at which it can be purchased for recreational use. MacMillian (2023) suggested that individuals under 25 years of age should not be allowed to purchase marijuana for recreational purposes before marijuana can affect memory and cognitive thought. No legal age should be imposed for medicinal purposes as it would be prescribed by a medical doctor. Some countries because of their cultural customs do not have a legal age for the purchase of alcohol and tobacco. Hence, such countries might not want to impose a legal age for the purchase of marijuana either. Such cultural norms should be respected.

Just like the occurrence in tobacco and alcohol there will be abuse of the use of marijuana, but this should not be a problem because many countries have rehabilitation centers for drug abuse-marijuana included. Regardless of where/how marijuana is purchased by the public once it is legal for both prescription and recreational use there should be comprehensive information regarding its side effects and abuse.

CONCLUSION

All nations need to legalize marijuana use, accept its medicinal values and where possible use their legislature to make it a revenue earner. As proven in the United States of America marijuana can be a great revenue earner through taxation rivaling alcohol and tobacco. Although marijuana is only one of the illicit drugs on the global market its use significantly more common in usage than the others (Personal Observation). At least in the Americas, Caribbean and Europe. The medical, legal and economic benefits of marijuana far out weighs the risks.

Drug trafficking is a multi-billion dollar business affecting global communities (United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime, 2023). Hence it is fair to conclude that marijuana join the drugs of global concern, During prohibition alcohol was allowed for medicinal purposes (Wynn, 2020). There is therefore a situation

where the medicinal value of a ban or illegal substance overrides its penal use. The same should be afforded medicinal use of marijuana in all jurisdictions of the world.

The legalization of marijuana for recreational use must be associated with a legal age for its purchase and warnings about its abuse and possible side effects. The use of marijuana will not go away so it would be delinquent not to legalize its use, earn income, and reduce the numbers in the prison system due to incarceration for its use. The lone significant experiment with prohibition was a failure.

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