

Ahmet kahvecÄ°ler

Economics, Tax



AHMET KAHVECİLER 210112342 UNI 123 DR. YONCA BURSALI Article

Critique of " Arguments for a Harmfulness Tax" In the article, " Arguments for a Harmfulness Tax" Lester Grinspoon and James B. Bakalar argue that using drugs is similar like tobacco and alcohol. Using drugs would be taxed with respect to communal cost. Varieties of causing addiction drugs are detrimental and have bad effects. They portray the act that using drugs should be allowed and insurance service is necessary for drug users. Grinspoon and Bakalar claim three arguments offered by police and moralists. To the claim that drug issue is related to criminal law. They counters that " freedom should not be restricted by government". Thanks to legalization of drugs, we can control drug traffic. In addition, to decrease social cost of drugs abuse, the taxes should be used. They make several persuasive points showing that to allow using drugs getting some taxes in order to prevent illegal using. However, in his zeal to prove their case, they gloss over the seriousness of the its harmfulness and abuse. They begin their argument with black market examples to refute moralists. For example; in the 1920s because of black market law breaking and strength had increased for using alcohol. Same situation experiences for drugs now. Also if drugs legalized arising from big profit chaos and terror should prevent between narcotics agents and drug traffickers. They are also correct about inelasticity of demand for tobacco. Due to fact that there are nicotine inside the tobacco and it causes more addiction then other substances. For example; in Turkey when there was an increase on cigarette taxation and it didn't effect so much the cigarette consumption. It is observed that there is no difference about rates of smoking between past and now among the youths. When it

comes to importance of public liberty and privacy it must be easily said that they are right that using drugs have relations our desires and human privacy. If the urine test was implemented and houses was checked by government this situation is threat for privacy. Accessibility of drugs should not be obstructed. Our desires are not government's issue. The author complained that people are hypocrite when concerning this issue. I agree with Grinspoon and Bakalar's perspective but I'm not entirely pleased with the way they present it. Their ideas are almost fantasy for our current society even though it is written in acceptable way. That means there will be some fault-finding about it. First of all, Grinspoon and Bakalar mention about conservative authorities because conservatives support their ideas but they do not give opinions of other authorities such as socialists or liberals. When they want to reinforce ideas, they give some examples such that some studies and authority, however we do not know who is authority and which studies mentioned. It is not enough to satisfy readers' thoughts. They have to use some statistics and quotes, they should indicate that where these statistics come from. It can not be valid other states' datas for United States. Authors say that " use of drugs and alcohol has benefits, as well as dangers. " Here, there is a lack of explanation, because they have to explain drugs' benefits and dangers clause by clause. We have no information in respect of its benefits and dangers. In the another proposition, they do not mention about the importance of civil law. It can be decreased using of drugs and alcohols by some of prevention in law. For instance, local government should ban to use drugs in public space. However, they do not think to solve these problems with some law amendments. They rule out power and affects of

law in social life. When these points are taken into consideration it can be concluded that this article has strong suggestions to overcome drug issue but their evidences are underpowered. They pay attention to freedom and privacy and also the authors emphasized inelasticity of demand for cigarette consumption. These arguments play an important role to support their ideas. They gave some evidences without reference. These damaged credibility of article. I wish the authors had used the ideas of experts of different fields. They should not take a side and should be objective.