

Free literature review on legalization of medical marijuana and its effects on th...

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Literature Review

(Section)

Introduction

Between the periods 1980 to 1992, consumption of illicit drugs in the United States increased from 29% to 42% among 12th grade adolescence, and from 11% to 21% among eight grade students. Other statistics shows that in the 12th grade 80% are students on alcoholic. More than half of them have been doing it in the eighth grade; 75% had smoked cigarettes, of this group, 35% became habitual smokers. The greatest challenge is faced by families, who, no matter what their social or economic level, must devise strategies to help their adolescence. Studies have been done to prove or disprove that

legalizing medical marijuana has an effect on the youth. The aim is to find

(1) What are the implications of legalizing marijuana for medicinal purpose?

(2) What are the effects of legalizing marijuana on the youth?

Keywords: illicit drugs, medical marijuana, effects.

Literature Review

In Leow's et al.'s (2014) summary article reviewing the legalization of marijuana, constitutional questions arise from the debate on whether the state law has the right to violate existing state law. This debate has to do with whether the state has the right to violate existing federal laws by refusing to legalize marijuana or not. Current state laws conflict with the Controlled Substance Act of 1970 and Congress has chosen not to remove marijuana as a Schedule 1 drug because the overwhelming evidence shows marijuana to be a dangerous and addictive drug which can have a negative

impact on the youths in the society.

Debaters want to know why the Government chose to control the finances of the country. In another review studied, Goode (2012), argues that the marijuana controversy is foremost a political, rather than a scientific debate and warrants much concern by the stakeholders in the society. It is a struggle to control moral supremacy and deviates from the moral values that consuming drugs is unhealthy if used in large doses. However, he further indicates that the stand toward marijuana use and legalization are largely a sign of prior basic underlying ideological commitments. So called scientific truths seem to have little impact on the positions taken and have been preselected to verify a position already taken. Widely used concept such as, “ drug abuse”, reflect the ideological character of the controversy.

Register (1993), examines whether the decriminalization of marijuana in eleven states has affected self-reported usage of drugs. Decriminalization is not found to significantly impact drug use. The implication is that the demand for drugs is highly inelastic with respect to incremental changes in the legal sanctions for possession of small amounts of marijuana.

There is no strong evidence that the legalization of marijuana will increase the frequency of use of drugs, whether legal or illegal - C. Thies and C.

Register. (1993). Studies have been done to disprove the increased use of hard drugs because of the legalization of marijuana. In contrast with marijuana use, rates of other illicit drug use among patients to the emergency room were substantially higher in states that did not decriminalize marijuana use.

Medical marijuana laws (MMLs) have been suggested as a possible cause the

increase in marijuana use among adolescents in the United States. This study has assessed the effects of MMLs on adolescent marijuana use from 2003 through 2011. Results have suggested that there were no quantifiable affected adolescent marijuana uses in the first few years after their enactment. An additional study by Jacobus, (2009) reports that in the onset of adolescent period, marijuana use has been linked to several brain structure abnormalities, including: reduced gray matter volume and density. Also, in non-users, an increased white matter volume and density, and, reduced white matter integrity in some areas which are not linked to learning performance. Results are however, inconclusive, and studies are ongoing to determine which of these abnormalities are linked to marijuana use.

Bostwick, MD.(2013) reports that arguments for and against medicinal marijuana are many. Under Federal Law the drug is illegal. However, given widespread state resistance, its use is becoming more common in areas such as cancer research. In Colorado, a handful of physicians write half the state's prescriptions for medicinal marijuana. The argument is that just because a few rogue doctors flout legislation to pot-mill commerce, which does not justify depriving physicians of the right to prescribe medicinal marijuana. No trial under the patronage of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has compared medicinal marijuana with analgesics. Because of marijuana's schedule I status, industry is thwarted in its attempt to develop compounds with endocannabinoid adverse qualities. Some people argue that as a drug of abuse, marijuana has no business being used for clinical purposes. Yet, several schedule I drugs have close association with legitimate medical

applications.

The United States has decreed that marijuana has no accepted medical use and should remain classified as a highly dangerous drug like heroin.

Accepting and promoting the powerful health benefits of marijuana would instantly cut huge profits geared towards cancer treatment. As a result of this, the United States would have to look at how we treat persons who have the substance in their possession. According to tangible research and findings done in recent years, the Decriminalization Movement by James Austin, Ph. D. of the JFA Institute in Washington DC, he said that for the past three decade they have witnesses a stormy controversial debate about the possible decriminalizing or legalizing marijuana and its subsequent merits to society. An important point noted in this article is that more than ever, the most powerful and appealing argument for marijuana legalization is that it would save a huge amount of Government money being spent on the enforcement of such laws.

Elas Hsu, (Ph. D. Taipie Medical University) says, speaking from a medical perspective, it is not hard to make the decision to legalize it. Yet after considering ethical, legal, economic and social issues, it is still a complex matter. She refers to the Opium Wars of 1840-1842 in China and links this to marijuana which could result in a stigma that is similar to the Chinese and this makes it hard to legalize it. Many previous comments made are that the indecision lies in the fact that in debating it, persons only argue from the standpoint of its harm and addiction. The harm and benefit of marijuana trade-off depends on the patient and the severity of his or her illness. As the benefit outweighs the risk, she strongly supports the patient who wants to

use marijuana as a cure. Its positive impact can only be realized and felt if the doctor supports the patient and advises of its benefits, risks and side-effects.

Huerta-Torryos, (2013M. D., Physician) in an academic activity organized by the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, in exposing the issue of poisoning in adults, the marijuana debate was mentioned. He made reference to a case study where a patient was administered drug made from marijuana. None of these primary caregivers had clinical experience, had not read any publication or known any clinical guidelines in using marijuana for medicinal purposes. As a result, it was felt that it was not to recommend the medicinal use of marijuana. It was therefore concluded that medical doctors who have no knowledge of the use of medicinal marijuana, should not be allowed to dispense or use same. The investigation into the above case study provided clinical information that was used to decide the fate of medical marijuana. Ultimately, the use of Marijuana is illegal in Mexico and physicians are not allowed to prescribe it for medicinal use.

Hawkins (1992) suggests that the most promising route to effective strategies for the prevention of adolescent alcohol and other drug problems is through a risk-focused approach. This approach requires the identification of risk factors for drug abuse, identification of methods by which risk factors have been effectively addressed, and application of these methods to appropriate high-risk and general population samples in controlled studies. The authors review risk and protective factors for drug abuse, assess the number of approaches for drug abuse prevention potential with high-risk groups and make recommendations for research and practice. There is a lot

of unfounded evidence to suggest that the legalization of medical marijuana is accompanied by increased use by high school students. The estimates from such findings are small, and therefore cannot be satisfactorily used to substantiate the negative claims made by many.

Debaters have expressed reservations over whether larger nations such as the United States and United Nations are prepared to allow legalization/decriminalization from smaller states. The attitude of larger Western Nations on legalization remains foggy at best. However, the conventions do not prevent anyone from using it for medicinal or scientific purposes. This position represents a major game change in ongoing discourse on ganja law reform. It has been seen where many have been relaxing their laws as they clearly see the tremendous advantages. Walls of hypocrisy are falling in the United States itself, which is now on the forefront of reform, as it seems the Obama administration is steadily taking pragmatic and forward-thinking positions.

Conclusion

In concluding, although the use of marijuana is barred according to federal and state laws, there is still much debate as to whether or not the use of the drugs should be legalized in the country. Recent changes in state laws have been linked to marijuana use in the states of Colorado and Washington have restarted many of the arguments that are related to widespread legalization. The case for the legalization is based on the vast amount of revenue that the legalization can generate. There is also the medicinal benefit of the drug. Already many chronically ill patients are being helped. There is, however,

one major concern for the supporters of the legalization, and it is that if marijuana is continuously grouped with other hard drugs, the youth will begin to think that these drugs are as harmless as marijuana.

The National Institute on Drug abuse said that the quality of life among some persons can be linked to the use of the drug. They have reported that the studies have shown that persons who are users are unable to function effectively at their jobs and are often diagnosed with having mental issues while there are others who may have social issues connected to the use of marijuana.

There is no concrete evidence to show that adolescents who use marijuana will eventually use other substances such as cocaine and alcohol. There had been other studies that prove that the use and abuse of other drugs have been linked to societal factors. These factors have passed on from generation to generation and, therefore, until there is concrete proof; it cannot be said that any one factor affects youth behaviour. Data must be analyzed over time, and enough time is given for observation in order to determine what the main factors are that impact youth.

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