

# Decriminalizing marijuana



Today, drugs remain the main concerns of the society and are regarded a major issues affecting our country today. Stories are seen on media about individuals killed over drugs. Although drugs are viewed as the inner-urban problems, the fact is that, it affect everybody, both users or non-users. The detrimental impacts related to drugs can be reduced if the United States impose a policy that support decrimination of marijuana. The present drug policy has actually failed. Cases of corruption, conflicts, high street crime and disobedient to the criminal justice system has been exacerbated by the current drug laws.

It's difficult to control illegal substances when majority of the population are actively using drugs (Morgan & Zimmer, 42). Marijuana is derived from a hemp plant grown across the nations and was heavily cultivated during colonial era. Other nicknames for marijuana include: pot, weed, grass, and so forth. The indigenous American used marijuana for various purposes ranging from medical to religious. After 130 years of being lawful, the alarm was raised concerning the problems of marijuana, and with much pressure from the public, the marijuana tax act was enacted in 1937 making its sale and possession illegal.

However, this prohibition was implemented without any research to show any possible detrimental impact that marijuana could have. The views of the native and the continental cultures were ignored and instead the government, media and the society assumed that the weed was a narcotic that caused crime and insanity among individuals. In America, silence and denial were the earlier trends deployed to stop marijuana usage. However, a

new approach of gross exaggeration and distortion was adopted later. This trend was meant to scare those who may use marijuana into abstention.

Medical journals and newspaper wrote stories showing the effect of the drug by making individuals committing inhuman crimes (Saffer & Chaloupka, 402). Questions about the impacts of marijuana need to be considered in order to establish the validity of the current law. More research have proved that moderate amount of marijuana is not addictive and not physically harmful as compared to the use of alcohol and tobacco. Chronic alcoholism has been documented to caused damage to the brain; however, this is not the case with marijuana use.

Therefore, although individuals should worry about the psychoactive qualities of marijuana, that is less detrimental than alcohol or tobacco (Single et al. , 160). Punishments for marijuana use have changed drastically with the public's view of the effect that the drug caused. The first prison sentences were a ten-year minimum prison for marijuana possession and a death sentence for selling the drug to a minor. However, the penalties reduced as usage increased with other states decriminalizing individual use. In 1980's, the three-strike rule was created making the third time offenders be sentenced to a compulsory life imprisonment.

Judges were now expected to focus their sentences on the serious attestable charge (Saffer & Chaloupka, 402). The current attitudes of the government and public towards marijuana are based on the assumption that unperturbed policies increase the use. Nevertheless, Holland, which decriminalized marijuana in 1976, has recorded a 40 percent reduction in regular use (Morgan & Zimmer, 42). This is a potential argument for decriminalizing in U.

S. Although realities about the use are influential, possibly the most abstemious facts are racist and arbitrary implementation of the current drug laws and policies.

The effects of incarceration for drug offenders has not been the same across races or ages, with young, black men suffering more for drug offenses. According to Single et al. , (160), 32 percent of black men between 20 and 29 years old were under criminal justice control in 1995. Currently, about 48 black men times the rate of the white men are admitted to public facilities for drug offences. Moreover, while the rate of black imprisoned for violent offences increased at the same rate as white, the rate of black imprisoned for drug offences are four times higher than the white.

The impacts of the incarceration affect both individuals and the communities at large. Such unequal laws and sentences reflect the problem faced by this system in persecuting the ethnic minority as a recognizable scapegoat. Indeed, decriminalization of marijuana in America would have a positive impact. Liberating billions of dollars that are spent on the sentencing peaceful drug offenders, and a change in laws and policy would remove burden on the system and allow money to be used for treatment and rehabilitation programs.

The legalizing and regulating of marijuana would prevent the introduction of the users to a harmful drug use, since the illegal dealer will be out of the equation. With decriminalization of marijuana, the oppression of the minority by this legal system will not be seen. The face of the drug use problem will theoretically shift, and buyers will meet their dealers just as it happens with other legal drugs. Moreover, decriminalization will eliminate the detrimental

image the government has gained for many years for not accepting the mistake they made (Saffer & Chaloupka, 402).

## Conclusion

The current marijuana issues and the disgusting discriminations observed in the legal system provide an almost potential argument for decriminalization. For us to have a reduction and a stop in the racial and ethnic legalization in our penal system conduct, decriminalization would be an appropriate and powerful step. The societies have been living in a puritanical menace for over along time and hence it is time to remove the fetters of the traditional meekness to the minority demand that feel they have to speak to people their ethical and moral role in the name of their belief and indistinct opinions.