

Use Of Marijuana In Adults And The Impact Of Legalization On The Consumption Patterns

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Abstract

This paper is about the use of marijuana in adults and the impact of legalization on consumption patterns. The paper will have a brief account of the epidemiology with the definition of the major drugs and their abuse. The major approaches to legalization will also be addressed along with the use of marijuana for medical and recreational purposes. All the data is backed by the reports published by YRBS, MTF and NSDUH. The effect of youth shall be explained in detail with an insight into the criminal penalties for the consumers.

Social workers are working to fight the excessive consumption of marijuana, particularly after its availability at all stores. It has become accessible to youth, and that is why the consumption rate is increasing. Social workers have different rehabilitation centers, and they treat the addicts with care. The committee to judge the addiction level at the court always has a social worker on a plane.

Epidemiology Of Marijuana Use Among Youth

Marijuana means the leaves and flowers of the plant called cannabis; It has a high concentration of cannabinoids. These leaves are then smoked, cooked or vaporized to gain a feeling of pleasure. These leaves have therapeutic benefits as well. Marijuana is a blend of cannabinoids. If we talk about the point of view of doctors, they never suggest anything that requires being smoked. However, there are methods to use it with consumption.

Substance use is tracked in the United States of America to keep an eye on consumption. These substances include marijuana. The databases responsible for this tracking include MTF (Monitoring the Future, and the University of Michigan sponsors this, NSDUH (National Survey of Drug Use and Health), which is backed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sponsors (YRBS) Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Each of these has different methods and techniques. MTF looks after the High School, and the results published by them in 2014 were alarming (Johnston, 2013). The report showed that 6.5% of students of 8th standard and 21.2 % of students of 12 standard use this drug once a month. However, there was a decrease in the percentages, as shown in 2013. YRBS reported the percentages as 23.1 % in 2011 and 23.4 % in 2013, which was not a big change (Eaton, 2012). Another alarming report was

published by the Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, which showed that teenagers in grade 9 were smoking marijuana more than 20 times a month. This increase was alarming. Similarly, NSDUH also gave its analysis on the current consumption of the drug, which showed that 8.2% of students were smoking in 2002, 7.3% in 2009 and then 7.9 in 2011. These percentages increased for the students of 18 years and rates became stagnant at 19% in 2012. All this history gives an insight into the frequent use of marijuana, and thus, it can be stated that almost 100 million adults have indulged in consuming marijuana, and the current rate of their consumption is 17.4 million. However, the reports of all the databases can help in comparing the use of medical marijuana to the consumption at a national level.

The legislation of the state allows the use of medical marijuana, but no change in the rate of consumption was noticed after the new legislation. Therefore, we can state that the current rate is not significantly influenced by the use of marijuana being legal or illegal. On the other side, if we study the youth and their behaviors, there are some ways to discourage them. The harms of this drug can be conveyed along with discouraging the endorsements done by youth. Similarly, the policies to take care of the use should be strict including the location of the stores and the prescription policies at the drug stores.

Experiences Of The Condition

The smokers have reported feeling happy and high. They start sensing the things around them more sharply, and the increased attention to music pleases them. It also aggravates intimacy.

Usually, the people arrested for marijuana abuse are teenagers and the young guys who affect the rest of the population. The majority of the people arrested for this cause are black men and young boys. Due to the law of the state, they are then prosecuted, which creates problems for them in the future. Legal problems at a young age are not desired anyway because these can impact the lives permanently, The marijuana arrests are increasing each.

52% of arrested people for marijuana are young adults. If we discuss it with segregation, then 28% were the students from 15 years to 19 years, and 24 % were comprised of men ranging from 20 years to 24 years. (2005) However, we cannot determine the amount of the drug processed by the people, but the arrests and the analysis by the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports showed that each detainee had 1 ounce or less, but 75% of the arrested people were young.

A report published in 2005 studied the efficiency of the youth from 17 to 21 years old and measured their performance. Those who were high consumers of marijuana, whether medically or recreationally, had slow processing and had lost memory. Those who had controlled intake were comparatively better (Lane, 2005). Similarly, the test of learning was conducted for students 13-18 years old who were given marijuana more than once a week. Their mental health was also damaged. These people are seen as less motivated individuals.

Discussion

Decriminalization and legalization are used interchangeably, but they have different meanings. Decriminalization means that there would be no criminal penalties for consuming or processing marijuana, but legalization is defined as the freedom to keep, consume, sell and grow it. The decriminalization and legalization of this drug have been the most debated topic in the near past when states were talking about it, but today, these are legalized. The major concern about legalizing it was actually about the youth who misuse the drugs for the pleasure of some time. Their attraction to the drug was the major obstacle for the authorities.

On the other side, not all countries in the world have declared it legal. Many countries still have charges for possessing or consuming marijuana. The law of such states treats the drug users as criminals. However, some countries have adopted de facto policies to tackle the issue of decriminalization of possession. On the broader side of these policies, the decision to keep it illegal separates the countries from the rest of the world on the grounds of the private treaties and commitments that demand strict adherence to stop the use of drugs and prohibit their possession even.

The most liberal laws for consumption can be observed in Portugal, Uruguay and the Netherlands. Uruguay was the first country to take the initiative to legalize it in 2013. It did not limit the use of the drug to medical or fun purposes. The people in the state were allowed to consume for recreational purposes as well (Haase,2012). This change in law was to tackle the problem of illegal drugs and trafficking of drugs, which was causing the constant increase in the crime rate. Today, we cannot determine the effects of this law because it will take some time to become clear, but yes, the world is keen to know how it will impact the crime rate and drug trafficking in Uruguay and the neighboring states.

Portugal followed the steps of Uruguay, and in 2000, they also declared that marijuana could be used for personal consumption. Portugal not only made it legal, but they also came up with legalizing other drugs, including heroin, cocaine and amphetamines (Domoslawski,2011). The state then decided to come up with a different and healthy approach. Any person who is caught consuming the drugs has to appear in front of a committee. This committee comprises of the health officers and social workers. The duty of these members is to confirm whether the person is using drugs just for recreation or is an addict. Each case is dealt with care, and every person is judged individually. After careful observation, the committee determines the type of treatment that should be given, whether the person should be warned or fined, or does he needs any rehabilitation treatment. If the person is an addict, he has to take the treatment and fight against addiction. In extreme cases, the driving license of the addicts is also suspended till they take proper care at the drug center.

If the person does not comply with the orders of the courts, he may be imprisoned by the authorities. Research shows that it is not easy for the authorities to treat substance overuse patients with the

help of the committees. Tracing the patients and treating them with care is a troublesome job, but a very prominent decrease in the usage of drugs among the youth has been witnessed. Also, the rate of HIV decreased, which was increasing because of the injections used for drugs.

Most importantly, there was a significant increase in the number of people who wanted to seek treatment for the cure of drug abuse.

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