
The Reasons Tobacco Production Should Be Banned

Every year, about 6.7 million tons of tobacco are produced throughout the world. According to Jegede(2019), in the list of top producers of tobacco in the entire world, the top five are China, Brazil, India, U.S.A, and Indonesia in that order. U.S.A is the fourth largest producer of tobacco in the world. Its production in the year 2019 is about 467 956 000 pounds according to statista.com. With all this production and the amount of income it earns the country, do we really stop to think of the effects this brings and the side effects that we suffer, as a country and the whole world in extension, from the production of tobacco? Have we considered other options and other income generating activities that do not involve production of a substance dangerous to our health and the environment? Do we really consider the persons who suffer from tobacco, not because they chose to but because other people around them chose to use tobacco subsistence? Do we consider the possibility of having counterfeits that look genuine but contain more harmful and unregulated substances that may harm us? Have we really thought how in producing the tobacco, we actually affect all the creatures of sea and dry land? Do we care how it affects the productivity of the people, the country and the whole world? With the hazards that tobacco causes, both to our health and the environment, I strongly believe tobacco should be banned not only in the United State but all around the world.

What are the effects of tobacco to a country and the entire world population? Tobacco smoking leads to diseases that affect almost every part of the body. It is time to take a close look at this general statement. The inhaled substances damage the lungs and leaves one vulnerable to such infections as emphysema which is the destruction of air sacs and chronic bronchitis which is a permanent inflammation on the bronchus. These are health hazards from basic smoking of tobacco products – cigarettes. Tobacco consumption also results to effects on the integumentary system – the skin, hair and nails. It literally changes the skin structure therefore increasing the risk of squamous cell carcinoma popularly known as skin cancer. This clearly shows how tobacco affects the body respiratory system and the skin structure which is a serious health hazard. These effects run deep as they are not easy to treat and are mostly long term - one will not notice the effects when they start consuming the tobacco and its products.

Tobacco consumption leads to constricted blood vessels. “The nicotine and carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke damage the cardiovascular system and pave the way for a stroke”, This will increase the blood pressure leaving someone vulnerable to suffering stroke and even heart attack. It also lowers the HDL cholesterol and raises the LDL cholesterol. This is harmful as it lowers the efficiency of the heart in performing its functions. It also raises the fats in the body by raising the triglycerides in the tissues around the heart. This all amounts to exposing the heart to extreme dangerous conditions increasing chances of stroke and heart attack. Research also shows that, compared to people who don't consume tobacco, people who consume are at a greater risk of blood cancer. This is evidence enough that tobacco is harmful to human health.

While it is true that tobacco has a higher monetary value which is good for the economy of the country, it is also true that some dangerous and harmful gases are reduced during the curing process. These gaseous substance affect the balance of the respiratory gases by contaminating the air. This has adverse effects as it aids the formation of acid rain which alters the pH of the soils and water bodies. Altered pH makes the ecosystem less conducive for the organisms that

live in that habitat as organisms can only survive in specific pH. Another effect of the gaseous pollutants is destruction of the ozone layer which shields human skin from direct sunlight. This exposes people to danger of cancer from the direct sunlight rays.

According to the FDA, “Smoking is a major cause of cardiovascular diseases, such as coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke.” However, one can inhale the smoke even without actually smoking – secondhand smokers. Secondhand smokers are the persons who inhale smoke from the burning end of a cigarette or from the smoke exhaled by a primary smoker. A secondhand smoker can be anyone from a kid on his way to school to an old woman on her way from the store. It could also be someone with a heart disease. They are secondhand smokers because someone else is smoking around them even though they may not have intended to smoke. Some people argue that there are smoking zones to ensure there are no secondhand smokers but in reality, smokers exhale and other parties inhale the smoke. It is clear the ‘smoking zones’ solution is not working and it is clear that in order to really protect the secondhand smokers, banning tobacco is the best thing to do in order to protect secondhand smokers.

In the recent past, there have been cases of smuggling tobacco across borders done by criminal gangs and production of counterfeit cigarettes. First, all tobacco products, whether legitimately bought from the retailer or the illegal products from the black markets, contains over five thousand chemicals at least sixty of which are known to cause cancer. Secondly, the counterfeit products are much riskier to health compared to the legal products. This is because the illegal counterfeit tobacco products do not undergo standardization. The government does not verify whether or not they are harmful to health. The counterfeits may therefore contain dangerous and harmful substances for example, the level of tar and carbon monoxide found in them may be many levels more than the allowed levels which makes their effects far much extreme “and in some cases (they) can contain insects...”

Lastly, some scientists have argued that tobacco is not entirely bad. They have suggested that tobacco has some positive effects on the persons who smoke it. Wanjek(2011) says that it lowers risk of knee replacement surgery. He says, “results from a new study shows that men who smoke had less risk of undergoing total joint replacement surgery than those who never smoked.” In addition, smoking reduces risk of Parkinson’s disease and it reduces risks of obesity since it (tobacco) is an appetite suppressant. Parkinson disease is a disorder of the central nervous system that affects movement, often including tremors. Nerve cell damage in the brain causes dopamine levels to drop which explains the symptoms of the disease. The act of smoking triggers behavior modification that prompts smokers to snack less and may make food less tasty curbing the smokers’ appetite. This will make them eat less and less therefore losing weight. Although this relationship between smoking and weight loss works, no doctor would recommend smoking for the purpose of losing weight mainly because the bad effects of smoking are worse than being obese. It has also been said by some scientists that the nicotine has positive effects on cognitive functions. They suggest that nicotinic receptors may contribute to normal cognitive functioning and that smoking may help patients with Alzheimer’s disease. Alzheimer’s disease is a progressive disease that destroys memory and other important mental functions. In this disease, brain cells and their connections degenerate and die which explains the memory destruction and damaged mental functions.

However, it is a little disappointing that even with this entire knowledge, resources and many other alternative less harmful ways of generating incomes, some countries including the USA

still have their focus on tobacco as a main source of income. In so doing, its effects and the dangers it poses are overlooked because of the economic gains from the tobacco. As seen in details, tobacco does not only affect human beings but also plants, animals, soil micro-organisms and the atmospheric gases. When the acidic rain which results from tobacco curing kills the soil micro-organisms the soil becomes less fertile. It is also true that the pH of the water in seas is altered by the rain which makes some species of fish disappear and become extinct. As small as the problem seems, it is not really small and the effects of tobacco production cut across all aspects of life from reducing the life expectancy, increasing mortality, reducing greatly the output of individuals in terms of labor, all types of cancer all through to reducing fertility of persons who smoke.

In conclusion, it is very clear that tobacco production and its ultimate consumption is dangerous to the health of people, plants and other animals. For these reasons, I strongly suggest that tobacco be banned, from its production all the way through to consumption. This will help protect the environment, plants, soils and soils micro-organisms, water bodies, water animals, respiratory gases. It will also protect human beings from the adverse effects of tobacco consumption that we do not admit we suffer from directly or otherwise. When tobacco is eliminated from the country and the entire world eventually, cases of cancer will drastically go down and the world will realize the true potential of its people. The world will become a safer place to live in and the productive population that is out there producing the dangerous tobacco which may affect them even without knowing will get different better and less hazardous jobs for a better unified country and a better world.