

# Social Movements on Liberalization "Free Marijuana" of Thai's Government Policy: Freedom under Boundaries

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## Abstract

The Thai government's declaration of marijuana as free and legal requires marijuana plants to be produced, exported, sold, and possessing consumption marijuana plants. The medicinal marijuana use, leveraging solutions, and leverage points in the social movement sector. While Thai lifestyles have long been associated with marijuana, the evidence appears in murals, literary works, and parallel Thai drug recipes on medicine relief. A critical leverage point considered liberal marijuana has gained social acceptance and widespread policy discussions through the activism of various organizations, the fight in the discourse sector, and civil society are "marijuana is a medicine" or "marijuana is a magic drug." Simultaneously, there was a product launch and a research publication by Rangsit University that marijuana substances are supported for inhibiting cancer cells. Although the liberalization of marijuana is not yet complete, this is because there is no law to keep it. Therefore, it has resulted in a relatively unprecedented easing of policies, regulations, and prohibitions. Social movements are confident in the government that they can legally regulate the cultivation to use of marijuana, and products of their responses to their unbelievable toward the free marijuana policy indicate that at all levels.

**Keywords:** social movements, free marijuana, government policy, freedom, boundary, liberalization, leverage point, and modern medicine technology

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Thailand made it legal to cultivate and possess marijuana as a dream come true for an aging generation of pot smokers who recall the kick the legendary Thai Stick variety delivered. The issuance of the Notification of the Ministry of Public Health Re: Specifying the names of narcotics of category 5, A.D. 2022, which came into effect on June 9, 2022. All parts of marijuana, hemp, are prohibited from being a drug, except for extracts containing more than 0.2% by weight of THC (Thailand Health News, 2022)<sup>[1]</sup>. The Ministry of Public Health has consistently pushed for the introduction of marijuana and hemp, that is used for medical purposes or health care are expected to help create added value to the economy and generate income for people who

insisted that they had encouraged the inappropriate use of marijuana and hemp. The stated intention of the country's public health minister to distribute 1 million marijuana seedlings has added to the impression that Thailand is turning into a weed wonderland (National Public Radio, Inc, 2022)<sup>[2]</sup>.

The phenomenon has created the image of Thailand as a country with marijuana freedom. The Khaosan Road Operators Association has proposed pushing Khao San Road as a center for marijuana. This will benefit tourism and create business opportunities some areas are designated as sandboxes and have prepared private marijuana cultivation areas to support the policy of liberal medical marijuana, which has been widely publicized. While the Ministry of Public Health has proposed a draft of the Marijuana Hemp Act,

A.D. 2022, which use for medical, health, and community-based lifestyles to promote the agriculture industry and economy, including protection for persons who may be harmed by consuming marijuana, hemp, prohibiting those licensed to sell marijuana, hemp to persons under the age of 20, and pregnant women to exempt from prescriptions for patients by medical professionals through the Thai traditional medicine and applied by the Thai traditional medicine for the benefit of treating disease. In this Act: “Thai traditional medicine ” means medical procedures relating to diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of disease, or promotion and midwifery, the examination, and restoration of human health, Thai massage, and also means the preparation and production of Thai traditional medicines, and the invention of medical equipment and devices based on knowledge or texts passed down and developed over generations; “Thai traditional medical profession Thai traditional medicine and s the practice of ” means profession s relating to the practice of applied Thai traditional medicine; etc (Government Gazette of Thailand, 2013)<sup>[3]</sup>.

Some Thai advocates celebrated by buying marijuana at a cafe that had previously been limited to selling products made from the parts of the plant that do not get people high. The dozen or so people who turned up at the Highland Cafe could choose from different buds with names such as Sugarcane, Bubblegum, Purple Afghani, and UFO (International Drug Policy Consortium, 2022)<sup>[4]</sup>. Thailand made it legal to cultivate and possess marijuana as of Thursday, like a dream come true for an aging generation of pot smokers who recall the kick the legendary Thai Stick variety delivered. The stated intention of the country’s public health minister to distribute 1 million marijuana seedlings has added to the impression that Thailand is turning into a weed wonderland. So far, it appears there would be no effort to police what people can grow and smoke at home aside from registering to do so and declaring it is for medical purposes (Vejjongsa & Peck, 2022)<sup>[5]</sup>.



a) Leafs of Hemp and Marijuana



b) The first customer of the day, Rittipomng Bachkul celebrates after buying legal marijuana at the Highland Cafe in Bangkok, Thailand, Thursday, June 9, 2022.



c) Thailand gives away a million free marijuana plants but says it doesn't want people to get high

**Sources:** a), b), and c) Lalit (2022)<sup>[6]</sup>

Ministry of Health The Ministry of Public Health recently announced that marijuana is a controlled herb don't use in children under 20 years old, pregnant women, and lactating women that effective from 17 June, nine days after the liberalization of marijuana. Mr. Anutin Charnvirakul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health has pushed for the use

of marijuana for medical and health benefits before adding value to become an economic crop. The announcement also bans smoking in public places such as the Ministry of Health, schools, shopping malls, streets, and crowded places. Following the announcement of the Department of Health, control of nuisance from smell or marijuana smoke (BBC News, Thailand, 2022)<sup>[7]</sup>.

People's movement against free marijuana in Thailand: The Thai government will distribute one million free marijuana plants to households nationwide in June to mark a new rule allowing people to grow marijuana at home. The move is the latest step in Thailand's plan to promote marijuana as a cash crop. According to the World Bank, about a third of its labor force works in agriculture. A worker inspects flowering marijuana plants at a legal marijuana facility in Thailand. The law was meant to pave the way for people to use the plant in medicinal teas or soups (Chen, 2022)<sup>[8]</sup>. Twenty-one years ago, it had one of the more searing experiences. They were invited to watch and film the execution of five prisoners and four convicted drug traffickers. It's hard to imagine, then, that what we have seen over the past weeks is happening in Thailand. Cafés and stalls have been openly selling marijuana products or showing off jars filled with potent marijuana flowers (Head, 2022)<sup>[9]</sup>.

### **Marijuana or Marijuana Plant**

Marijuana refers to the dried leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds from the *Marijuana Sativa* or *Marijuana Indica* plant. The plant contains the mind-altering chemical THC and other similar compounds (Pacheco & Rehman, 2022)<sup>[10]</sup>. Thai's people were worried about the damaging effects on their communities of narcotics like methamphetamines - and they were willing to ignore the shocking violations of human rights that came with the violent crackdown. Other countries in the region have followed the same punitive approach, notably the Philippines after President Rodrigo Duterte took office in 2016. Singapore and Malaysia have imposed the death penalty for drug trafficking for decades. Tourists coming to South East Asia have long been warned of the harsh penalties they face if caught with even small amounts of marijuana. It's hard to imagine, then, that what we have seen over the past weeks is happening in Thailand (BBC News, 2022)<sup>[11]</sup>.

### **Using Marijuana for Medical**

Marijuana is mainly used recreationally or as a medicinal drug, although it may also be used for

spiritual purposes. In 2013, between 128 and 232 million people used marijuana (2.7% to 4.9% of the global population between the ages of 15 and 65); it is the most commonly used illegal drug in the world (World Drug Report, 2015)<sup>[12]</sup>. While marijuana plants have been grown since at least the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE, evidence suggests that it was smoked for psychoactive effects at least 2,500 years ago in the Pamir Mountains. Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, marijuana has been subject to legal restrictions. The possession, use, and cultivation of marijuana are illegal in most countries (Donahue, 2019)<sup>[13]</sup>. In 2013, Uruguay became the first country to legalize recreational use of marijuana though it is legal in some jurisdictions, with the highest use among adults (as of 2018). So far, the medical use of marijuana is permitted only in a limited number of territories, including Zambia, the United States, Canada, and Nigeria (United Nation, 2018)<sup>[14]</sup>.

Free marijuana, as a medical plant, contains the essence of marijuana as a medical plant that wants the government to promote the free cultivation of marijuana. The main objective is to sell raw materials for the production of medicines or medical treatment, which will generate a tremendous increase in income for farmers. This has sparked a wave of support and awareness for the study of marijuana from many people. Marijuana is a medicinal herb useful in medicine, with academic evidence supporting both Thai and modern medicine. However, it has many impacts. Therefore, this article aims to study the meaning. The importance of the free marijuana (Dontumprai, et al., 2021)<sup>[15]</sup>.

### **Using Marijuana for Recreational**

There are many myths about marijuana. Despite what people may have heard, marijuana is not a harmless drug. It can be a trigger for mental illness. Although it is possible for some people to occasionally use marijuana without developing substance use problems, users should be aware that recreational marijuana use can become unpredictable and problematic. According to the CDC, approximately one in 10 people who use marijuana will develop an addiction. That number increases to one in six among people who used the

drug before 18. Unfortunately, people often believe they can use addictive substances without becoming addicted. This can be particularly true when people are using substances recreationally. However, it is essential to remember that addiction can strike unexpectedly. No one likes to think that they will develop a marijuana use disorder, and they are often surprised when their drug use turns into an addiction (National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), 2021)<sup>[16]</sup>.

### **Social Movements for “Free Marijuana”**

The use of marijuana is purely recreational and only happens in social situations; it is not "needed" to help the person relax or to get through their day, and they don't need to use marijuana to do things like stimulate their appetite, get in the mood for sex, or have a bowel movement. Excessive amounts of money are not spent on marijuana, and other essential purchases, such as food, household bills, and clothing, are not sacrificed in favor of marijuana. While recreational marijuana use is often believed to not lead to negative health effects, it is important to remember that smoke inhalation is always harmful. Marijuana has also been linked to cognitive problems, breathing issues, cancer, and other possible health issues (Bruce et al., 2019)<sup>[17]</sup>.

On June 9, 2022, the government released marijuana from the list of drugs announced by the Ministry of Public Health, meaning people can grow and consume this plant's components illegally in unlimited amounts, both household, and commercial. It is the use of state power to do illegal and legal things. This gap raises public concern about the potential consequences; who does not know how long it will take until the new law is issued that it is a rational concern? The government should therefore take responsibility by accelerating action to mitigate such risks. In economics: Liberalization allows liberalized goods to grow because production and consumption are out of control. Who wants to buy, which buy? Who wants to sell, which sell? Market forces and demand for profit will drive production, consumption, and the price of that product. This is

what will happen to marijuana as well. (Nijjathaworn, 2022)<sup>[18]</sup>.

The research has had a broader social impact, particularly the findings suggesting that marijuana can alleviate cancer symptoms. And the research team announced that it would continue to do the following research step to prove whether marijuana can cure cancer. As a result of these research findings, the liberal marijuana movement is more legitimized and accepted by society, with more scientific and modern medical data to support it. As a result of these research findings, the liberal marijuana movement is more legitimized and accepted by society, with more scientific and modern medical data to support it. Such shocks extend to the country's perimeter until many social movements exist. It took many forms and was responded to more quickly than the demanding movements of the past.

### **Historical Background of Marijuana in Thailand for Unlock Free Marijuana**

In 2018, Thailand became the first Asian nation to legalize medical marijuana. On January 25, 2022, Marijuana became decriminalized for recreational use in Thailand, and again it is the first nation in Asia to do so. A marijuana clinic was available as early as April 2022. Starting from June 9, 2022, all marijuana plant parts were removed from the narcotic list decriminalizing all marijuana-related crimes. Around 4,200 prisoners were released due to the decriminalization on the same day (Thairath Online, 2022)<sup>[19]</sup>. There are currently no restrictions on how many plants each individual can cultivate. The specific law regulating marijuana is still pending in the Thai parliament as of June 2022. Thai law essentially excludes all foreign companies, and most companies incorporated in Thailand from producing, selling, importing, exporting, and processing marijuana. The people using illegal expensive medical marijuana from underground suppliers are most likely to benefit from it. In addition, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved all hospitals of the Public Health Ministry to prescribe medical marijuana to people with approved medical conditions (Food and Drug Administration of Thailand, 2022)<sup>[20]</sup>.

As for the role of Rangsit University, Dr. Arthit Urairat, a medical doctor, President, has permanently joined the campaign to unlock free marijuana. Almost as part of a campaign to call for free marijuana, whether it's the launch of a chemotherapy spray for cancer patients or research into hair's problem have the critical chemical compound in marijuana leaves and flowers. The crucial compounds in marijuana can attack cancer-causing substances. In addition, opening the Bachelor of Marijuana Science Curriculum at Rangsit University has been an essential impetus for the movement of the people's and society's sectors to gain more attention. The results showed that marijuana could relieve cancer symptoms. The research team announced that it would continue to make sense of the subsequent research step to prove whether marijuana can cure cancer. The research to be published will result in the liberal marijuana movement becoming more legitimized and socially accepted. This is because there is scientific and modern medical data to support its credibility. It expanded to the country's perimeter until the movement's current variety of styles and received a response much faster than the activities demanded in recent times.

## METHODOLOGY

Research on the government policy towards banning marijuana as a drug without control measures would incentivize the cultivation and production of hemp, or marijuana free, with innovations to use marijuana as a raw material to produce goods or to cook food to stimulate consumption, supply or more marijuana production will cause marijuana prices to drop and consumption to expand. It follows Say's Law of economics, that is, the collection creates demand. As a result, society will produce and consume more marijuana, if possible. This research aimed to investigate the "free marijuana" Thai government policy: freedom under the boundaries of the social movements for understanding on liberalization of marijuana in recreation. This qualitative research method involved collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It can be used to gather in-depth

insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research.

## Research Objectives:

1. To monitor and evaluate the social movement in the fight to unlock free marijuana.
2. To synthesize the history and development of medicinal marijuana use in Thailand.
3. To analyze the problems to the leverage point and the turning point from the social sector's movement to amend the Drug Act of 1979 to allow marijuana plants to be used as medicines.

## The Conceptual Meritocracy: Research Conceptual Framework

A qualitative research conceptual framework according to the principles of social dhammathipateyya to analyze the leverage point in the social movement to unlock free marijuana was designed. It consists of holding the doctrine of truth, correctness, righteousness, goodness, reason precedes, action and scrutiny, scrutiny to the fullest extent of intellect, discernible innocence, character, etc. Therefore, social meritocracy is a fair society, economic justice, society, and politics. Synthesis reaches the leverage point in calling for the liberalization of marijuana by the public sector and Rangsit University. Therefore, systematic problems will be solved sustainably and based on social governance according to laws, regulations, and rules that look to the overall interests and social justice. An apply the principles of goodness and badness to judge the conduct of people in society are standardized and accepted in general society movements (Kongseang, 2021)<sup>[21]</sup>.

In terms of the conceptual meritocracy (merit, from Latin *mereō*, and -cracy, from Ancient Greek *κράτος* *kratos* 'strength, power') is a political system in which economic goods and/or political power are vested in individual people based on talent, effort, and achievement, rather than wealth or social class. Advancement in such a system is based on performance, as measured through examination or demonstrated achievement. Although the concept of meritocracy has existed for centuries, the term itself was coined in 1958 by

the sociologist Michael Dunlop Young in his dystopian political and satirical book *The Rise of the Meritocracy* (Fox, 2002)<sup>[22]</sup>.

### Research Procedures

The qualitative research model was designed with the survey method and the documentary research/textual interpretation mainly by using interdisciplinary analytical methods (multi-disciplinary approach) and theoretical methodology, which will use the theoretical concepts of various schools according to the phenomenological analysis. Focused on explaining and organizing the ideas of socially-sovereignty towards the demanding movement for liberalization of marijuana was described. Interviews with experienced professional experts involved in social activities with in-depth interviews, group interviews with academics and related persons, organizing seminars and workshops to exchange, and brainstorming ideas from involvers from all sectors of Thai society were provided.

### RESULTS

The objectives of the research study were to monitor and evaluate the social movement in the fight to unlock free marijuana, to synthesize the history and development of medicinal marijuana use in Thailand, and to analyze the problems to the leverage point and the turning point from the movement of the social's sector to amend the Drug Act of 1979 to allow marijuana plants to be used as medicines. The results of research findings indicate that for each sub-sectors following:

#### **To Monitor and Evaluate the Social Movements that Fight to Unlock Free Marijuana**

The Narcotics Control Board, Ministry of Justice has prepared information for discussion on the marijuana policy, with the scope of the policy as follows: Marijuana and international agreements that are obligatory by member states; the purposes of the marijuana policy; household marijuana

cultivation; marijuana cultivation and its economic effects; recreational marijuana cultivation or planting for non-medical purposes; the need for a marijuana control system; and marijuana policies and alternatives. This is a marijuana policy that will present the government with the requirements, procedures, and drug measures of international organizations are the various provisions that Thailand has adopted as a global mechanism governing the implementation of the provisions of the convention to implement the requirements of the tradition that is to prevent its impact if a Member State does not comply with the provisions of the pattern. These sanctions against parties who violate the requirements of the convention, including the world's legal marijuana trade system, marijuana issues contrary to the conditions, and other international obligations that should be considered if Thailand adjusts its policy on the liberal use of marijuana (Office of the Narcotics Control Board, Ministry of Justice, 2022)<sup>[23]</sup>.

Marijuana is now legal, but not for recreational use. Thailand is set to decriminalize marijuana starting June 9, 2022, the first such move in Asia, seeking to grab a slice of a growing market for marijuana-infused food and medicinal marijuana treatments. It will no longer be a crime to grow and trade marijuana and hemp products, a move aimed at bolstering the country's crucial agriculture and tourism sectors. However, prospects for the Thai marijuana trade will be limited by the country's ban on recreational use and the production of anything with more than 0.2% tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive compound that gives users a "high" sensation (Bulletin, 2022)<sup>[24]</sup>. Thailand's Marijuana liberalization began in 2018 with the legalization of medical marijuana. The deputy prime minister, who heads the health ministry, campaigned on a promise to legalize household marijuana and hemp cultivation to allow farmers to supplement their incomes (Chaninat & Leeds, 2022)<sup>[25]</sup>.

Sawitri Assanangkornchai et al. (2022)<sup>[26]</sup> reported they studied what social movements are to Thailand's advantages to using marijuana in traditional medicine. For centuries, Thais used marijuana in conventional medicine to relieve pain

and fatigue. The country can claim some natural benefits, including a year-round tropical climate which means less need for artificial light and costly temperature controls. Thailand was known as a cultivator of marijuana and producer of marijuana in the 1970s and 1980s before the government cracked down in cooperation with the US war on drugs. The next step in marijuana liberalization is expected to be the approval of recreational use.

Pakgardhom (Pseudonym)<sup>[27]</sup> reflected on the concept of 'Liquor-marijuana' free in Thai Newspapers Posted in seasonal political columns and wrote that Ministry of Public Health Policy for free marijuana is for medical and health use only; anything other than this is wrong. While Kiattipoom Wongrachit, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Health, explained that from the policy to unlock marijuana, it is expected that people, farmers, and businesses will benefit (Kiattipoom, 2022)<sup>[28]</sup>. He said:

*“Farmers earn an additional 1.5 million baht per enterprise per person per year. Approximately 1,976 community enterprises have applied for marijuana cultivation and have 2,964 million baht annually in circulation in the system.”*

Although many concerns, will the school be free as well? What preventive measures are in place? Social problems that cannot be solved and don't know when to solve them that is, there is a problem in law enforcement. People do not follow the law. Government officials neglect this because these two things are added together, and there has been a lot of destruction.

On the other hand, 25 Muslim Organizations called for the State to return marijuana as a category five drug. A network of 25 Muslim organizations has released a statement on the broad impact of liberalizing marijuana. After discovering both the sale and use of marijuana among the general public, a network of 25 Muslim organizations, the “Network against Unethical Laws and Regulations,” issued a statement calling on the government to use marijuana as a drug in the category five as the usual issue. That it should be used for medicinal marijuana only (Network of 25 Muslim Organizations, 2022)<sup>[29]</sup>.

Chayut Setboonsarng and Jiraporn Kuhakan (2022)<sup>[30]</sup> reported via Reuters News focused on How companies are responding to the opportunity? Restaurants serving marijuana-laced dishes and clinics offering medical marijuana treatments expect more business, particularly from foreign visitors, once the pandemic ends and global tourism resumes. Thai farmers and companies can start planting marijuana without the fear of arrests and lengthy jail terms. All they need to do is upload details of their plans on the nation's health ministry website or an app developed by the Food and Drug Administration. Thailand legalized the growing of marijuana and its consumption in food and drinks, the first Asian country to do so, to boost its agriculture and tourism sectors. However, smoking pot in public can still violate public health laws.

Finally, a significant breakthrough and leverage point that caused the idea to change liberal marijuana was accepted by society and as a policy, which was the beginning of the launch of research from Rangsit University that led to a response in the community for widening the organization and leading to policy changes. This is because Rangsit University's philosophy of social ethics is not neglectful or neglecting to contribute to society. Rangsit University has never been silent about moving issues that benefit people in the Thai community and the nation. Rangsit University uses the principles of social meritocracy philosophy as a philosophy.

### **To Synthesize the History and Development of Medicinal Marijuana Use in Thailand**

There is no restriction on the consumption of marijuana plant parts. However, marijuana extracts with THC higher than 0.2% and marijuana seed extracts are still considered narcotic. Consumption of these extracts is only reserved for medical use under prescription. Marijuana smoking is legal for personal use in a private area but not encouraged by the government and is prohibited in public places by the Public Health Act 1992 with a fine of up to 700 USD or imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Free marijuana as a medicinal plant is the campaigning policy of the Poomjaithai Party. It

contains the essence of marijuana as a medical plant that wants the government to promote the free cultivation of marijuana. It is a raw material for the production of medicines or medical treatment, which will generate a tremendous increase in income for farmers. Marijuana is a medicinal herb useful in medicine, with academic evidence supporting both Thai and modern treatment, that is, the importance of free marijuana (Dontumprai et al., 2021)<sup>[15]</sup>.

Literature reviews on marijuana in the Thai lifestyle appeared for a long time, and the popularity of marijuana consumption is evidenced in the murals. History of marijuana in the past of Thai society through five pieces of literature because literature is not only fun but also reflects the way of life of the people thoughts and attitudes of people in each era in Thai society such as:

The story of Raden Randai by Phra Maha Montri (Sap) was written during King Rama III's reign. It is a poem written with a rhetorical technique. Raden Landai tells the story of Indian Landai and Indian Pradu, both are marijuana users.

Literature Khun Chang Khun Phaen, written by Soonthornphu, discusses the use of marijuana in several episodes, such as when Khun Phaen volunteered to fight Chiang Mai. In addition to the provisions of the army, there was food. There are also marijuana sacks, liquor bottles, and mitragyna leaves to have the energy to walk to Chiang Mai or the chapter Plai Chumpol caught the charmer; he also uses methods of dunking alcohol, opium, and marijuana.

Literature Journey to Muang Klaeng, written by Soonthornphu, Soonthornphu wrote this story in the reign of Phra Phuttha Yodfa Chulalok the Great (Rama I) while traveling to see his father. Along with his followers, Mr. Sang and two other students, Mr. Sang was addicted to marijuana. He had to use marijuana all the time. Create problems and troubles for Soonthornphu along the way, leading them to get lost and disappear on the track until Soonthornphu wrote that Mr. Saeng was "Devathat."

“นายแสวงหายคลายโทโสที่โกรธา  
ชกักัญขานั่งกริมยิ้มละไม”

“Mr. Saeng lost his anger at the rage. Drink marijuana, sit and smile.”

Literature Stalker Boy Farmer—who has a Yoke in His Heart, written by Rong Wongsawan, inside the book tells the way of life of people in the countryside in the past. It reflects the inseparable passion, eroticism, and addiction. The characters portray marijuana use as commonplace in society. Rong Wongsawan also wrote several stories about marijuana, such as being obsessed with marijuana, from champignons to marijuana, and marijuana democracy, etc., who can be called a national artist who took marijuana to write about in many aspects blended with the expected life of people in society.

Literature Crazy Dog Breed, This novel by Chart Kobchitti is based on his actual experiences of him, and his friends mentioned that marijuana is one of the things that are always present in the story of Lek Hip, the self-proclaimed hippie who worships the freedom of life, love music, and use marijuana.

The five kinds of literature mentioned above reflect the way of life of Thai people who have been using marijuana for a long time. And it is something that has always been with people. From the lower classes in Thai society, according to the literature mentioned above, there is also evidence of the aristocratic use of marijuana in various medicinal applications. It shows the relationship of Thai society to the marijuana plant, a medicinal herb with many medicinal properties and uses. This plant is not just a tree but also a connection point for many cultures, societies, and classes. "Khan Ai - leaves of the sled - eyeballs" is a catchphrase of former smokers. Meaningful marijuana stalks can make your throat cough and itchy. Leaves will produce a large amount of sputum. The part of marijuana that has buds is the granules. When pumped into it, it will cause crusty eyes to be ultimately around the eyes. Because usually, the part being smoked is the dried female flower or some people call it cauliflower/kingfisher (Kruemanee, (2022)[32].





Smoking marijuana Mural at Mahathat Worawihan Temple in Phetchaburi Province

Smoking marijuana Mural at Ban Muang Temple, Ratchaburi Province

Stout Thai guy is supporting the old mantis pot, marijuana equipment in the murals at Makut Kasatriyaram Royal Monastery, Bangkok that written since the reign of King Rama IV

Smoking marijuana Mural at Baan Khao Yi San Museum, Samut Songkhram Province

**Figure 2:** Images for marijuana with murals

**Source:** Pengkaew (2018)<sup>[33]</sup>

Marijuana was so popular that it became a trend in Thai mural painting for over 100 years. The popularity of marijuana in the past is still evident in the mural that Niphatporn Pengkaew has kept in a photograph. Documentary Magazine Issue 404 October 2018 with a story about marijuana. He said:

*“Because we are countrymen, marijuana is our normal life. I can tell you anything. Father grows marijuana in the house for his wife and children to eat and use for children. Phetchaburi Province’s people around our house, almost every home in the last 40-50 years, have grown marijuana to eat – use it thoroughly all over the place.”*

Besides tracing marijuana on murals in the temple in Phetchaburi province, Niphatphong continued to travel to the Mae Klong River basin to enter the capital to meet Rama's army of marijuana on the wall of Phra Kaew royal monastery (see Figure 2).

Niphatporn Pengkaew said that

*“I love wall painting almost crazy or crazy. Especially the paintings of the villagers’ lives that are inserted in the historical paintings of the Buddha, which are known as “pap kak,” but for me, the “pain kak” is “the core picture” as the “main picture,” the main thing that will make you appreciate it to deep in the way of Thai villagers.*

*Especially the picture of “marijuana use” that I have found more and more bizarre images, and the strangest thing is found in the Royal Monastery, in the heart of Bangkok. It’s been lurking in silence for over 150 years.”*

### **To Analyze the Problems to the Leverage Point and the Turning Point from the Movement of the Social Sector to Amend the Drug Act of 1979 to Allow Marijuana Plants to be Used as Medicines**

For the past four years, the Thai government has been making legislative reforms to build a market for medical marijuana. With the potential to reap significant economic benefits and help patients in need, the question remains will the government prioritize profits or patients? Marijuana or ganja appears to have been introduced to Thailand from India, with the similarity of the Thai name to the Indian term ganja cited as evidence (Martin, 1975)<sup>[34]</sup>. Marijuana has historically been used in Southeast Asia as an ingredient, a kitchen condiment, a medicine, and a source of fiber. Laborers were known to use it as a muscle relaxer. It was reportedly used to ease women's labor pains (Blair, 2001)<sup>[35]</sup>. The possession, cultivation, sale, and use of marijuana were criminalized by the Marijuana Act of 1935

and again by the Narcotics Act of 1979 (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2016)<sup>[36]</sup>.

Medical marijuana refers to the use of marijuana to treat disease or improve symptoms; however, there is no single agreed-upon definition (Backes, 2014)<sup>[37]</sup>. The rigorous scientific study of marijuana as a medicine has been hampered by production restrictions and the fact that it is classified as an illegal drug by many governments (Borgelt et al., 2013)<sup>[38]</sup>. In terms of marijuana, also known as marijuana, among other names, is a psychoactive drug from the marijuana plant. Native to Central and South Asia, the marijuana plant has been used as a drug for both recreational and entheogenic purposes and in various traditional medicines for centuries (Vij, 2012)<sup>[39]</sup>. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the primary psychoactive component of marijuana, which is one of the 483 known compounds in the plant, including at least 65 other cannabinoids, including cannabinoids (CBD). Marijuana can be used by smoking, vaporizing, within food, or as an extract (National Institute on Drug Abuse, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2019)<sup>[40]</sup>.

There was research studied on marijuana becoming an increasingly hot topic from plants with psychoactive substances from what was previously stipulated by Thai law as a narcotic. Today, marijuana has become a popular medicinal alternative. The marijuana plant has fascinated many civilizations, societies, and individuals through the centuries with its unique properties. Many people have learned how to benefit from these, finding various therapeutic and industrial uses of the plant that, in turn, enhanced domestic economies worldwide. Marijuana plants and their derivatives have been used since ancient times to treat many diseases. The plant is a critical ingredient in many traditional Thai medicinal remedies (Jirayustienjinda, 2021)<sup>[41]</sup>. However, over the past few decades, marijuana usage has been seen to change in a way that became incrementally more abusive, resulting in outright prohibition in almost all countries. Thailand was no exception, and in 1979 the Thai government officially enacted the Narcotics Act forbidding the use of marijuana and listing marijuana plants and their derivatives, most notably marijuana and

hemp, as category five narcotics. In-depth interviews, interviewees, and answers to interview questions include Mr. Anutin Charnvirakul (Ministry of Public Health), and Kiattipoom Wongrajit (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health) (2022)<sup>[42]</sup> answered questions from people who have concerns about marijuana and free medical marijuana. For example:

### **What are the medicinal benefits of marijuana plant extracts?**

Marijuana contains a large number of compounds called cannabinoids, the main ones being THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol) and CBD (Cannabidiol). For medical purposes, THC's effects on the psychotropic effects of THC help to relax, sleep, reduce nausea, vomiting, and stimulate appetite. CBD has an anti-inflammatory effect to reduce spasms and has properties to inhibit the growth of many types of tumor cells in vitro.

### **What diseases/symptoms can be treated with marijuana?**

There are six 6 diseases/symptoms that marijuana is beneficial in the treatment with clear academic information to support: Nausea and vomiting in patients receiving chemotherapy drugs, difficult-to-treat epilepsy and drug-resistant epilepsy, central nervous system pain using other treatment methods and it doesn't work, muscle spasms in patients with degenerative neuropathy, anorexia in underweight AIDS patients, and improving the quality of life of patients receiving palliative care or patients at the end of life.

### **Can marijuana cure cancer?**

There is a large amount of data available at the in vitro level, showing that various cannabinoids have the ability to inhibit the growth of various types of cancer cells to inhibit the formation of new blood vessels (anti-angiogenesis) and inhibit diffusion anti-metastasis but there is no clear data on the therapeutic effect of human cancer. However, marijuana extracts or medicinal marijuana does not commercially available, even

for patients who are treated with medicinal marijuana.

In addition, medical personnel to provide treatment with marijuana extracts must undergo training before dispensing marijuana products obtained from a standard production facility certified by the Ministry of Health and by considering other treatment methods first. This is because marijuana is not the first choice to treat disease.

**The echoes of society grew louder and louder after unlocking marijuana gets out of drugs with an apparent regulatory legal vacuum**

Focused on NIDA Poll survey results that involved the government policy on free marijuana, the Perceptions Survey Center "NIDA Poll" with the Faculty of Social and Environment Development, the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) revealed the results of a public perception poll on "marijuana policy," a survey conducted between 18 - 19 July 2019 from people aged 18 years and over, distributed in all regions. Education level and occupations across the country include 1,257 sample units about marijuana policy. The survey was based on probabilistic sampling from the NIDA Poll Master Sample database using a stratified random sampling method, stratified by region. Then in each region sampling by Simple Random Sampling, data were collected by telephone interview. The confidence value was set at 95.0%, as reported in Table 1.

As Table 1 indicates, the population followed up on marijuana news, marijuana products, or free marijuana policies, and their perceptions were somewhat skeptical about the belief that marijuana can cure serious diseases. The medical group must produce modern medicine that the government allows to create medicinal marijuana s and use to treat disease. The objectives the government should set about the liberal free marijuana policy for medicinal and therapeutic benefits. Public perceptions on the procedure to allow free cultivation of six marijuana plants per household strongly disagree with at all levels. People confident in the government they can legally regulate the cultivation to use of marijuana and marijuana products; their responses to their unbelievable toward the free marijuana policy indicates at all levels.

However, the College of Pharmacy, Rangsit University's research discovered that the CBN from marijuana inhibits lung cancer cells. This research achievement is ready to open the first medical marijuana research institute in Thailand and four innovative products based on marijuana extracts, marijuana extract wafer pills, marijuana or marijuana pills, hemp oil, and cannabinal oral spray. This is the starting point for marijuana that has been publicized and sparked the first use of marijuana for medicinal purposes. Rangsit University has always been active in various social aspects, which it has considered as an introduction to the society in motion pushing for the adoption of marijuana for medicinal benefits and eventually unlocking marijuana successfully.

**Table 1:** Questioning data, social movements' perceptions, and percentage of people's responses of Thai's government policy on free marijuana

Questioning data	Social movements' perceptions	Percentage
When asked about following up on marijuana news/marijuana products/marijuana policies?	The population said they followed	47.73%
	They said that did not followed	34.77%
	They refrained from commenting.	17.50%
People's belief in marijuana that it can cure serious diseases	They were somewhat skeptical	49.03%
	They believe at strongly believable level	22.68%
	They did not believe it at all	
	They were not sure about it	

	They seemed to doubtful	16.46%
	They were not responding/not interested	8.54%
		2.68%
		0.61%
The medical group that the government should allow to produce medicinal marijuana and use it to treat disease.	The modern medicine	65.73%
	Thai traditional medicine	46.40%
	They indigenous healers	21.60%
	No group should be allowed.	4.67%
	They didn't know/don't reply/not interested.	3.07%
The objectives the government should set about the liberal free marijuana policy	They said that it was for medicinal and therapeutic benefits	82.68%
	It is to support the creation of legal marijuana products	19.02%
	It is to increase income for the general public	16.10%
	States should not issue policies to support marijuana products. To support social entertainment such as legalization of marijuana use, the availability of marijuana cigarettes, etc.	7.68%
		3.41%
	They did not know/don't reply/not interested	1.34%
Public perceptions on the policy to allow free cultivation of six marijuana plants per household.	Strongly disagreed with at all level.	40.85%
	Strongly agreed with level	24.76%
	Somewhat in agreement.	18.17%
	Disagree with level.	15.37%
	They didn't know/don't reply/don't care	0.85%
People's confidence in the government that they can legally regulate the cultivation/use of marijuana or marijuana products.	They didn't believe it at all.	51.10%
	They did not believe	22.44%
	They were somewhat believing	15.12%
	They believed that at strongly believable	9.39%
	They didn't know/don't answer/don't care	1.95%

**Source:** Perception Survey Center "Nida Poll" and the Faculty of Social and Environmental Development, National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) (2022)<sup>[43]</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

Marijuana has played a role in the Thai lifestyle for a long time. Creative using the qualitative research method for searching and integrating important literature, historical documents, semi-documentary, wall painter contemporary

literature, in-depth interview, group interview, and the principles of social dhammadhipateyya or meritocracy, and research on the benefits of medical marijuana by the Faculty of Pharmacy, Rangsit University was monitored and evaluated. The conclusion of this research study found that the use of marijuana in medicine and in mixing food for consumption was not found to be used in rituals like in some civilizations. People's recreational use, most of them are located in the lower classes of society. Thai society views that marijuana as a drug, and an addict is the wrong person.

According to the Narcotics Act of 1979, marijuana is classified as a Category 5 drug, thus causing movement in the sectors of society to demand legal policy against marijuana addiction not limited to the scope of medical use only but wants to have a liberal marijuana policy like in some countries or some states of the United States. By focusing only on the benefits and seeing marijuana as part of the Thai way of life since ancient times, such a starting point prompted awareness and response to the liberal marijuana policy together with the body of knowledge and positive wisdom of Thai society towards a plant called marijuana or marijuana continually accumulated even during the period when marijuana was designated as a drug. Since marijuana is tied to the way of life of Thai people in various dimensions, including Thai traditional medicine recipes, marijuana, even though it is a forbidden plant, must be cut off from Thai society. Therefore, when the product launch and research results of the College of Pharmacy, Rangsit University, became public, both the original cost and the new findings became a key transmission force of the liberal marijuana movement toward adopting modern medical marijuana technology.

## DISCUSSIONS

Free marijuana leverage point, the response from society to public policy, a significant turning point for a wide range of social movements due to the research of the College of Pharmacy, Rangsit University that launched a medical marijuana research institute and revealed the results of a study on substances CBN (Cannabinol) and THC

(Tetrahydrocannabinol) extracted from marijuana has properties to reduce the proliferation of lung cancer cells in rats. Along with launching four prototype innovations: marijuana extract wafer pills, marijuana herb, marijuana oil, and cannabinal spray for oral spray. Rangsit University is the initiator of thinking outside the frame in using marijuana for research. Although this research is still in the experimental stage, it has changed the traditional beliefs of Thai people and attitudes in Thai society. It became all about marijuana, which was brought up and discussed in a brief period. People in the Thai community are increasingly interested in the use of marijuana.

The media, including the academic community, became interested, and there were articles. More news came out. Even elaborating on the wisdom of believing that marijuana can cure diseases was raised to speak and study more seriously. Civil society and other agencies have moved to increase the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes. Government agencies such as the Department of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine have studied ancient Thai medicinal formulas. The Office of the Narcotics Control Board, Ministry of Justice DEA has prepared information to propose policies on free marijuana, etc. These results in social movements are widely accepted until they are a trend that political parties use as the campaign policy and drive until it is legal to unlock some marijuana.

If considering the framework based on the basic concept of the "Public Sphere," according to Habermas defines the public sphere as a "society engaged in critical public debate." Conditions of the public sphere are, according to Habermas: The formation of public opinion. All citizens have access. The space formed in social life includes Public Opinion, the Public Body, and the sum of its integration of private/individual assembly, which is different from business incorporation and government employees. It is a space where opinions are exchanged, flexible, and free to form an association. There are newspapers, magazines, radio, and TV acting as the area's medium, a size the government cannot cover. The government will have duties in the manner of managing the public according to the public authority (Habermas, 1989)<sup>[44]</sup>.

David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden & Robert D. Benford (1986)<sup>[45]</sup> reported on the study "*Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation.*" Four frame alignment processes are identified and elaborated frame bridging, amplification, extension, and transformation. Pruittisan Chumphon (2003)<sup>[46]</sup> said that social movements context of Thai society's political rights. It creates a new way of life by challenging the old values. The main characteristics of social movements include being a social movement rather than a political movement, firmly rooted in a civil society with an emphasis on By Pass the State, and attempting to bring about social change by changing values and developing alternative lifestyles. Nittha Harunkasem (2021)<sup>[47]</sup> reported her research study on *Media Agenda Setting on Medical Marijuana* To analyze the media's agenda and stance on social movements on medical marijuana. It was found that the media agenda takes an average of three weeks to incubate and move, and it takes effect in the public interest over six months.

Unlocking marijuana for medical use with patients according to the Narcotic Drugs Act (No. 7) 1979 and consumption according to doctor's orders which the Minister of Health Can declare territories for experimental cultivation, production, and testing, or consuming or possessing drugs (Section 26/6) and can permit the production, testing of marijuana for medical, scientific and industrial research by allowing them to produce, import, export, sell, consume or possess (Section 26/2). In addition, the use and possession of marijuana for medicinal purposes can be done both according to the orders of modern medicine and Thai traditional medicine (Section 58), but with the current use of marijuana oil is still stuck with marijuana as a raw material for production It has begun to allow the cultivation of marijuana for medicinal purposes, which has not yet kept up with the needs of the people In the meantime, many institutions are licensed by the Ministry of Health. Therefore, asked to take advantage of the confiscated marijuana in drug cases from the investigating officer Narcotics Suppression Bureau Take advantage with the approval of the Royal Thai Police or to the Food and Drug Administration, which has the power

under the Narcotics Act as the recipient to distribute to agencies that request permission (Kiatyingangsulee, 2022)<sup>[48]</sup>.

Recreational marijuana use involves using marijuana for personal enjoyment rather than health purposes. The recreational use of marijuana can be contrasted with medical marijuana use, which involves the prescribed use of marijuana to manage the symptoms of some medical conditions. Characteristics of recreational marijuana use include infrequent use, no compulsion to use, using small amounts, using in social settings, and low investment. However, it is crucial to recognize that even recreational marijuana may present health risks. It is also possible for recreational use to unexpectedly become a marijuana use disorder. Is Medical Marijuana Recreational? The purpose of using medical marijuana is to alleviate symptoms (such as pain) of a health condition rather than to get high. Even though daily use may be required, there may be long-term adverse health effects, and use may appear compulsive. The use of medical marijuana according to prescribed protocols would be categorized as unproblematic marijuana use rather than misuse or addiction (Hartney, 2020)<sup>[49]</sup>.

Faculty of Pharmacy, Chulalongkorn University, reported that research on marijuana had been done since planting development of different breeds and extraction processes taking into account the safety of using people in order not to get caught or misused that including side effects in the use of drugs must have standards and quality that can be used. Research work of a biochemistry expert at Chulalongkorn University finds that over 30% of marijuana-flavored drinks randomly tested contain higher THC levels than what is permitted. The public is warned to keep their consumption to moderate levels and that children should refrain from drinking this beverage. The government should control its consumption and warn the people of the benefit and harm of marijuana (Momkaew, 2022)<sup>[50]</sup>. The use of marijuana in terms of Thai traditional medicine is used for various diseases and conditions, including at Chao Phraya Abhaibhubejhr Hospital, Prachinburi Province, there was a project called "Marijuana Abhaibhubejhr Model" that the use of

marijuana extracts must focus on standards, quality, and complete safety (Phakdeecharoen, 2021)<sup>[51]</sup>. Since the planting, production, and use, must pass the standard inspection from the Department of Medical Sciences that is safe, not pesticides, heavy metals, chemical residues, and dispensing marijuana extracts to patients must comply with medical guidelines (Urairat, 2021)<sup>[52]</sup>. Currently, it is in the research experiment, follow-up, and set up a system to apply it for the best benefits and suitable for Thai people.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to thank you for the in-depth interviews that were designed, interviewees and answers to interview questions include: In-depth interviews, interviewers, and respondents discussions included individuals involved in the liberal medical marijuana policy, activists advocating for marijuana policy, the Ministry of Public Health, Thai Traditional Medicine, National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA), painters working on murals, writers, literary figures, and people who have shaped the government's importance to medical or recreational marijuana policies.

Thank you to the President of Rangsit University, Dr. Athit Urairat, who is the pioneer and movement to call for marijuana as a modern medicine ready to establish the College of Pharmacy in support of marijuana science curriculum in research with high technology, to promote and support the marijuana plant as alternative medicine in the medical field.

Our most excellent thanks go to Prof. Dr. Toansakul T. Santiboon, Postdoctoral Administrator in Research at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom, who understood my professional and personal commitments throughout the study and never pushed but always encouraged me. Without his support, I would never have achieved the completion of this research project.

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