

DRUG ABUSE AND CRIMINALITY IN INDIA: A SOCIO-LEGAL ANALYSIS OF THE NEXUS BETWEEN SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND CRIME

K. Kanagasabai, Assistant Professor,

Center of Legal Education, Sri Manakula Vinayagar Engineering College, Pondicherry, India

Abstract : Unfortunately, drug abuse is a one of the most critical socio-legal issues faced by today's societies and impacts on public health, social stability, economic development, and criminal justice systems. The link between drug abuse and crime is complex and multidimensional, including crimes directly linked to the manufacture, possession, trafficking and distribution of illicit drugs and secondary crimes like theft, robbery, assault, and organized crime, where the abuse of drugs becomes an addiction dictating the criminal course and activity. This issue has worsened in India with rising prevalence of substance abuse among the youth, growing availability of synthetic drugs and the international centre of the country. The main law which regulates narcotic substances and fighting drug-related offences is Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985. However, despite the rigid stovepipes of laws and increased levels of trafficking control, the current trafficking routes - trafficking from abroad, cyber trafficking and trafficking through drugs, as well as the lack of appropriate drugs rehabilitation-remain obstacles to efficient trafficking control. The article critically discusses the socio-legal linkage of drug abuse and criminality, examines the legal framework relating to drug offence in India, discusses the social and economic effects of drug abuses and the role of police and judicial measures when dealing with the issue. The study contends that a balanced strategy must be implemented which combines effective law enforcement with prevention, treatment, rehabilitative and intervention based on community involvement responses to combat with drug-related criminality activities. To address the issue of drug-related crime, while keeping communities healthy, requires such an integrated approach.

Keywords

Drug, Drugs and drug abuse, Crime, NDPS Act, Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime, Criminal Justice, Rehabilitation of the abused.

1. INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse has emerged as a global phenomenon showing no regional boundaries and irrespective of economic development of nations. Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are harmful drugs used incorrectly that affect individuals, families, communities and national economies. Substance abuse is no longer regarded as a purely public health problem but has also become an important socio-legal problem which has implications on social order, public safety and criminal justice systems in the world. Since the 1990s, the prevalence of illegal drugs and shifts in how they are used have driven up concern both about the impact of drug addiction and its connection to crime.¹

Drug abuse poses a negative health impact as well as it has a close connection to criminal behavior. It has been found that the occurrence of criminal behavior is often linked to an individual's level of substance dependence in a variety of ways. Those addicted may rob, steal, burgle or commit fraud so that they have money to pay their heroin and crack addiction. Thus, the link between drugs and crime is complex, with psychological, economic and social aspects that must be addressed through broad and comprehensive legal/policy solutions.²

The trafficking of illicit drugs has also become one of the most lucrative criminal activities of the modern world. Narcotic drug related crime, therefore, poses a serious threat to a person's health, as well as national security and international stability and peace, and also affects a country's economy.⁴ drug-related crimes are a significant source of profit for criminal organizations and are so common that they are frequently used to finance other types of drug-related criminal activities such as money laundering, corruption, human trafficking and arms trafficking.³

India is uniquely placed between the "Golden Crescent," the heart of the opium trade, mainly comprising Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan on one hand and the "Golden Triangle," Principally comprising Myanmar, Thailand and Laos on the other, making it

¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, World Drug Report 2024 1–15 (U.N. Publ'n 2024).

² Ahmed Siddique, *Criminology and Penology* 412–18 (7th ed. 2021).

³ K. Chockalingam & S. Srinivasan, *Drug Abuse and Crime in India* 24–31 (SAGE Publications 2019).

difficult for the country to tackle drug abuse and drug-related criminality. The rise of synthetic drugs, online transactions of drugs and increased use of illicit substances among young people, have also added to the problem in recent years, exposing India to domestic drug consumption and transit of drugs across the country.

To resolve the problem, the Indian government has implemented the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS Act), which aims to control narcotic drugs and to provide protection against the illicit transportation of drugs in the country. In this context, it is important to study from the legal and the socio-economic perspective the association between drug abuse and crime, given the difficulties that could arise from implementation, rehabilitation and prevention. This article aims to examine the linkage between drug and crime, assess the functioning of the existing legal framework and recommend ways in which drug related crimes can be curtailed in India.⁴

2. UNDERSTANDING THE DRUG–CRIME NEXUS

There has been a long-standing research and academic interest, criminological study, and policy dialogue regarding drug abuse and crime. Nowadays, drug abuse is commonly related to crime yet there's a complicated and multifaceted association between the two. Adolescent substance use does not always lead to criminal behavior and not all adolescents who engage in criminal acts are drug users. There is generally a three-fold interpretation of the drug–crime nexus, namely crimes committed as a result of drug use, crimes arising from the illegal drug trade, and crimes that result from common social and economic factors that affect drug abuse and offending.⁵

The one main reason behind drug-criminal nexus is that people who are into drugs are already under financial constraints and are thus driven to indulge in illegal activities. Addiction is often characterized by an obsessive compulsive urge to use and abuse a drug regardless of negative feedback received. This is often called the economic-compulsive model of drug-related crimes, and is more common among users of illicit substances with a high street value, like heroin, cocaine and synthetic opioids. Certainly, the psycho-pharmacological effects of drugs also play a role in criminal activity. Some drug types and psychotropic medications have effects which influence the central nervous system, leading to poor judgment, diminished inhibitions, altered perception and heightened impulsivity. Evidence shows that people frequently act out violently and engage in domestic and sexual violence and public order offences when intoxicated or affected by stimulant drugs such as methamphetamine because of their effects on cognitive and emotional functioning.

An additional angle of the drug/crime relationship that has significance is the issue of "systemic crime" linked with the illegal drug market. Supply, distribution, and sale of narcotic substances is not subject to legal control and therefore criminals within such drug trafficking markets are liable to use violence, intimidation, and corruption to ensure that they have their interests looked out for. The large amounts of money created from drug trafficking have allowed organized criminal networks to grow and gain significant influence over the local, national, and transnational criminal landscape.⁶ There have been reports of drug trafficking organizations making use of extortion, money laundering, kidnapping and armed conflicts with other groups.

There are several criminological theories that offer insights into the relationship between substance abuse and criminal behavior. People could be more susceptible to learning behaviours when exposed to a social environment where drug use and criminality is accepted. Peer pressure, especially among adolescents and young adults, plays a vital role because they tend to experiment with drugs when in groups of people who are conducive to experimentation with drugs.

Robert K. Merton's Strain Theory is another explanation of the link between drugs and crime. Poverty, unemployment, educational disadvantage and social exclusion could drive into both substance abuse and criminal activity, where individuals are turning to other ways to deal with frustration and make a living.⁷

The lack of social cohesion and family structure also help to drive the relationship between drugs and crime. In communities with low levels of social cohesion, weak social institutions, poor education, and high unemployment rates, drug abuse and crime rates tend to be higher. In the same way, neglect, domestic violence, parents using drugs and alcohol, and lack of parental supervision are all correlates of drug abuse and delinquent behaviour among children and youth, showing that drug abuse and crime can often go together, but not by coincidence.

⁴ Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, No. 61 of 1985, Acts of Parliament, 1985 (India).

⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, World Drug Report 2024 18–30 (U.N. Publ'n 2024).

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Frank E. Hagan, Introduction to Criminology: Theories, Methods and Criminal Behavior 301–10 (11th ed. 2020).

⁷ Robert K. Merton, Social Structure and Anomie, 3 Am. Soc. Rev. 672, 672–82 (1938).

Rapid Urbanization, Socio-economic inequality, Youth unemployment, Global drug market exposure, has led to the increasing cases of drug abuse and drug related offences in India. Being able to recognise the complex nature of drugs and crime is crucial for the design of effective legal, social and public health strategies to reduce the use and criminality associated with drugs.⁸

3. TYPES OF DRUG-RELATED CRIMES

Drug related crimes involve a wide array of illegal activities which are directly linked with drugs and psychotropic drugs and activities that indirectly result from an addiction to and dependence on drugs and/or psychotropic substances. Such crimes are problematic from a criminal enforcement perspective as they impact both public health and public safety as well as economic stability. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) classifies drug-related crime into three types: Drug possession and drug takers offences, offences relating to the illicit drug trade and crimes in the context of addiction and drug dependence.⁹

Possession and actual or attempted use of prohibited drugs is the most prevalent offence related to drugs. Possession offences are those of which narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances are held or controlled as a result of which the drugs are not lawfully expected to be found in their possession. In some jurisdictions a distinction from consuming drugs or alcohol vs drugs used in trafficking may be made, but generally the legal penalties apply based on the character and amount of the drugs used.¹⁰ The next most significant is known as productions or manufacturing crimes. Those crimes include the growing of illicit drugs like opium poppy, cannabis and the manufacture of synthetic narcotics in secret production laboratories. In addition to the manufacture of synthetic drugs—such as methamphetamines and ecstasy and other psychoactive substances—via chemical advances, the illegal production of drugs is frequently tied to well-funded and well-organized armed criminal enterprises capable of operating on a wide scale.

Some of the most violent and harmful acts of drug-related criminal activity are transportation, distribution, and trafficking in persons. Trafficking in drugs is the delivery of narcotics over local, national or international boundaries with the objective of making money. Trafficking networks are highly organized and use deceptive techniques to hide trafficking and to avoid clearance by the law. Illegal drug trafficking often involves threats to vulnerable populations, corruption of public officials, and more sophisticated communication technologies to outfit the operation, and the amazing profits from the business of drugs have made the trade one of the world's most profitable criminal activities.¹¹

A second type of occurrence involving drugs relates to offences committed to facilitate drug dependence. People with a substance dependence can have a significant financial burden as they keep buying drugs. Recent criminological studies find that burglary, robbery, embezzlement, fraud, theft, and other property crimes are especially prevalent among those addicted to the use of costly narcotics, like heroin and synthetic opioid use.¹² These offenses have not only an immediate impact on the victims, but also raise societal issues of crime, law enforcement, and social upkeep.

OCEs have helped to maintain illegal drug markets in their centre. Activities associated with the trade of drugs, including laundering money, bribery, extortion, abductions and violent measures taken to preserve the profits of the business, are a common aspect of the insurgency waged by DTOs. The conflicts between different DTOs often lead to violence that erodes the existing framework of law and order in the community. The revenues from trafficking in drugs are also directed into the funding of other forms of transnational organized crime, like trafficking in people and arms smuggling.¹³

In recent times, the nature of criminal activity concerning drugs has been radically changed by technological advances. In recent years, websites and forums have sprung up on the dark web where individuals can buy illegal drugs anonymously using cryptocurrency communication methods. Cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin and Monero enable these transactions with greater privacy and have caused difficulties for law enforcement authorities in trying to identify and arrest perpetrators of cyber drugs.⁷

Drug-related crime, then, has been moving beyond these traditional geographical boundaries through the gradual increasing scope and complexity of globalisation of digital devices.

⁸ Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Magnitude of Substance Use in India 2019 38–45 (Gov't of India 2019).

⁹ K. D. Gaur, A Textbook on the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act 48–55 (6th ed. 2020).

¹⁰ Howard Abadinsky, Drug Use and Abuse: A Comprehensive Introduction 153–68 (10th ed. 2018).

¹¹ Frank E. Hagan, Introduction to Criminology: Theories, Methods and Criminal Behavior 304–12 (11th ed. 2020).

¹² Jay S. Albanese, Organized Crime in Our Times 112–26 (9th ed. 2021).

¹³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, World Drug Report 2024 82–91 (U.N. Publ'n 2024).

There is a wide variety of drug-related offences which show the problem is not restricted to the use of drugs and alcohol. It covers all types of organised crime, financial crime, cybercrime and crimes against persons and property. It is critical that knowledge of each of the types of drug related criminality be developed in order to design the right laws and enforcement policies to help address the root and effects of drug abuse.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN INDIA

India has taken a holistic view of putting in place a set of laws governing narcotics drugs, psychotropic substances and preventing the raging tide of drug related crime. The legal regime is a reflection of the State's responsibilities for protecting public health, social order and its international obligations in relation to drug control. The framework comprises constitutional articles, legislation, and other international treaty obligations and institutional oversight to stop the illicit transport, production and consumption of drugs.¹⁴

The constitutional basis of the drug control in India is given under Directive Principles of State Policy Article 47 of the Indian constitution with regard to drug control of the State. The constitutional basis of drug control in India can be traced back upon Directive Principles of State Policy, Article 47 of the Indian constitution has referred with regard to drug control of the State. While the Directive Principles are not legally binding, they are in some ways practicable principles to follow when making policies and legislative decisions that affect public health and substance control.

The main laws outlining drug-related crimes in India are the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS Act). In passing the Act, the government had intended to consolidate and amend current laws relating to narcotic drugs, to carry out its obligations under international conventions and to put in place tough measures to combat illicit trafficking in narcotics.¹⁵ The NDPS Act is one of the most stringent laws against drugs in the world and comprehensively covers regulation of production, manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transportation, storage, consumption and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

The Act makes a variety of activities with restricted substances, criminal. Possession, cultivation, manufacture, sale or purchase of illicit drugs, transport, import or export, financing of drug offences are also included as criminal activities under the Act, as are attempts, conspiracies and abetments. The Act acknowledges that there is a spectrum of seriousness with different offences, and categorises punishments as small quantity, intermediate quantity and commercial quantity offences.

The sanctions under the NDPS Act which are more stringent. In cases involving commercial supplies of narcotic drugs, imprisonment of as much as twenty years and heavy monetary fines can be imposed, and in some cases, repeat offenders may be eligible for heavier fines and prison sentences.⁵ The harsh penalties are intended to deter trafficking in drugs and to will to infract organized crime groups within the drug trade.

Drug control laws are enforced by various agencies. Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) connects the various agencies as the central co-ordinating body for intelligence generation, coordination and investigation of heavy drug offences, State police authorities are very instrumental in detecting and prosecuting the local drug offences and customs authorities monitor the ports, airports and the checkpoints on that border to prevent smuggling. Other agencies responsible for enforcement include the Central Bureau of Investigation, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence and special anti-narcotics cells.¹⁶

International conventions like the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961; the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971; and the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988 also contain provisions that involve the enactment of legislative and administrative measures by participating States for better control of narcotic substances and to combat the transnational trafficking networks.¹⁷

Although there is a good legal structure in place there are some issues that continue to impede in the implementation of it. There have been concerns about the effectiveness of existing strategies due to difficulties in implementation, overcrowded jails, delay in prosecution, limited rehabilitation and the appearance of new psychoactive substances. However, the National Drug Policies in India are still based in the NDPS Act that is the main driving force in combating drugs and protecting the public from the negative effects of drug abuse.

¹⁴ K. D. Gaur, A Textbook on the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act 1–12 (6th ed. 2020).

¹⁵ Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, No. 61 of 1985, Acts of Parliament, 1985 (India).

¹⁶ Id. §§ 8, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25A.

¹⁷ United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Dec. 20, 1988, 1582 U.N.T.S. 95.

5. JUDICIAL APPROACH

The judiciary has been the backbone of making the law in India. The judiciary has been an important player in articulating a legal framework relating to drug offences in India. As the laws of the country are very clear and very strict under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS Act), because of the injunction to balance effective enforcement with the protection of constitutional rights and reasonable process in Indian Courts, the interpretation of the law has been caught up by rhythm of the state. In a very strict law the Indian Courts have consistently voiced the need to strike the balance between effective enforcement and the protection of constitutional rights and procedural fairness, in the rhythm of the state being caught by interpretation. Judicial interpretation has played an important role in applying the Act, and has clarified the procedures, evidentiary standards and criminal liability under the Act in narcotics prosecutions.¹⁸

An issue of great importance in relation to judicial intervention in this context under the NDPS Act is compliance with the procedural safeguards. Investigating agencies are invariably tied with restriction on bail and the act prescribes heavy punishments to the courts which have insisted strict compliance with statutes pertaining to search, seizure, arrest and investigation. Failure to meet mandatory provisions may mean, in spite of narcotic substance recovery, that the defendant is found guilty. The approach mirrors the judiciary's attitude towards protecting the rule of law and giving due effect to the exceptional powers given to enforcement bodies.

State of Punjab v. Baldev Singh has become a landmark case in this regard – the Supreme Court has stated that the accused had to be informed of his right to be searched before a Gazetted Officer or Magistrate.¹⁹ Failure to comply would make the recovery questionable and negatively impact the prosecution. The decision underscored the need for procedural safeguards to protect against the potential abuse of power by law enforcement officials.

In this case, Noor Aga v. State of Punjab, the Supreme Court gave emphasis that in the face of special bringing-of-the-facts-of-accused legislation like NDPS Act, the rule of presumption of innocence is a fundamental rule of the criminal jurisprudence.²⁰ The Court had laid down that though the statute contains reverse burden provisions, the burden faced by the prosecution has to be met by providing the foundational facts beyond reasonable doubt before the reverse burden is shifted to the accused. The ruling emphasized the need for a fair and just approach in drug prosecutions.

In Mohan Lal v. State of Punjab, the Supreme Court had considered the problems with regard to impartial investigation and confirmed that the complainant must not be the investigating officer and complained that if the same officer investigates the incident then it could have a negative effect on the impartial investigation. The court's ruling emphasized the need for neutrality and fairness in the criminal justice system, especially when facing harsh statutory consequences.²¹

Cases of bail in NDPS Act have also been given a reasonable defense from the bench. The stringent conditions imposed under Section 37 of the Act in relation to bail in respect of commercial quantities of narcotic substances have a binding effect on the determination. The conditions to be satisfied in respect of bail for commercial quantities of narcotic substances as provided for in Section 37 of the Act is binding against the determination. The Supreme Court's judgment in Union of India v. Shiv Shanker Kesari was in line with the legislators' apparent desire to impose a stringent regime on the bail of serious drug offences, but also maintain judicial discretion in appropriate cases.²²

The judiciary has also rendered significant contributions towards interpreting the term possession under the NDPS Act. Supreme Court in Madan Lal v. State of HP stated that mere presence close to narcotic substance is not enough condition to establish the liability with respect to the Act, the knowledge and control over the narcotics are essential elements. Thereby covers people from arbitrary conviction, simply for being on the premises where drugs are found.²³

More recently, the courts have granted that some individuals are addicted to drugs while others are drug traffickers. The new trend in the treatment of substance abuse as a public health problem that calls for non-punitive responses that include social reintegration and rehabilitation has been observed by the judiciary and is being seen globally.

¹⁸ K. D. Gaur, A Textbook on the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act 165–72 (6th ed. 2020).

¹⁹ State of Punjab v. Baldev Singh, (1999) 6 SCC 172.

²⁰ Noor Aga v. State of Punjab, (2008) 16 SCC 417.

²¹ Mohan Lal v. State of Punjab, (2018) 17 SCC 627.

²² Union of India v. Shiv Shanker Kesari, (2007) 7 SCC 798.

²³ Madan Lal v. State of Himachal Pradesh, (2003) 7 SCC 465.

In general, the Indian judiciary has been a crucial force in fulfilling the goals of the NDPS Act and safeguarding constitutional guarantees and principles of natural justice. Courts have handed down numerous breakthrough rulings that also increased procedures and protections, clarified standards, and improved fairness in the criminal justice system. Judicial interpretation remains thus to play an important role in the evolution of narcotics law in India and is indispensable to the overall process of attaining drugs related crime prevention and safeguarding of individuals' rights.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Ensuring that rehabilitation and treatment facilities are strengthened

The best way to combat drug-fueled crime is to make rehabilitation and treatment readily available. There are those among the community who engage in a variety of drug-related crimes who have a dependency on the use of these substances, and are in need of medical and psychological help, not just punishment. Increase the establishment of de-addiction centres in previously neglected and underdeveloped region/areas and raise the percentage of mental health and counselling services along with vocational training and post treatment monitoring in rehabilitation programmes. Rehabilitation is an effective way of diminishing the likelihood of relapse and making it easier for people to successfully reintegrate into society.

6.2 Improving public awareness and prevention education.

Prevention of drug use is key in the fight to minimise chronic offending. Awareness campaigns should be made in schools, colleges, work places or community organizations to let people know the risks involved with substance abuse. Children of mixed familial marriage should be watched closely; adolescence and youth are definitely the critical period to pay attention to because of high pressure from peers and experimentation. Drug abuse should be covered in educational programs with the legal consequences of drug abuse, its health risks and social impact, highlighting healthy lifestyles and healthy social interaction.

6.3 Steps for enhanced Law Enforcement Coordination

The expected increased complexity and cross-jurisdictional nature of drug trafficking networks will necessitate improved coordination between police and other law enforcement organizations. The need for increased coordination in the working of Narcotics Control Bureau with the State Police, Customs Department, Border Security Force and Intelligence Bureaus has also to be encouraged. More effective detection, investigation and prosecution of drug-related offences may be achieved through the establishment of integrated systems for the sharing of information, and through the joint task forces. Better coordination also would impact organized criminal networks that have connections with the sale of illegal narcotics.

6.4 Utilizing Advanced Technology

Advances in technology can be a huge boost in the fight against drug-related crime. To find trafficking networks and track suspicious activities, law enforcement agencies should invest in data analytics, AI and cyber-forensics and digital surveillance. This must be done with specific focus on online drug markets via social media, encrypted applications and dark web marketplaces. The use of technological innovation can help enhance intelligence gathering and make anti-drug operations more efficient.

6.5 Strengthening International Cooperation

However, drug trafficking is a transnational offence and therefore international cooperation is essential. Further, crossing-boarder needs to be continued to be strengthened with its neighbouring countries and other international organizations in order to fight against smuggling and organised crime activities. Enhancing anti-trafficking efforts could be achieved through increased information sharing, joint investigations, extradition processes, and mutual legal assistance. Cooperation is especially necessary in the fight against new drugs and international trafficking rings.

7. Conclusion

There is a complex relationship between drug abuse and crime and it is dynamic and reinforcing; there is great challenge for modern societies in dealing with these issues. Narcotic drugs use and the consumption or abuse of psychotropic substances have a significant adverse impact on the physical and mental well-being of individuals in addition to increasing significant rates of criminal activity and social instability and the economic losses of such abuse. As seen throughout this article, drug related criminality can take a variety of forms such as drug possession, drug trafficking, drug organized crime, property crimes and violence. The effects are not just to each user, but to families, communities, public institutions, and national security.

The study shows that there is a multifactorial relationship between the use of drugs and crime. Substance dependence can push persons to engage in delinquent activities to meet their need to fuel addictions and criminal networks can provide access to illegal substances. In addition, conditions like peers' pressure, social exclusion, poverty, unemployment and family dysfunction

frequently are associated with drug abuse and crime. Thus, policy interventions need to acknowledge the multi-faceted nature of the issue, and not solely driven by a punitive aspect.

India has put in place in-depth legislation under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, to impound drug-related offences and regulate the trafficking of drugs. Additionally, judicial interpretation has reinforced the existing legal framework with the guarantees of due process and protection of constitutional rights. However, the efficacy of drug trafficking organisations, the rise of the use of synthetic drugs and the spread of digital technology in narcotics distribution point to the fact that it is impossible to resolve the issue through legal measures.

The unwelcome social and economic impacts of drug abuse highlight the critical need for comprehensive and sustainable solutions. Aside from the social crises of addiction, it also causes health issues, decreased productivity, family disintegration, unemployment and higher rates of criminality. Meanwhile, organised criminal groups are still profiting from drug markets as a source of profit and are used as pawns in other types of transnational crimes. Such a reality requires collaborative efforts from multiple stakeholders such as government, law enforcement, health systems, schools and communities.

It is important to frame this problem of drug-related criminality in a balanced socio-legal view to arrive at the best solution in the future. Enforcement measures on traffickers and organized criminal groups should be supported by prevention programs together with public awareness campaigns, rehabilitation and community involvement. Ensuring public health goals are included as part of criminal justice policies will enable India to effectively confront the underlying drivers of substance abuse and minimize its negative social impacts. This would enhance the campaign against drug related crimes and strengthen the call for human dignity and social welfare, as well as ensure for long-term social development.

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