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Impact of alternative development on reducing the security threat posed by cannabis cultivation: A case of Tain District, Ghana

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Abstract

Purpose: Cannabis cultivation has supported the local economy and culture of Nsawkaw, Badu, and other communities in the Tain District of the Bono Region for many years. The cultivation's security threat was also important, according to this study's respondents. However, any Alternative Development (AD) program to replace this old enterprise must entail community engagement, youth participation, entrepreneurial development, and finances to preserve the culture and tradition of the people.

Methodology: Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to analyze data and use the inductive research approach. Cannabis cultivation farmers in Badu and Nsawkaw in Tain District, Opinion Leaders, Narcotics Control Commission employees, and Bono Region NGOs were the study's target demographic.

Findings: It was also found that most AD regulations to prevent cannabis cultivation were heavily affected by party politics, leading many people to forsake them. AD must examine how Ghana might allow cannabis cultivation under stringent laws for its many benefits, including medicinal use and quick money.

Value: AD should consider marketing, conserving, transporting, and pricing licit crops. The Tree Crops Authority (MOFA) should be proactive in its mandate. Their proactiveness can pique cannabis farmers' interest in tree crops, particularly cashews.

Keywords: Security Threat; Cannabis Cultivation; AD regulations; Narcotics Control Commission

1. Introduction

According to Baum (2018), the "anti-drug fight" is a half-truth. Another scholar claimed that massive amounts of "drug-war" overseas relief money, knowledge, and equipment destroy leftist uprisings and are delivered to clusters involved in large-scale narco-trading (Brian, 2021; Owusu et al., 2021). It's important to note that the US advocates spraying enormous amounts of weed killers in Latin American countries where drugs like cannabis are grown as part of their Drug-Annihilation-Agendas. Brian (2021) argued that airborne disinfection harms sensitive ecologies and indigenous communities. The War on Drugs has been vicious from the start. Three-quarters of Americans felt the anti-drug fight was waning on October 2, 2008 (Matthew, 2018). Civil societies like the American-Civil-Liberties-Union view drug penalties as ethnically biased, in contrast with subgroups, and unfairly responsible for the US custodial population (Baum, 2018). According to Drug-Policy-Alliance, Justice-Policy-Institute, and America's-Drug-Free-Zones, fruitless clinging to adolescent abstinence and substituting it with robust ethnic inequities in the Judicial System. Most political candidates in Colombia and Bolivia have promised to decriminalize the customary agronomy and use of drugs like

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marijuana (Douvris et al., 2022). The Drug- Suppression-Plan was rejected because it hurt cultivators in Latin American countries like Ecuador (Baum, 2018). Ghana focuses on the cannabis drug war (Akyeampong et al., 2015). According to Owusu et al. (2021) and the Criminal and Other Offences Act, of 1960, marijuana is the term used in Ghana for cannabis. Ghana and Nigeria are West Africa's top illegal cannabis producers (Douvris et al., 2022; Owusu, 2021). Ghana, like most countries, bans cannabis. Drug abuse, trafficking, and money laundering are security risks for this nation, according to the Memorandum of Narcotics Control Commission Bill 2019 (page 2) and Akyeampong et al. (2015a). According to the strategic framework of the National Security (2020, pages 40 and 41), cited in Owusu et al. (2021), cannabis is widely farmed in Ghana and negatively affects youth. Youth crime, indiscipline, and other activities hinder society (Ann-Charlotte, 2013). As cited in Owusu et al. (2021), 90% of drug offenders globally utilize heavy drugs. Again, according to the Ghana Health Service (Mental Health Division), 85% of mentally ill people use drugs and heavy drugs (Owusu et al., 2021). The Social Welfare Division of Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit in Ghana finds people (cited in Owusu et al., 2021). heavy drug users and domestic abusers. It is important to note that 8 out of 10 criminals detained by police in the US are drug users (Barr, 2014) and that according to Ghana Health Service (2020), most people with mental illness are hooked to cannabis and other hard drugs found in Ghana's economic environment. Based on the study above, this paper intends to examine the influence of alternative development as a meaningful vocation and source of livelihood for cannabis cultivators in Badu and Nsawkaw communities in Tain District, Bono Region, Ghana. The drug war's stakeholders may see this alternative farming as the best way to lessen Ghana's cannabis security concern (National Security, Ghana, 2020). Drug use has eclipsed cannabis cultivation as a significant agricultural sector, according to Barr (2014). Because other cannabis-related issues are downplayed, discussing the ecological impact in cannabis-legal states is difficult (Barr, 2014). Alternative Development (AD) is a popular drug-fighting strategy outside of law enforcement and drug education (World Drug Report, 2021). Cannabis use and cultivation have detrimental impacts. AD sought economic and community interventions to help families live successfully without drug farming (Anem and Bridge, 2017; Mansfield, 1999). Alternative Development reduces poverty and provides rural livelihoods, according to the Afghanistan Ministry of Counter Narcotics (2021). AD, crop elimination, and prohibition are part of the International Community's "Balanced Approach" to drug management (World Drug Report, 2021). At the 20th Special Session of the World Drug Report (2015), dedicated to fighting global drug delinquency, the General Assembly defined AD as a "process to avert and eradicate the illicit agronomy of plants comprehending narcotic-drugs and psychotropic-substances through precisely intended Rural-Development procedures in the framework of continued National Growth and maintainable growth exertions." According to the World Drug Report (2021), alternative development is a unique idea that is constantly changing. In a recent study, Gavrilove et al. (2019) observed that several international conferences, expert working groups, and seminars are investigating and improving the concept and its methodologies. The unique approach involves careful policy design and execution, stakeholder selection, and government, non-governmental, and civil society involvement, according to Gavrilove et al. (2019). Duvall (2014) and the Council of the European Union (2006) aim to meet the zone's rising concentration. UNGA Resolution 68/196, "UN-Guiding Principles on Alternative Development," was vital to this concept. It is important to note that more countries embrace alternative- development interferences (Reinert and Kattel, 2020). Germany's 2015 Organized Crime and Terrorism Task Force comprised AD, Wildlife Trafficking, and Terrorism Financing (World Drug Report, 2021). Anem and Bridge (2017) and Duvall (2014)'s sustainable livelihood program AD combats drug cultivation and other risks. Despite discussions about AD's actuality as a strategic mainstay of global drug control (World Drug Report, 2021), the overall magnitudes dedicated by OECD countries for AD in the period 1998-2013 were appropriately small compared to the quantities dedicated as a share of overall expansion collaboration (Reinert and Kattel 2020). Over the past four decades, OECD countries in North America, Europe, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand have largely financed AD in impoverished countries (Anem and Bridge, 2017; Ann-Charlotte, 2013). Delayed foreign assistance has prevented most dependent countries from promoting AD (Ann-Charlotte, 2013). It is important to note that Ghana's drug laws are so strict that cannabis possession or control is a crime (Section 37, Act 1019, 2020). Ghana is one of the world's top cannabis smokers (Akyeampong et al., 2015). Ghana ranked third in 2015 among countries where cannabis is mostly smoked or consumed (Police Criminal Investigation Report and Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit, DOVSU, 2020; Akyeampong et al., 2015). Ghana is one of the gateways to drug trafficking and cannabis cultivation, hence UNODC (2013) recommends reviewing Ghana's drug war system and emphasizing alternative development as the best way to reduce drug production.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Review

This section counsels the study's main idea. Alternative development (AD), cannabis production, broad-based rural development, and security threats Owusu et al. (2021) and Mann (2021) defined AD as a procedure to thwart and remove the illegitimate agronomy of foliage comprehending narcotic substances through unambiguously intended Peripheral-Development procedures. Alternative development is one of three primary forces fighting premeditated misbehavior and

extremism (Alimi, 2019). Ojeda (2011) advocates merging traditional, social, and geographical variables into alternative development. Early-20th-century AD missions were “alternative livelihood” programs. Modifying attention and highlighting AD’s social aspect was difficult. Afghanistan’s Ministry of Counter Narcotics (2021) stated that the livelihood plan strengthened and expanded the drug-free rural and peripheral worker approach. Mann (2021) defines a hazard as security misuse that could destroy. Hell (2021) says hazards can lead to resource loss and unpleasantness. Threats are events in this study. Cannabis cultivation may endanger a community or nation. Cannabis originated in Central Asia and was produced in China for a long time (Ren et al., 2019). The plant supplied cloth, cooking oil, and other goods (Hell, 2021). Cannabis addiction and drug dependence are illnesses and hazards to national and international security, according to data (Hell, 2021). International dependency on illegal drugs has stabilized over the past year, but it is worsening for some drugs and regions and increasing for others (Johanna, 2020). For example, marijuana and cannabis cultivation and use are rising in African and Asian countries (Johanna, 2020). UNGASS stated that the prosperous drug markets of the early 20th century have been restrained but are not insolvent because statistics vary by illicit drug and nation (Mann, 2021). As a result, UNODC collaborates with governments to place user control under the supervision of doctors and counselors rather than security, in recognition of the threat that illicit drugs like cannabis pose (UNODC, 2019a). Deterrent, handling, and injury reduction must be done in an integrated manner that explains an alternate route, rather than a mutually exclusive strategy that was problematic in drug regulation (UNODC, 2019a). UNGASS affected many states, including Ghana. Payan (2013) says improving these two areas improves the intermediate stage that curbs the drug trade. This study examines cannabis production as the first alternative development assistance option to reduce supply. The researcher carefully investigates the alternative development and how the drug administration has reserved under the mechanism the otherwise large well-being threat, peace threat, economic threat, crime threat, terrorist finance, and a few others posed by drug cultivation and business. Ghana’s macroeconomic black market is haphazard (Owusu, 2021). Ghana’s cannabis trade exceeds its GNP. Ghana’s economy benefits, but people’s lives don’t (Owusu, 2021). Alimi (2019) says the global drug market is more than gangs owning land, factories, and planes. They buy officials, elections, contract murders, and other crimes (Alimi, 2019). Ghana’s cannabis production and drug trafficking concern Owusu (2021). Drugs harm Ghana’s security and growth (Owusu, 2021). Where drugs are grown and sold.

2.2. Theoretical Review

Over time, numerous ideas and strategies have emerged as viable alternatives to conventional and Neo-Classical canons (Reinert and Kattel, 2020). These theories highlight the richness of alternative development as a fresh mean to solve societal problems and occasionally provide solutions to misconstrued philosophies that, in different historical contexts, have contributed to social progress. The Renaissance Mercantilist and Cameralist theories advanced throughout the Enlightenment (Reinert and Kattel, 2020). It covers African, Chinese, Indian, and Muslim commercial growth strategies and Substitute and Heterodox theories of economic development. The researcher chose the enlightened, public policy, and good governance theories after considering numerous factors. The Enlightenment describes the 17th and 18th centuries' knowledgeable endeavor to combine God, Reason, Nature, and Humanity into a universal platform that has been widely accepted in the West (Reinert and Kattel, 2020). These revolutionized social problem-solving. This enlightenment idea relied on the use and festivity of the purpose to help people understand the world and improve their situations without causing more difficulties (Reinert and Kattel, 2020). Demonstrations against policing in the drug war, which is regarded as widespread killing (Szasz, 1982), show this. Thus, this ideology seeks rational solutions to social problems without harming society. This is why this idea applies knowledge, freedom, and happiness to drug fights. This enlightened view made the 20th century “the age of reason: human understanding of the universe (Reinert and Kattel, 2020). Enlightenment philosophy is linked to psychology, ethics, and social issues in a drug struggle as a reciprocally beneficial organization among individuals defending customary privileges. Thus, the drug fight must shift from police and hunting to giving alternatives to drug dealers. This model normally consists of an agreed-upon collection of actions indicating tactics, regulations, and performances established by a government inside proper political institutions (Klein and Stothard, 2019). The World Bank linked modern public policy and good governance to the new public management’s policy framework (Klein and Stothard, 2019). They helped emerging governments change their municipal sectors by fostering social engagement, strengthening citizens, and using Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Societies (Klein and Stothard, 2019). Thus, concerns with the new governance and policy framework must focus on how state agents like the Narcotics Control Board will now fight drugs in a different but socially accepted system of alternative development (Owusu et al., 2021). At a guess, many works provide comprehensive accounts of the novel public government’s impact and rise in specific policy sectors, such as drug control, health care, communal well-being, and municipal safety (Klein and Stothard, 2019). However, strategic evaluations frequently include an unbending scope of control and an expressive one of establishing alternate livelihoods for cannabis producers and the drug trade. The public’s role in her new communal goals, including comprehensiveness and ecological fortification, must balance social concerns about efficient drug control with those over ethics. Try replicating the top theories of good governance, municipal policy reform, and rational choice, which

support the enlightened theory that promotes an intellectual revolution in drug control. These policies typically explain their policy timetable in an official and social environment. It encourages dialogue, deliberation, and alternative drug-fighting measures.

2.3. Empirical Review

This section examines two prominent studies that carefully shed light on the cannabis cultivation issue. Owusu et al. (2021) examined cannabis as industrial hemp and its legality in the first empirical study. The second framework examines AD conception and global drug control administration changes (Brombacher and David, 2022). The goal of this study is to provide a framework for the development of a comprehensive understanding of the world's most popular religions. Since the 1970s, drug production, and reduction have focused on rule, punishment, and illegitimate plant substitution (Alimi, 2019). In current times, AD has unexpectedly assumed the position it had previously not assumed, with a rising number of governments stating that they either conduct internal AD procedures or back them overseas (Brombacher and David, 2022). The significant increase in AD involvement may be due to a rising rendezvous of nation-régimes or a re-branding of current actions, as shown by the increased appreciation of AD (Alimi, 2019). In light of this party-political boost, the capital is underprivileged. AD accounts for 0.1% of international authorized growth funding since 2013 (UNODC, 2019a). Though there appears to have been a minor upsurge in finance lately, the writers argue that a tangible outpouring is so remote that it is not in the picture (Brombacher and David, 2022). Security threats to cannabis cultivation are identified in the study. According to Butsic et al. (2018), the negative special effects or threats caused by the misappropriation, transfer, and manufacture of illegal drugs have developed into a growing concern in collaboration with Governments and civil society groups and prompted substance guidelines calling for negative outcomes. Drug supply and trade cause civil and national dishonesty (Ashworth and Vizquete, 2017). Illegal drug sales profited from intentional influence, prosperity, revenue, false macroeconomic indicators, and inventive speculation (Reinert and Kattel, 2020). It is important to note that snowballing drug misappropriation has destroyed social capital and burdened women, who often suffer the community and commercial consequences of addiction at home (Butsic and Brenner, 2016). Illegal drug plants are produced far afield, creating socio-financial, conservational, and military conflict (Owusu et al., 2021; Butsic, 2018). Illegal drug cultivators have the worst health, education, and security. Butsic et al. (2018) and Amelia (2017) explain cannabis and other illicit drug-led agronomy-led danger paradigms. Gutierrez (2015) thinks drug laws and extermination cause insecurity. Violence, wrongdoing, health, and poverty all cause anxiety, according to Martin (2015). It is important to note that the US has been fighting drug use for nearly a century (Martin, 2015; Payan, 2013; Szas). This is frequent in communities experiencing military conflict, election violence, or tribal warfare (Payan, 2013). Drug control, especially coercive operations against narcotics producers and traffickers, worsens security and drug market violence (Martin, 2015). If regarded as an authoritarian institution targeting indigenous people, the government may lose trust in organized criminal gangs that can better defend indigenous communities (Gutierrez, 2015). West African cannabis-producing and trafficking nations should prioritize human safety programs in a cannabis development-focused drug control and enforcement approach (Martin, 2015). Martin (2015) says the drug market is peaceful. Several actions have led to a reduction in drug violence. Martin (2015) says modern drug law enforcement strategies organize illicit marketplaces to be least harmful to indigenous people and most beneficial to subsidiary expansion. I and Kamminga (2018) suggest drug laws fully include alternative development. Health Poverty Action and the International Drug Policy Consortium (2015) claim the drug trade threatens health security. Progress-focused drug regulation requires fair access to impairment reduction and evidence-based drug dependency treatment (Ashworth and Vizquete, 2017). Drug legalization opposes this. Ashworth and Vizquete (2017) and Martin (2015) say fumigation and burning control drugs. Many environmental alternative development, threat reduction, and alternative development advocates, such as Butsic et al. (2018), Amelia (2017), and Ashworth and Vizquete (2017), argue that fumigation should be stopped immediately due to the lack of success of fumigation in reducing crop yields, the long-term effects of chemicals and fire on lands and communities, and the displacement of affected groups. Drug control and SDGs Target 3.5, "Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol," is related. Drug policy opposes the SDGs. Thus, drug control policies and strategies must combine development measures to reduce cannabis production to achieve the SDGs (Health Poverty Action and International Drug Policy Consortium, 2015). Goal 1: "End poverty in all its forms everywhere"; Goal 2: "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture"; Goal 3: "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages"; Goal 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." It is important to note that present drug combat measures, such as fumigation, burning, police hunts, and killing, violate these goals, according to Amelia (2017) and HPA & IDP (2015a). Land dilapidation requires governments to stop aerial and manual fumigation and cannabis farm burning (Butsic et al., 2018; Melis and Nougier, 2010). These findings suggest that measuring and evaluating effectiveness is an important part of development-oriented drug control. Process indicators were used to measure drug control success, including confiscations, hectares of illicit crops eradicated, and people apprehended and imprisoned. These suggestions haven't measured drug governance's progress (Butsic and Brenner, 2016). Ghana's cannabis cultivation security threat will

be assessed. Economic, agricultural, and employment impacts. Mann (2021) anticipates 1 million people imprisoned for drug offenses in the US. Teen substance abuse often leads to permanent or semi-permanent exclusion from education, voting, and employment (Hari, 2015). 20% of US detainees are drug slaves. Again, other writers argue that the anti-drug campaign has led to the concept of a permanent underclass of people with few employment or educational options, often as a result of being penalized for drug charges committed while trying to make a living without education or drugs. Illicit drug growers also suffer. The situation with cannabis cultivators has developed into a serious issue in Ghana and other West African nations like Nigeria (Payan, 2013). Former coca grower Evo Morales promised to legalize coca. Morales was legalized and eradicated (Payan, 2013). In 2011, Morales' coca growers' federations enforced the law without security, reducing coca cultivation by 12–13% (Baum, 2016). Ghana wanted this when Parliament approved industrial cannabis. Critics say the eradication of illicit narcotics hurts manufacturers in several nations, including Ghana. Rural Ghanaians drink cannabis tea, mix it with alcohol, and make sweets. Despite security risks, many people consider cannabis manufacturing illegal. To identify Ghana's cannabis agricultural security hazard. Alternative development, the new drug war, lacks finance, awareness, and sustainability. Awareness and alternative crops are costly. Policy reform is needed. According to Brombacher and Westerbarkei (2020), the concept of alternative development (AD) has evolved from a Crop Substitution-Based Approach in the 1970s and 1980s to a Development-Oriented Method that promotes sustainable rural progress and reduces poverty in drug crop farming regions (GIZ, 2016) and, more specifically, an "integrated rural development" that requires a large budget for sustainability. AD struggled financially (Jelsma, 2018). Jelsma (2018) listed lack of services, infrastructure, drug-related violence, exclusion, marginalization, and social disintegration as financial risks for individuals, communities, and society. Brombacher and Westerbarkei (2019) said AD now includes financial issues. Public and academic opinion sees AD as a cover for forcible eradication or counter-insurgency development (Buxton, 2015). Despite a lack of data, AD is assumed to be economically undesirable for farmers or that farmers value money above stability (Brombacher & Westerbarkei, 2019). UN CND and other relevant organizations support AD politically but lack funding. Many UNODC-reporting nations' AD interventions' scope, volume, and goals are unknown (Alimi, 2019). Alimi, 2019; Kamminga, 2018 Political support for development-led drug economy solutions Jelsma (2002) called the AD approach "a short history and a failed balance" due to its narrow margins. Illegal crops always returned. Jelsma (2019) asked at the international conference on Alternative Development's role in drug control and development programs: What can Alternative Development interventions realistically hope to achieve, given the growing demand for illicit drugs and rural poverty? This paper examines Ghana's alternative drug war development. Initial efforts to replace marijuana with other crops were profitable, but this worldwide approach was too narrow, providing little aid for infrastructure, marketing, and other activities necessary for the development of viable alternative crops (Butsic et al., 2018). Alternative Development, a global supply-side policy, cannot stop drug production (Ashworth and Vizuete, 2017). Alternative Development eliminated illicit drug crops but failed to improve living standards in project areas. When certain political and economic framework conditions are met, success is likely, and law enforcement measures are considered a complementary element whose implementation depends on clearly defined conditions closely coordinated with Alternative Development results. (Mann, 2021). The 2004 American drug strategy reported that the Drug Courts Program, which provides alternatives to incarceration, had grown significantly (Baum, 2016). Drug courts place substance abusers under court supervision, community oversight, long-term treatment, and alternative employment. In 2006, incarceration averaged \$24,440. Drug court costs \$900–\$3,500 annually. NYS drug courts saved \$2.54 million on incarceration (Me and Kamminga, 2018; Payan, 2013). Most people feel drug control has been costly and ineffective because of poor drug treatment and rehabilitation (Mann, 2021). Given its various benefits, I and Kamminga (2018) believe AD's sustainability requires appropriate settings. These include Central Government operational control of the area and an absence of counter-pressure from insurgent groups; a sustainable national and international economic environment that facilitates market forces that make illicit cultivation less appealing; and constant law enforcement operations, control, and extermination. AD operations usually target community participation, institution creation, and regular monitoring and assessment in disadvantaged contexts.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

Research design determines the research method (case study, survey, experiment, ethnography, etc.) (Saunders et al., 2012). The research design describes data collection, analysis, and interpretation. It also covers data types and scales, data collection instruments, methods, tools, techniques, and data analysis. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), a case study allows a researcher to closely examine data in a specific context. This helps the researcher illustrate cannabis farmers' characteristics or alternative options.

3.2. Population and Sampling

Cannabis farmers and opinion leaders in selected Tain District communities are the target population. It will also involve some Bono Regional Command Narcotics Control Commission staff and rural development-focused NGOs. Through the community entry process, the study estimated a population of 25 large-scale farmers in the Tain District as "Community members" for research. Presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Population Table for the Study

Respondents	Large Scale Farmers (Community Members)	Non-Farmers
Number	25	30
Total	55	

Authors: Construct, (2023).

A research study's sample size depends on its purpose, population size, precision, confidence or risk, and attribute variability (Singh and Masuku, 2014). Due to time constraints, the researcher chose a convenient sample of 25 farmers and 30 non-farmers, totaling 55 people. Purposive and convenient sampling selected Tain District in the Bono Region and identified farmers and non-farmers for the study. Purposive research allows the researcher to choose cases that best answer research questions and meet research objectives, according to Saunders et al. (2012). The method also helps reach the targeted sample. Again, non-probability methods let the researcher choose willing participants. Purposive sampling, also called judgment sampling, involves selecting participants based on their characteristics (Etikan et al., 2016).

3.3. Sources of Data and Data Analytics

Scientists rely on primary and secondary sources (Walliman, 2011). Field surveys provided the basic data. Journals, articles, and authors, mostly from the internet, provided secondary data to enrich the primary data from the research area. Saunders et al. (2012) classified quantitative data as categorical or numerical. Chi-Square, mean, median, mode, variance, and standard deviation are categorical data statistical analyses. Saunders et al. (2012) say the questionnaire is best for collecting mixed data. To simplify data collection, this study used structured questionnaires (Saunders et al., 2012). The three objectives divided this questionnaire into five parts. Respondent demographics introduced it. The researcher used closed and open-ended questions, asking respondents to check or comment. To fix flaws and inconsistencies, two narcotics Control Officers, two farmers, and one opinion leader piloted the questionnaire. Pre-testing questionnaires help ensure reliable and valid data and allow for question ambiguity correction, according to Lietz (2010).

Data analysis interprets data to find answers (Walliman, 2011). Descriptive statistics, including standard deviation and mean, summarize data from a population or sample (Etikan et al., 2016). The study interpreted its findings using tables. Inferential analysis was used to explain the study results, especially the goals. Inferential methods included confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis. Inferential statistics let researchers make population-based predictions or conclusions, according to De Stefani and Upfal (2019). Based on sample data, researchers employ inferential statistics. Williams (2011) describes factor analysis's many uses. These include reducing the number of variables, finding relationships between variables, identifying and assessing the one-dimensionality of a hypothetical concept, evaluating scale validity, simplifying and clarifying analysis and interpretation, dealing with high correlation between two or more variables, creating a theoretical framework, and verifying or rejecting hypotheses. To comprehend the construct, factor analysis was done. Several sources will rate the measurement scale's reliability as excellent using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient.

4. Results

The researcher envisaged a population of 25 farmers and 30 stakeholders but there was a response rate of 15 farmers described in the study as community members indicating 60% and 21 stakeholders representing 70%. There was therefore a total response of 36 and a rate of 66%. The major data collection instrument is the interview. All protocols of research including ethical consideration were adhered to to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. The profile of respondents looks at the respondent's bio-data including industrial characteristics. Table 2 presents this finding.

Table 2 Profile of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	14	64
Female	8	36
Department Or Section Of Work		
Non-disclosure	3	13.6
Narcotic Control Officers	11	50
NGO	3	13.6
Community Members	5	23
Length Of Knowledge On Cannabis Cultivation		
Less than five years	8	36
More than five years	8	36
Others specify (very long)	6	28

Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

According to the gender dimension of respondents, it was found that there were 14 males indicating 64% whilst females were 8 representing 36%. Considering the department or section of work of respondents it was reviewed that those who did not disclose their identity were 3 indicating 13.6%, Narcotic Control Commission Officers were 11 indicating 50%, NGOs were 3 representing 13.6% whilst Community Members were 5 representing 23%. According to the question, how long have you known the cultivation of cannabis in this District? It was found that 8 respondents representing 36% have known the cultivation of cannabis for less than five years. Those who have witnessed for more than five years were 8 indicating 36% whilst others who specified their knowledge to be very long were 6 indicating 28%. Table 3 was generated when respondents were asked about their understanding of Alternative Development.

Table 3 Respondents' Understanding of Alternative Development

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Alternate source of livelihood	7	32
Adopted a way of doing business free from hazard	4	18
Ruling out illegal businesses/acts for illicit business	5	23
Poverty reduction strategies	6	27
Total	22	100

Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

From the table, it was ascertained that those who understood alternative development to be an alternate source of livelihood were 7 (indicating 32%). Those who understood it to be an adopted way of doing business free from hazards were 4 (indicating 18%). Another group also understood it to be a method of ruling out illegal business or acts of illicit business. These people were five, representing 23%, while the remaining respondents, numbering six, indicated 27% understood it to be poverty reduction strategies. Respondents were further asked about the feasibility of enrolling in alternative programs as cannabis cultivation alternatives in the District. Figure 4.1 below presents this finding.

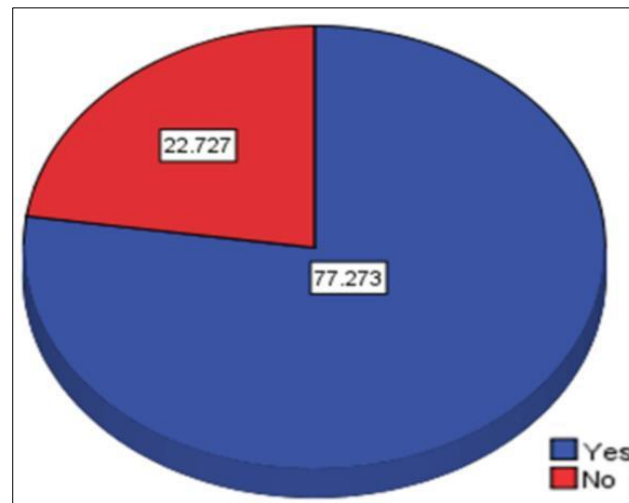


Figure 1 Feasibility to Enrol Alternative Development Programs

Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

From the figure 1, out of 22 total respondents, 17 agreed that the enrollment of an alternative program as a cannabis cultivation alternative would be welcomed by the community, while 6 disagreed. Those who even agreed added that alternate programming towards cannabis cultivation never started, but party politics eroded the benefits away. To ascertain the historical development of cannabis cultivation within the Tain District, the following questions were raised:

4.1. Tell us a short history of farming and producing cannabis in the District.

Under this section, it was found and common among all 22 interviewees that Tain District has been rampant in cannabis cultivation for so many years and they are still in that business. Cannabis cultivation has been a source of livelihood and an economic pillar for their local economy. It was reiterated by one interviewee that people have taken the cultivation of cannabis as a hobby and habitual business; hence, the District is seen as a cannabis hub in the Bono Region.

4.2. What are the benefits and uses of cannabis?

According to the benefits of cannabis, as mostly claimed by the farmers, it was found that cannabis is used for medicinal purposes, including all sorts of cancer, relief of chronic pains, losing weight, arthritis, and anxiety. Others also considered it to prepare tea, smoking, and hair growth concoctions, creams, and pomades. Few respondents also shared the common idea that cannabis cultivation is for the production of raw materials for foreign buyers. However, all the respondents agreed that cannabis cultivation is their passion.

4.3. In your opinion, should Ghana legalize cannabis cultivation? And why?

The majority, numbering 20 out of the 22 total interviewees, had the common idea that, for the sake of its numerous benefits, especially its medicinal purpose, cannabis cultivation should be legalized under strict regulations. Other aspects, like usage and consumption, must be critically looked at when considering the legalization of its cultivation.

Security Threat Posed by the Cultivation of Cannabis

Considering the goal of knowing the security threat posed by the cultivation of cannabis The following questions were asked:

4.4. How will the cultivation of cannabis cause harm to the people of Tain District? How?

The majority attributed the threat of cannabis cultivation to its rampant availability for smoking and its resultant health challenges and violent lifestyle including robbery attacks and street fights. And added that, that is their fear. Few other respondents conforming to the threat of cannabis cultivation were looking at its abuse if people are legally motivated to handle and or produce cannabis in Ghana. Few other interviewees were also interested in the disruption of social development just as unregulated galamsey is causing problems in mining sites so the legalization of the cultivation of cannabis will also do. They cited social problems such as school drops out, child delinquency, and others.

4.5. Doses the cultivation of cannabis has anything to do with the incident of crime in the District? And How?

The majority numbering 18 upon their experience and incidents occurring in other parts of the country that has a connection with crime, violence, and addicted smoking responded yes when they were asked about the outcome of security threats posed by the cultivation of cannabis in Tain District. However, a few respondents numbering 4 refused the security threats associated with the cultivation of cannabis. They were looking at the other benefits of it for which they specified its medicinal purpose of it, its ability to boost the local economy, offering job opportunities with juicy financial packages, reducing the incidence of crime among unemployed youth, and a few other merits with its cultivation.

4.6. Effects of Security Threats Posed by the Cultivation of Cannabis

Per the effects of security threats posed by the cultivation of cannabis in the Tain District, the following question was asked:

4.7. What is the outcome of security threats posed by the cultivation of cannabis in the Tain District?

The respondents listed several effects and the common ones and the most pressing ones among them include indiscriminate smoking of weed, issues of violence, increased crime rate especially gang robbery, school dropout, and other social vices like prostitution, youth indiscipline. To appreciate the rate of each impact as a security threat in the District a descriptive statistical analysis was drawn out of these findings. Table 4. presents this finding.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of the Outcome of Security Threats Posed by the Cultivation of Cannabis

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
What is the outcome of security threats posed by the cultivation of cannabis in the Tain District?	22	1.0	5.0	3.0	1.6

Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

From the descriptive Table 4., there is a mean value of 3.0 and a standard deviation value of 1.6. In a comparative analysis of the high mean value of 3.0 and a low deviation value of 1.6, there is a demonstration of the significant and valid nature of these responses (indiscriminate smoking of weed, issues of violence, increased in crime rate especially gang robbery, school dropout, and other social vices like prostitution, youth indiscipline) given by the community, and there is assurance that the Government and decision-makers can rely on in making any decision. However, the reasonable deviation value of 1.6 which is higher than half of the mean value of 3.0 is an indication that the outcomes are not all that alarming and have not gotten to the level of being a threat to security.

4.8. Sustainability of Alternative Development

According to the sustainability of Alternative Development as a tool for reducing security threats posed by cannabis cultivation, the following questions were raised:

4.8.1. What is the major drug control mechanism in the District?

According to the major drug control mechanisms, the majority considered cultural, behavioral, and lifestyle changes, which take a long time before people can adapt to the new way of life. Hence, it was found that the major tool should be education and sensitization to create awareness of the hazards and risk effects of using cannabis and community engagement. But most of the tools adopted have been law enforcement, the burning of farms, and a few others, for which few considered such enforcement mechanisms the last resort. The respondents did not leave youth programs that will engage the youth or other entrepreneurial programs.

4.8.2. How is the District committed to preventing or reducing cannabis cultivation? And How?

The majority of the respondents identified arrest, Police threats, and, on a few occasions, public education as some of the strategies the District has employed to deal with cannabis cultivation within the District.

The remaining respondents, numbering 8, also stated that most of the time, the government, through the District Assembly and the Member of Parliament (MP), also educates them and offers certain opportunities that will increase their commitment to cashew farming and other licit crops. However, it has not been effective, as they always are for party supporters and party foot soldiers.

4.8.3. Do you think alternative development can offer any help or be a sustainable livelihood program for cannabis farmers?

According to this question, a majority of 15 agreed that alternative development can offer a sustainable livelihood program for cannabis farmers if it is not politicized. The remaining 5 also accepted the fact that alternative development can offer a sustainable livelihood program for cannabis farmers through a systematic approach that will gradually replace the cannabis revenue. The last two, however, disagreed that cashew and other licit crop revenue can be equated to cannabis revenue, and for that matter, alternative development can never offer any help.

4.9. Community Members (Stakeholders)

4.9.1. Profile of Respondents

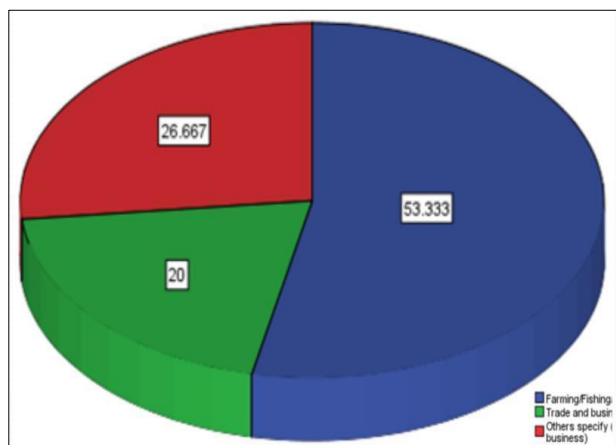
Per the gender of respondents, it is realized that all the respondents are males which is an indication that cannabis cultivation is a masculine business. Upon further interrogation, it was found that women help their husbands, boyfriends, and brothers in cultivating and their major activity is to weed under the cannabis plants, harvest them when the time is reached, and help in other businesses making the cannabis cultivation business cycle complete. According to their customs of trade, it is becoming customarily unaccepted for a woman to engage in cannabis farming without ownership attribution to a man. Considering their level of education, Table 5 presents the findings.

Table 5 Respondents' Level of Education

Items	Frequency	Percentage
None	3	20
Basic School/SHS	4	27
Tertiary	3	20
Others specify (community education)	5	33
Total	15	100

Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

From the table, out of the 15 cannabis farmers described in the study as community members because of dignity and confidentiality, 3 indicating 20% had no basic education, 4(27%) had basic education, 3(20%) had tertiary education whilst 5 specified community schooling commonly called evening or night school. A further probe into the farmers holding tertiary certificates about the level of their knowledge and the kind of illicit business they are into, it was found that life is all about money, and wherever there is money men go for it. And again education trains the mind to make money. In a close examination of such people, it was realized that they are more into the business than even the ordinary community member with added knowledge and skill to cultivate, harvest, and transport to business partners and trading centers either within the country or outside the borders of Ghana. Upon their major economic activity and source of livelihood in the District Figure 4.2 was generated.



Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

Figure 2 Major Economic Activity and Source of Livelihood

From the figure 2, 8 respondents indicated an approximate figure of 53% engage in farming and hunting, 3(20%) engage in trade and other businesses whilst 4(27%) specified cannabis business. However, it was triangulated that all the 15 respondents have cannabis farms as their head jobs with other camouflaged businesses like cashew farming, food crops, and other businesses like drinking spots, provisions shops, and a few others. These cannabis farmers were further asked, how long have you been cultivating cannabis and more importantly the size of their farms? It was found that only 2(13%) out of the 15 engaged in that business within 5 years, 6(40%) for more than 5 years whilst others specified that they have been in the business since their childhood times when they were following their fathers and uncles to the farms and now they are over 40 years. Figure 5 presents this finding.

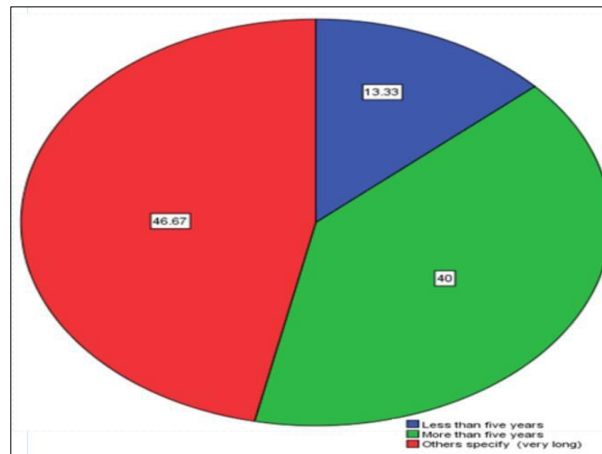


Figure 3 Period Engage in Cultivating Cannabis

Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

About their estimated size of farms, it was found that the majority have either more than 5 acres 4 (27%) or fragmented pieces of farms 4 (27%) that they cannot enumerate on an acre basis as shown in figure 3. Few numbering 2 indicating 13% had more than one acre of cannabis farm, another 2 respondents also indicated less than 3 acres of land whilst the remaining three indicated less than 3 acres of land. It was later found out through triangulated method that all of them have pieces of farms located in different areas within the deep forest and mostly give information about the largest one but if they were to put all those farms together for enumeration each farmer will not possess less than 10 acres of cannabis farms within the District. Again it was found that each member of the community has a cannabis farm Table 6 presents these findings.

Table 6 Estimated Size of Cannabis Farms

Items	Frequency	Percentage
How long have you known the cultivated cannabis in this District?		
Less than five years	2	13
More than five years	6	40
Others specify (very long)	7	47
What is the estimated size of your farm?		
More than 1 acre	2	13
Less than 3 acres	2	13
More than 5 acres	4	27
Less than 10 acres	3	20
Others specify (several fragmented pieces of land)	4	27

Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

In the course of conversation with these farmers, they were asked, whether or not they engage in any other illicit drug besides cannabis. majority numbering 9(60%) responded No whilst the remaining 6(40%) said Yes. However, few among these farmers brought to light their engagement with tobacco farming. Respondents were further asked about their understanding of alternative development and Table 7 presents these findings.

Table 7 Community Members' Understanding of Alternative Development

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Alternate source of livelihood	4	26.7
Adopted a way of doing business free from hazard	4	26.7
Ruling out illegal businesses/acts for illicit business	4	26.7
Poverty reduction strategies	3	20
Total	15	100

Source: Authors Field Work, (2023).

It was found out from the table that out of the 15 community members, 4 indicating 26.7% understood alternative development to be an alternate source of livelihood. Another 4(26.7%) understood it to be an adopted way of doing business free from hazard and illegality. The same section of people 4(26.7%) also understood it to be ruling out illegal business/act for illicit business and the last section 3(20%) perceived alternative development as poverty reduction strategies. Upon getting these understandings such respondents were asked whether or not it will be feasible to enroll in that program as a cannabis cultivation alternative. 100% out of the 15 respondents agreed to the feasibility of the program provided it is not politically motivated with the intention to resource their party faithful only.

4.10. Industrial Characteristics

4.10.1. The researcher asked respondents

i. Briefly describe cannabis farming and production in the District. Cannabis is an ancestral and traditional crop, and its cultivation is widespread throughout the District, according to all interviewees. Most prominent people who have been able to build buildings, pay for their children's university education, and enter other businesses have done so as a result of cannabis cultivation and its linked businesses. People from the South, particularly those from Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, have historically been involved in business along West Africa's downstream supply chain. One bad historical orientation is that a small number of people who were addicted to cannabis smoking became aggressive and insane, resulting in their untimely deaths. Cannabis matures and is harvested early compared to other income crops in the District, they say. Some farmers grow it twice a year, and a bag costs twice as much as a cashew, which takes years to mature. They usually transport cannabis leaves to market centers in charcoal trucks. Later, a machine compressed the leaves into a bundle you could carry.

4.10.2. What are cannabis' advantages and uses?

All of them found a regular source of revenue, therapeutic use, and other benefits they didn't know about. Others say they don't know of any other perks outside of revenue, but they think there are many, which is why people fly from other nations to deal in the cannabis business.

Should Ghana legalize cannabis cultivation? And why? Due to its commercial advantages as compared to other legal cash crops, the majority supported the legalization of cannabis cultivation. Due to its short harvest season, high selling price, and great employment opportunities, others supported its legalization. After these legalizations, they introduced a smoking regulation program. Cannabis Cultivation Security Threats Respondents were asked:

How would the cultivation of cannabis impact the people of Tain District?

Drug misuse and cannabis smoking are attributed to most juvenile violence, public disruptions, and mental health issues. Most community disruptions were attributed to cannabis misuse and accessibility. Few disagreed with the fact that easy access to cannabis caused community unrest, instead praising its ability to re-energize youngsters.

How does cannabis cultivation influence District agriculture?

Most thought cannabis didn't affect farming since other crops hide it. Others start cashew cultivation with cannabis revenue, so it doesn't damage farming. Some say cannabis is collected before cash crops are planted. 4.1.2.4: The Cultivation of Cannabis and Security Threats. Does cannabis cultivation enhance drug abuse and misuse in the District? And how? More than half of respondents who saw cannabis cultivation as a security danger also saw higher abuse, including smoking and cannabis toffees, which can lead to drug abuse, mental incapacity, a violent lifestyle, and others. Few believed cannabis posed no security threat or had bad community effects. Sustainable Alternative Development The researcher asked respondents to ascertain the sustainability of alternative development as a measure to reduce security issues posed by cannabis cultivation.

4.11. How will the District reduce cannabis supply and demand?

The District's public education and community participation aren't what the community wants. According to the majority of respondents, the community wants cannabis cultivation legalization and regulation. The community wants a non-political cannabis cultivation alternative. They offered realistic alternatives, including cashew seedlings, government support, dams for year-round farming, and cashew marketing boards or produce-buying firms. All respondents compared the District's fight against cannabis cultivation to Ghana's fight against galamsey, which is ongoing but not successful

4.11.1. How do you spend cannabis cultivation money?

When asked about cannabis cultivation revenue allocation, all respondents agreed that it depends on the farmer's maturity and reasonability. Most have built or bought commercial vehicles and motorcycles, taken care of their children's education, and met other social needs, while some have used it for prostitutes, alcoholic beverages, loud sound systems, and other engagements like marrying multiple wives.

5. Discussion

According to stakeholder knowledge and understanding of alternative development, they mentioned the following: alternative source of livelihood, adopted manner of doing business free from hazard, methods of ruling out illegal business/act for illicit business, and poverty reduction techniques. According to Brombacher and David (2022), the new global drug control regime has been confirmed by the people of Tain. According to the farming community's understanding of alternative development, it was found that the majority saw it as an alternative source of livelihood, a way of doing business free from hazard and illegality, and an act for illicit business as poverty reduction strategies. After hearing from farmers and non-farmers, they were asked if an alternative development model for cannabis cultivation would be feasible. All felt the idea is feasible if it is not politically motivated to resource party faithful. They also asserted alternative cannabis cultivation programming has begun but party politics destroyed the benefits. The community perspective of alternative development differs from practice. Legalizing and regulating cannabis cultivation is their alternative development. Alternative Development feasibility or implementation must come with new legislation to position Ghana to benefit from the global hemp or cannabis business. To limit illegal production, regulators should favor local cannabis investors and farmers (Owusu et al., 2021). Despite the District's efforts to control cannabis farming, it was found that all of them have pieces of farms located in different areas within the deep forest and mostly give information about the largest ones, which might be 5 acres and above. If they were to put all those farms together for enumeration, each farmer would have at least 10 acres of cannabis farms in the District. Thus, Owusu et al. (2021) recommended that the regulatory structure include a well-equipped organization to oversee cannabis cultivation and research. According to cannabis cultivation's history and benefits, the Tain District's people have been growing cannabis for untold years. Most called it a traditional crop and money source. And has been their source of livelihood and economic cornerstone. The cannabis business has become a hobby. Cannabis is used in medicine, lotions, pomade, and foreign businesses. Others have used farms' profits for prostitutes, booze, loud music systems, and social activities including marrying multiple wives. However, for its many benefits, notably therapeutic use, Ghana should legalize cannabis cultivation under stringent supervision. People from the South, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso have traditionally been active in the business as downstream supply chain participants. One bad historical orientation is that some cannabis addicts became violent and insane, resulting in their premature deaths. Cannabis matures and harvests earlier than other cash crops in the district, according to them.

5.1. Security Threat and Effects Posed by Cultivation of Cannabis

According to The Feldafing Declaration, there are negative effects or threats generated by drug consumption, trafficking, and production (Butsic et al., 2018). This shows that people in the Tain District and around the world view drug trafficking as a threat to governments. Perceptions vary. According to Alimi (2019), the global drug economy

includes more than mafia cartels buying properties, businesses, and aircraft. They buy officials, elections, parties, contract murders, and other crimes (Alimi, 2019). Drug trafficking and supply have led to the corruption of state and civil society institutions, according to a previous study (Ashworth and Vizuete, 2017). Ghana and Tain District faced these security risks, however, they were realized differently. For instance, it was found that most saw cannabis cultivation as a threat due to its widespread smoking, health problems, and violent lifestyle, which included robbery and street fights. Few other threats to cannabis cultivation in Tain compared to the global trend of buying estates, officials, and elections, the respondents of Tain were concerned about its abuse in the community and other social disruptions like school dropouts, child delinquency, and other social issues. They cited drug misuse and cannabis smoking as the main causes of youth violence, public disturbances, and mental health issues. The findings disproved the premise that cannabis production threatens lawful agriculture. They explained that cannabis plants are covered by other crops. Others start cashew cultivation with cannabis earnings, so it doesn't damage farming. Others said cannabis was collected before other crops were planted and did not disrupt farming seasons. It has been realized by Reinert and Kattel (2020) that the illicit drug market has led to the concentration of power, wealth, and income in criminals and the few, making them power drunks. It also distorted macroeconomic indices and limited productive investment (Reinert and Kattel, 2020). In this survey, respondents reported several effects, including indiscriminate smoking, violence, increased crime, notably gang robbery, school dropout, social vices including prostitution, and youth indiscipline. Thinking along these effects per the globe and Tain District, one can see that the continued cultivation of cannabis in the District will destroy their social structure, unlike on the international level where money from the business is used to buy estates, cause political instability, manufacture and purchase weapons of mass destruction. For example, more than half of farmers who considered cannabis cultivation a security threat also reported more abuse of it, such as smoking and cannabis toffees, which can lead to drug dependence, mental incapacity, violent lifestyle, and others. When the European Commission report on money laundering found that there is increasing contamination in the financial and economic world due to the higher flows of illicit money (UNODC, 2019a), it was clear that there are disparities in the effects of cannabis cultivation. Black money is drug money. They said that financial houses, building businesses, hotels, casinos, and office blocks across Europe are increasingly financed by black-laundered money (UNODC, 2019a), putting world security at risk. It was found in this study that increasing drug misuse in our region of the world had led to a loss of human capital and placed a particular burden on women, who typically bear the social and economic costs of addiction within the family.

5.2. Sustainability of Alternative Development

According to Gutierrez (2015), coercive drug eradication efforts or drug regulations cause instability in local populations. Violence, crime, health, poverty, and others can cause insecurity, according to Martin (2015). This study found that forced drug eradication programs or drug legislation on the local populace will not promote alternative development policy sustainability. They explained that cannabis cultivation is cultural, behavioral, and lifestyle, which takes a long time for people to accept the new way of life of alternate development, therefore a long-term plan is needed to succeed. Unlike elsewhere, the people of Tain considered employing important instruments like education and sensitization to raise understanding of cannabis's risks and benefits and community engagement in this long-term plan. Vizuete (2017)'s findings were in line with this study when he backed Tain people's gradual cultural, behavioral, and lifestyle changes. As Gutierrez (2015) and Martin (2015) found, the people of Tain said that the government's and district's approach to reducing cannabis cultivation through law enforcement, arrests, police threats, farm burnings, and other enforcement mechanisms threatened the sustainability of alternative development. According to Health Poverty Action and the International Drug Policy Consortium (2015), such initiatives confirm the Tain people's belief that most drug eradication programs threaten livelihoods and national security. The respondents did not leave youth programs that involve youth and other entrepreneurial programs as viable approaches and chances to improve young engagement in cashew farming and other licit crops. Alternative development can provide a sustainable living for cannabis producers if it is not politicized, it was found. Thus, they affirmed that the District is doing its bit through public education and community involvement to limit cannabis production and promote the sustainability of alternative development, but the community is looking elsewhere. To combat abuse, the community is considering cannabis cultivation legalization and control. If people in Ghana are legally motivated to handle and produce cannabis. The community also wants a practical alternative to cannabis cultivation without governmental influence. They explained the availability of cashew seedlings, government funding, dam building for year-round farming, a marketing board, and/or cashew produce-buying companies. Martin (2015) proposed that alternative development programs should be included in a comprehensive development policy that protects the environment, builds strong infrastructure, ensures legal market access, and engages local communities as equal partners. Because cannabis can be planted twice a year due to its early maturing period, they believe alternative development is a poverty reduction strategy and a source of livelihood for cannabis farmers. However, despite its high and consistent selling price, it has not solved their poverty problems. how much longer alternative plants like cashew and cassava take to harvest, along with irregular prices, trouble procuring seeds, no regular rains for cultivation, and other marketing, conserving, transporting, and pricing

issues. The majority of respondents were in line with Amelia (2017) and Martin (2015) when they called for the legalization and regulation of cannabis cultivation in alternative development efforts. Amelia (2017) argued that "healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages" will only be achieved when drug laws and policies are revised to ensure adequate and affordable access to internationally controlled substances like morphine for pain relief and palliative care. Martin (2015) also stated that universal health care will only be achieved if people who use drugs can access harm reduction, therapy, and other health services without fear of arrest or prejudice.

6. Conclusion

The old-age problem of cannabis cultivation has been around the globe and in Ghana in particular. Available data, as discussed above, indicated that it continues to be the most abused narcotic in Ghana because it is cultivated in abundance and harms the youth in particular (National Security Strategy, Ghana, 2020, pages 40 and 41). Although a lot has been done in terms of supply and demand reduction to curb the menace over the years, the threat is still there. The United Nations System's adoption of Alternative Development as a means to reduce and possibly eradicate drug cultivation and also serve as an income-generating venture for rural farmers in particular. As cannabis cultivation has historically been part of the tradition and culture of the area of study, any alternative development must involve the identifiable culture and tradition of the people through community engagement. It was also confirmed that most of the local alternative development policies implemented were highly influenced by party politics, which led many people to abandon those policies. It is concluded that alternative development must look at how Ghana can legalize cannabis cultivation under strict regulations for the sake of its numerous benefits, especially the use of medicine and a prompt source of revenue. It is my fervent hope that if the findings, outcomes, recommendations, and future research on alternative development outlined in this study are implemented, Ghana can make major inroads in the war on drugs, specifically in the fight against cannabis cultivation.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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