

Chapter 9

Analysis of Lessons That Can Be Learnt by South African Government Leaders in Their Role in Advancements Within the Cannabis Industry of South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Government leaders have a key role to play in leading a diverse economy towards alleviation of poverty. Throughout the years cannabis has contributed to improved livelihoods for several years even with strong legislative policies that prevented its cultivation (Nkosi, 2021). In efforts to grow its economy, South Africa has joined many countries in changing its legislative policies to allow for legalization of hemp and cannabis under certain conditions. This chapter provides an analysis of the lessons that can be learnt by South African government leaders from the cannabis industry and their role in advancements within the cannabis industry of South Africa.

INTRODUCTION

The cannabis industry has seen transformation since its legalization by many countries including South Africa. The race to achieve economic growth in the cannabis industry is strong, according to the research from the leading market research company (IMARC) group medical cannabis market was worth \$7.8 billion (~R117.5 billion) in 2020 with a 15.3% projected growth in 2026 (IMARC CANNABIS - Zoeken, 2020). Whilst many countries have progressively embraced the economic growth and benefits from this industry South Africa's progress has fallen behind. Recent events such as the COVID19 pandemic, Rus-

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sian invasion of Ukraine (Team, 2022), July 2021 unrest in KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng (ACCORD, 2021) and the recent floods in KwaZulu Natal (South Africa: Floods and Landslides - Apr 2022, 2022) weigh unfavorably on South Africa's bottom line.

In his 2022 state of the nation address South African president Cyril Ramaphosa announced government's strategic plan for expansion through the industrialization and commercialization of hemp and Cannabis which is estimated at approximately R28 billion, with a potential of 130,000 new jobs (State of the Nation Address 2022 | South African Government, n.d). South Africa's cannabis strategy is detailed in the Cannabis master plan which was compiled in 2021. Success in the implementation of this strategy requires leadership to ensure strategic integration of functional strategies linked to the overall strategy with coherence of unified and mutually supportive policies and practices.

Literature has a lot of theories on government leadership roles. This chapter focuses on the six important leadership roles described by Stiglitz. These six important roles are unpacked in this chapter in relation to the cannabis industry and they include promoting education, promoting technology, supporting the financial sector, investing in infrastructure, preventing environmental degradation, and lastly creating and maintaining a social safety net (Stiglitz, 1997). In understanding its role in advancing the cannabis industry, South African government leaders can ensure improved delivery of the National cannabis master plan through the implementation of learnings gathered from countries that are ahead in their execution plans. This chapter also covers lessons derived from the current challenges described in the National cannabis master plan for South Africa with the intention to provide a broader spectrum of lessons that can reduced the challenges within South Africa. The academic value and intention of this chapter is to extend on currently available literature in providing an analysis of lesson's that can be learnt by South African government leaders on their role towards advancements within the Cannabis industry in South Africa.

Research Philosophy

In unpacking the lessons that can be learnt by South African government leaders on their role towards advancements within the Cannabis industry in South Africa. This chapter adopts a qualitative method of research philosophy which focuses on generation of non-numerical data for understanding beliefs, experiences, and behaviors using available literature sources (Kalra et al., 2013).

Data Collection

The data collection method for this chapter is qualitative. Historical and recent research events from the literature are used to create a framework for addressing the lesson's that can be learnt by South African government leaders on their role towards advancements within the Cannabis industry in South Africa. The method for analyzing the data involved a content analysis based on grounded theory to identify differences and similarities on available literature.

Background of the Study

“Cannabis the plant that produces hemp as well as hashish, is now known primarily as one of the leading psychoactive plants in the world use following, tobacco and alcohol in popularity” (Schultes, 1974). Cannabis was cultivated for fibre food medicine thousands of years ago before it became the ‘superstar;

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