

---

## Nigeria's Quest for Sustainable Development: Drug Abuse and the Impact on Health and Manpower Development. (Case Study of Sokoto Metropolis in Sokoto State, Nigeria)

---

<sup>1</sup>H. Olatunji, <sup>2</sup>S.Tanko & <sup>3</sup>R.M. Maiwada

<sup>1&2</sup>*Department of Economics, Sokoto State University*

<sup>3</sup>*Department of Educational Foundation, Sokoto State University*

---

### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to highlight the effects of drug abuse on health, manpower development and the economy as a whole with a focus on Sokoto Metropolis in Sokoto State, Nigeria. It is important to recognize that at the heart of Nigeria's Economic development challenges is manpower development. The question of sustainability remains a secondary objective which can only be achieved if the nation's population is healthy, productive and value oriented. This study seeks to establish the relationship, if any between the menace of drug abuse and the achievement of the 2030 agenda of Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

*Keywords: Drug abuse, Manpower development and Sustainable development*

Corresponding Author: H. Olatunji

### **Background to the Study**

Sustainable development conceptually encompasses three fundamental approaches, these include economic, environmental, and social development, which are interrelated, interdependent and complementary (Remigijus, Jolita, Bronislovas & Martinkus, 2014). The main objective of sustainable development is its concern with the maximum utilization of resources at present without undermining their utilizations by future generations (Rachel, 2015). While the need for achieving the 2030 agenda of sustainable development remains a global objective; different countries of the world are facing different challenges towards its achievement. In as much as other population groups of the country are increasingly engaging in the habit of illicit drug consumption. This however is a potential source of cancer and other health disasters. Consequently, for every human being, family unit, society and indeed nations of the world; health is wealth because health is an asset; it is a security of life and productivity of labour, and ultimately a determinant of development. At the heart of every nation lies the burning desire to achieve economic development that is sound, stable and sustainable. However, it is very important to recognize that no economy can achieve such important breakthrough with an army of labour that is unproductive or less productive and the productivity of labour is not solely determined by education or dexterity but ultimately by the health status of that labour.

Consider a University professor that is ill for example, his/her knowledge cannot be optimally tapped from because of his/her health challenge. A student with health challenges also, may not be able to acquire the optimal lesson that is taught. A factory machine operator that is ill may perform poorly depending on the intensity of such an illness. The lesson here is that, whatever undermines the health of a people also undermines their productivity and the potential benefit in view. There are many factors that lead to ill health; however, the consumption of illicit drugs for example is a deliberate invitation of health problem such as cancer, loss of mental ability and foresight, poor mental power of concentration, madness and behavioural changes and ultimately in some cases death. Against this background, it will be safer to presume that the relationship between health challenge and productivity of labour is mutually exclusive. In the light of manpower development as an economic variable and one of the three components of sustainable development; it will not be mistaken to assume the unlikelihood of its achievement under such circumstances.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study is broadly, aimed at highlighting the health impact of illicit drug consumption on manpower productivity as a challenge to Nigerian economy as well as to the effort of achieving sustainable development goals using Sokoto State metropolis as a case study. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine the links between improper consumption of drugs and the health and productivity of the drug abusers,
2. To investigate the impact of drug abuse on the economy.
3. To examine the consequences of drug abuse on achieving the sustainable development goals.

## **Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Framework Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development is a long-term improvement on economic, environmental, health, social and any other factor (s) that add value to life. Sustainable development as a concept is concerned with conserving resources for future generations (Rachel, 2015). The overall goal of sustainable development (SD) is the long-term stability of the economy and environment; and this is only achievable through the integration and acknowledgement of economic, environmental, and social concerns throughout the decision making process. In the application of this definition, one issue of concern is the substitutability of capital. For example, the development of an economy relies on manpower productivity and natural resources. The development of manpower relies on education, environmental safety and health. From all angles of sustainable development, all factors are dependent and complementary.

### **Drug Abuse (Theory and Evidence)**

Although the concept of drug abuse varies, generally, it entails any substance or drug that is deliberately consumed by individual(s) with the intention of having a predetermined side effect on emotions, attitudes and behaviours which could be inimical to health (Osa-Edo and Egbochukwu, 2012) Drug abuse also implies the violation of drug prescription or excessive consumption of drugs deliberately by an individual that is not sick or whose sickness is not relevant to the drugs consumed (UNODC, 2005). According to Eze and Omeje (1999) some individuals depend on certain drugs for their survival due to a number of factors; such as peace of mind in moments of anger, leisure and relaxation, exoneration of pressure, enhancement of mental power of concentration and others. The main emphasis of the theory of drug abuse is that people have their own reasons for taking illicit drugs. For example, drug abusers have always maintained their stance on the opinion that the joy and pleasure derived from illicit drugs is too big a price to be measured. This is in spite of the health implication known to them.

The theory of drug abuse specifically outlines three rounds of consequences for taking illicit drugs (Eze and Omeje, 1999). On the first round category, different drugs have different side effects on attitudes and behaviour, but they all converge in deteriorating the normal health status of drug abusers, some of which include: cancer and other related killer diseases, physical disability, loss of productivity, development of immoral attitudes and dependency. On the second round category; it includes waste of money, attraction of public stigmatization, crime and violence and others. On the third category, it is particularly responsible for the loss of potential contribution of innovation, skills and expertise of their productivity in various components of institutions that promote economic development.

### **Manpower Development**

Manpower development implies the improvement of skills, capacity and intellectual ability of labourer for his job (McGuire, 2010). It also involves the process of converting unskilled labour to semiskilled and to advance the skills of skilful labour. The principal objective of manpower development is to improve the quality of inputs and outputs

simultaneously. That is why to every country who desires to build an economy at a level that guarantees the general wellbeing and welfare of its citizens, manpower development has always been a priority advanced by policy makers (Singleton & Wolfston, 2009). In that process, the art of converting human population into an economic force with the right skills requires education as the necessary condition. As for the sufficient condition for productivity of labour to optimally translate into value added, that labourer must have the physical ability, mental power of concentration and composure at work. In addition to this, the quality of labour productivity at work depends on his/her attitudes and behaviours and mental power of concentration which rhymes with the working environment.

### **Challenge of Sustainable Economic Development in the light of Drug Abuse**

Economic development that is guaranteed to last for a long-time can be referred to as sustainable but where development indicators frequently rise and fall it is unsustainable (McGuire, 2010). There are many factors that are responsible for retarding the longevity of economic development. Amongst the popular superior arguments; these factors include among others bad leadership, war, crime and violence from social and political point of view (Jonathan and Harris, 2000). From an economic perspective, the components of an economic development value chain comprises both economic and non-economic factors that complement productivity of labour, efficiency and the effective combination of factors of production which guarantee the creation of economic result at the optimal level (Rachel, 2015). At the pinnacle, among the biggest challenges of sustainable economic development are factors that directly or indirectly retard the productivity of labour. Some of which include physical disability, emotional disorder, sickness, poor education and a list of others.

Based on the separate concepts of sustainable development, drug abuse and manpower development explained above; we can logically interpret their linkages and externalities. Economic development is one part in the body structure of sustainable development. Economic development however is driven by manpower productivity. The productivity of labour from the stage of knowledge and skills acquisition to practical application of the skills acquired at work depends on education, health and behaviour of labour. In addition to that, the effects of drug abuse on health, attitudes and productivity are detrimental. By implication, whatever undermines labour productivity also undermines economic development and thus; its sustainability.

### **Review of some Related Literatures**

Interestingly, there are many research articles that have investigated not only the effects of drug abuse to personal health but also by extension, on how the health impact can affect the socioeconomic wellbeing of the society. Julian (2015) in her article titled 'drugs and development: the great disconnect', shaded more light on the ongoing advocacy on the mutually exclusiveness between economic development and drug abuse. She was of the view that economic development in any society is driven by healthy and productive labourers and that drug abuse is an anti-health and a draw back on labour productivity. An individual might have acquired the necessary and relevant education and skills but if

he/she is sick as a result of taking hard substances, that person becomes unproductive, and a burden on the economy. On the other hand, the habit of drug abuse among youths who are not educated promotes a fertile ground for resentment, employment into the bandwagon of criminality, urban violence and hindered peaceful resolution of conflicts. Consequently, drug abuse has been a consistent barrier to development.

Agbonghale and Okaka (2014) examined the effects of drug abuse on academic performance of technology education students in Nigerian public universities. Their main objective is to find out whether or not the increasing habit of taking hard drugs by students could have negative influence on their academic performances. Using 10 education students for pilot study, the authors further administered 459 questionnaires for data collection from other universities and employed descriptive statistics for data analysis. Their results revealed two interesting lessons. First, is that expenditure on hard drugs consumption reduced their pocket money which psychologically retards their mental stability and power of concentration. Secondly and in any event, where they are not under the influence of drugs, it made it difficult for them to concentrate on their academic activities. Drug abuse therefore, affects the academic performance of students negatively. Hornsby, (2006) examined the menace of drug abuse on academic performance and youth development in Nigeria. Their result coincides with the findings of Agbonghale and Okaka.

Fayombo & Aremu (2000) examined the impact of tobacco consumption on health and socio-economic development in Africa. On their status report, they opined that smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined, and thousands more die from tobacco-related causes such as exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (also called passive smoking). They found that the general health effects of tobacco products in Africa, as everywhere in the world, include lung cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke, respiratory disease, and other tobacco-related diseases; and that the negative effects of tobacco use are not limited to users. People exposed to second-hand smoke are also at greater risk for lung cancer and coronary artery disease as well as other chronic health problems. As the world takes stock of the progress made against the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, the majority of African countries are on course to miss most of the targets. Tobacco is a contributor to the factors that continue to derail Africa's effort to attain the MDGs because it affects all facets of Africa's health, economy and development and is responsible for crippling poverty.

### **Nigeria's Experiences**

From independence to date, available statistics have shown that Nigeria has had seasonal development and underdevelopment regimes. By implication, the cyclical behaviours of development parameters over these periods suggest that sustainability remains the biggest challenge of development in Nigeria. There have been attempts from academicians, independent researchers and political analysts in reactionary effort towards coming out with the right policy blueprints to tackle the barriers of development longevity; in most cases, they converge in prioritizing labour productivity at the pinnacle (Kavutha, 2015). The culture of taking illicit drugs in Nigeria today has become rampant

among all ages and population groups; from senior civil servants, university students, women and children, uneducated and even the less fortunate. According to Osa-Edo and Egbochukwu(2012), amongst the popular illicit substances patronized by drug abusers are Indian-hemp, cocaine, syrups with codeine, rohypnol and others with different names. The problem of alcohol consumption and smoking of cigarettes are coming from a history of exponential growth. As a result, millions of people have died of cancer, lung damage and other health disasters that are connected with the side effect of drugs abuse (UNODC, 2005). Many young men, women and children have gone mad as a result of taking illicit drugs. Apart from self-embarrassment of questionable attitudes and behaviours in the public, at home and office displayed by drug abusers under the influence of drugs.

**Picture 1: Most highly abused Drugs in Sokoto State and Nigeria as a whole**



Syrups with Codeines are the most consumed drugs in Nigeria at large. This involves all population and gender groups in the country such as students, security, teachers, children boys and girls, women, pregnant women and politicians among others. The other most commonly abused drugs are shown below:

**Picture 2: Rohypnol 5/4/2.**



**Picture 3: Other Varieties.**



**Ultimate Effects of Illicit Drug Consumption**

The abuse of drugs irrespective of their varieties are detrimental to human health, body system and its productivity. Although they have different side effects, they all converge to destroy the vital organs of the human body. The table and flow chart below show an illustration frequency of consumption and the effect.

The table presents the descriptive statistics tables about the quantum of various drugs abused on daily, weekly, monthly and yearly bases by estimate as well as prices of the drugs in Sokoto metropolis.

**Table 1: Financial Implication of Drug Commonly Abused in Sokoto Metropoli**

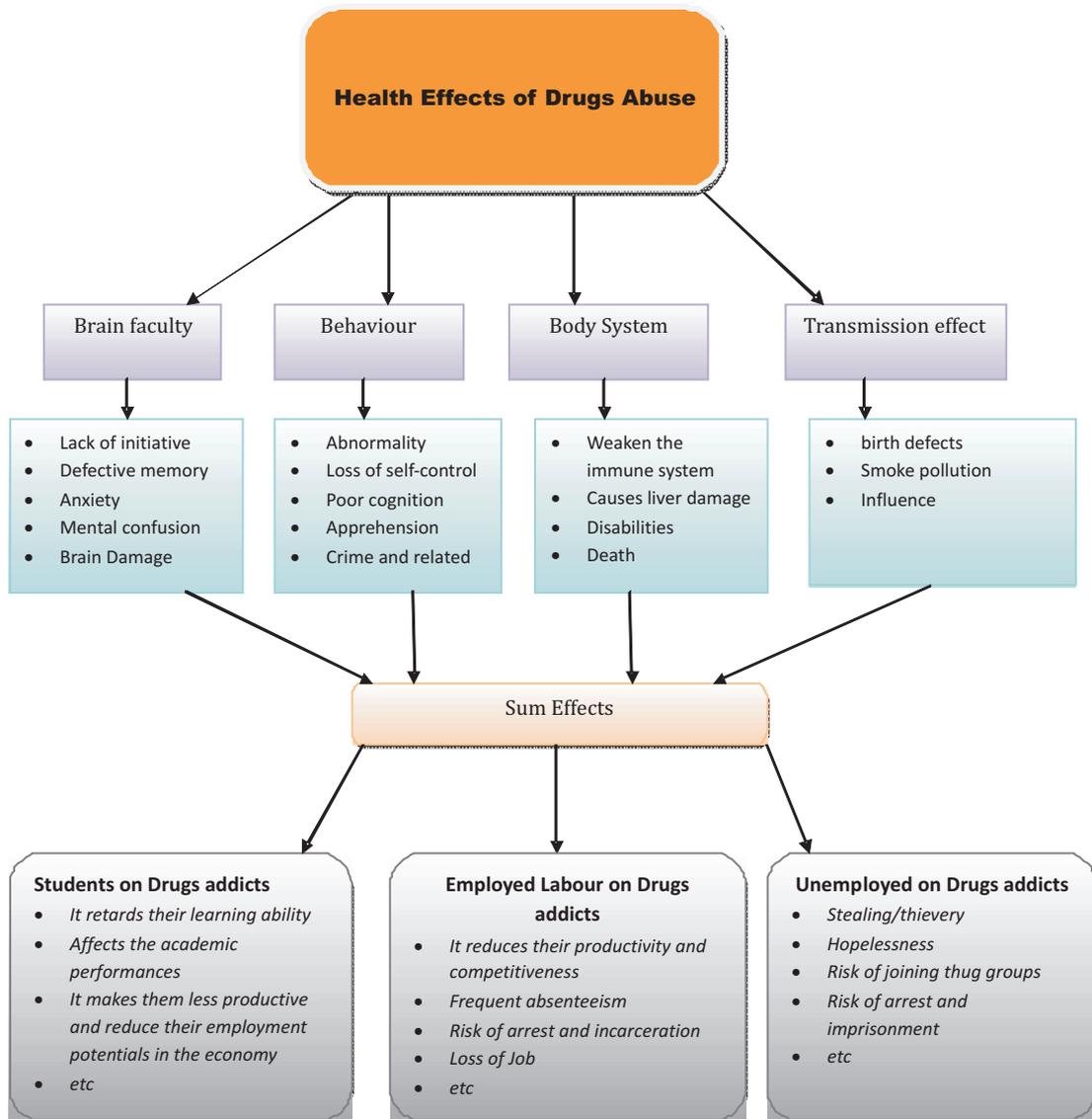
S/N	Drug	Unit Price	Daily Unit Consumption Rate	Total Daily Sales	Total Weekly Sales	Total Monthly Sales	Total Yearly Sales
1	Codeine	800	1000	800,000	5,600,000	24,000,000	292,000,000
2	Rohypnol	150	1500	225,000	1,575,000	6,750,000	82,125,000
3	Others	500 (Average)	700	350,000	2,450,000	10,500,000	127,750,000
			<b>Total</b>	<b>1,375,000</b>	<b>9,625,000</b>	<b>41,250,000</b>	<b>501,875,000</b>

**Source: Drug Suppliers**

The implication of this is that in an economy that is struggling to meet up with its recurrent expenditure and provision of basic amenities for the citizens, the loss of such a staggering resource to drug abuse is simply devastating. More so, the consequential effect of this bad habit is actually far reaching, it deprives the individual abuser economic, social, psychological as well as physiological wellbeing, it subjects the user's family and friends to trauma and stigmatization and consequently the economy as a whole is deprived of its efficient labour force on one hand and loss of resources on the other hand because such resources will be diverted to the rehabilitation and treatment of these abusers. This situation apart from hindering the achievement of Sustainable

Development through the deprivation of the much needed manpower is also retarding it by directing the scarce resources of the state to such unproductive use.

**Flow-Chart 1: Effect of Drug Abuse on Individuals**



**Source:** Designed by the Authors

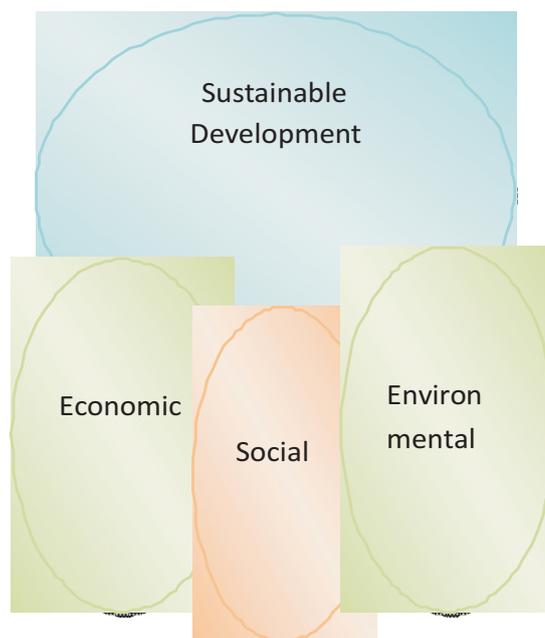
**Explaining the Nexus**

This section presents the link between achieving Sustainable development and the menace of drug abuse. Recall that sustainable development encompasses three components which include economic, environmental and social development and that they are interrelated, interdependent and complementary; therefore in any event; whatever undermines one of its components will also affect the other two components.

Considering the economic component of sustainable development, in the light of establishing the nexus between drug abuse and sustainable development through the health impact on manpower productivity; we described the links hypothetically through the health impacts of drug abuse and how it affects labour productivity and the economy. Consequently, we examine the relationship between sustainable development and economic development, the relationship between economic development and manpower productivity, the relationship between manpower productivity and health and the relationship between health and drug abuse.

The flow-chart 2 is a hypothetical description of how sustainable development depends on the economic, social and environmental development at a sustainable phase. It also indicates the breakdown of any component, be it economic, social or environmental. Moreover, these components at individual level are also dependent on other factors. Our paper singled out only the economic component and its determinants from development perspective, labour productivity and the health impact of drug abuse on health and productivity of labour.

**Flow-Chart 2: The Inter-dependent components of Sustainable Development.**



**Source:** Designed by the Authors.

### **The Impact of Drug Abuse on Health, manpower Development and Consequently on Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development as a goal can only be achieved if three of its components are improving at a sustainable phase. The literature also has it that the failure of any one component will affect the other components and the true realization of its goals. Therefore, the relationship between economic development and sustainable development is that of causation. If the economy is facing challenges of development, it will automatically contract the likelihood of achieving that goal of sustainability of development. In any economy, productivity of manpower is the most sensitive determinant of economic development from input perspective and traditionally, output is a function of input. This implies that if the productivity of labour is poor or marginally insignificant, it will directly translate into the economy from output scale. Therefore, for the economy to improve at a sustainable phase and to contribute to the true realization of sustainable development, the productivity of manpower has to be protected and improved.

For labour to be productive apart from educated, the individual must be in good health condition in order to contribute his or her productive skills into an economic value. However skilful a labour is, the society and the economy can only benefit from him/her if that person is healthy, physically and mentally fit. This implies that if labour is facing health challenges, his or her productivity is reduced and in some cases completely lost and this implies a loss to the economy and consequentially, resulting to a retard in sustainable development effort. Drug abuse or consumption of illicit drugs has been considered as a deliberate invitation to health disaster. Although there are many causes of health challenges; consumption of illicit drugs renders abusers useless to themselves and the society irrespective of their education and dexterity. Drug abuse causes madness, it destroys vital organs of the body and ultimately an untimely death. This implies that consumption of illicit drugs will affect the realization of sustainable development by posing a health challenge to Labour and loss of manpower to the nation leading to loss of productivity, and the loss of their potential contribution to the growth and development of an economy thereby undermining a Sustainable Development.

### **Limitations of the Paper**

The paper did not empirically capture such relationship as explained above rather, it uses rational explanations and logic on the bases of economic, health and drug abuse theories because of the non-availability of data required for such analysis. Moreover, sourcing needed data for empirical analysis proved very difficult because of the sensitivity of the issue and unavailability of fund. This therefore provides opportunities for further research on the subject matter to employ data if available for justifications.

### **Conclusion**

Drug abuse has been recognized in this paper as a bane for Nigeria's quest for sustainable development. The menace of drug abuse cannot be overemphasized. Drug abuse is not peculiar to any gender, age or group it cuts across all social groups. No nation can attain any meaningful growth if its citizens are prone to drug abuse. For any meaningful

development to thrive its manpower must be well educated and healthy; a healthy Nation is a wealthy nation. Drug misuse causes diseases like cancer, liver cirrhosis, kidney failure and even death. Nigeria as a developing nation needs all the manpower she can get in order to attain the desired development and economic sustainability. As a result of this, it becomes very imperative for the government of Nigeria rise up and fights this canker worm. The wealth of a nation are its healthy citizens, therefore all hands must be on deck the menace.

### **Recommendations**

1. Sokoto State Government should organize workshops and engage resource persons to orient the populace on the evils of drug abuse; since there is the culture of seclusion of women in the state, house to house sensitization should be encouraged to reach out to the women folk. It should also be made mandatory that all institutions of learning in the state organize periodic sensitization workshops in order to educate students about the consequences of drug abuse/misuse.
2. Guidance and Counseling services should be made available in all levels of school, .Women and Civil Organizations should avail themselves to counselling services since this is a dimensional problem. Guidance and Counseling units in all institutions of learning in the state must be empowered with all the necessary equipment to be able handle all cases of drug abuse schools; they should refer such cases to proper channel for isolation and treatment. Such identified students should not be discriminated against, but be shown love, care and understanding.
3. The (NOA) National Orientation Agency,( NDLEA) National Drug Law Enforcement Agency,(FRSC) Federal Road Safety Corp and Non-governmental agencies, each has their roles to play. All should come together in the fight against and the use and distribution of illicit drugs.

## References

- Agbonghale, G.O. & Okaka, R. O. (2014). Effects of Drug Abuse on Academic Performance of Technology Education Students in Nigerian Public Universities. Kamla-Raj. *Journal of Psychology*. Vol. 5 (1). Pp. 79-83
- Eze, J.E. & Omeje, A. (1999). *Fundamentals of substance abuse*. Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd.
- Fayombo, G. A. & Aremu, S. (2000). *Drug education and its effects on the educational performance of some adolescents drug abusers in Ibadan*. *The Counsellor*, 18(5), pp. 378-387.
- Hornsby, R. A. (2006). Drugs abuse in the United States, possible implications for Nigeria. *Nigerian Medical Journal*, 5(3): 20-22.
- Jonathan, B. & Harris, C. (2000). *Basic Principles of Sustainable development*. Global Development and Environment Institute Working Paper 00-04 Tufts University Medford MA 02155, USA
- Julian, H. (2015). *Drugs and Development: The Great Disconnect*. GDPO Policy report 2. ISSN 2054-2046 Swansea University, Prifysgol. Abertawe.
- Kavutha, M.J. (2015). Influence of Drug Use on Academic Performance among Secondary School Students in Matinyani District, Kenya. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*. ISSN 2250-3153. Volume 5, Issue 11,
- McGuire, P. L. (2010). *Narcotic Trafficking in West Africa: A Governance Challenge*. The Pardee Papers / No. 9 / March 2010. The Frederick S. Pardee Centre for the study of Longer-Range future. Boston University.
- Osa-Edo, G. I. & Egbochukwu, E. O. (2012). Classification of Frequency Abused Drugs amongst Nigerian Youth and the Social Influences: Implications for Counselling. *International Journal of Science and Technology*. Vol.1 No. 3
- Rachel, k. (2015). *The Concept of Sustainable Development: Definition and Defining Principles*. Brief for GSDR 2015, Florida International University.
- Remigijus, D. Jolita B & Martinkus (2014). The Concept of Sustainable Development and Its use for Sustainability Scenarios. *The Economic Conditions of Enterprise Functioning* ISSN 1392-2785. *Economics* (2). 2009.
- Singleton, R. A. & Wolfston, A. R. (2009). Alcohol Consumption, Sleep, and Academic Performance among College Students. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*. Vol.70(3). pp 355-363.
- United Nations Organizations on Drug Council (UNODC) (2005). *World Health Organization Expert Committee on Dependence Producing Drugs*. Fourteenth Report Urban Adolescents, Child Development, 61, 2032-2046.