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Tackling the Illicit Drugs Use in Nigeria: The Need for Policy Appraisal

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ABSTRACT In spite of the profundity and scope of the current drug control activities of the government, illicit drug use has become more prevalent in Nigeria in recent years. While, recent development in drug addiction studies emphasises treatment and rehabilitation of drug-addicts as a viable means of assisting recovering drug-addicts reintegrate successively into the community; current drug control efforts in Nigeria rely rigidly on law-enforcement, even when it contradicts international drug policies and produces unintended negative consequences. Relying mainly on secondary sources of data collection, this paper examines the sanction-approach option of drug control policy of the government and questioned the associated “unintended negative consequences” of such policies, which includes widespread human right abuses. This paper concludes that the Nigerian drug control policy should be revised because it is reactive, punitive and subjects drug users to stigmatisation, marginalisation and social exclusion without making recourse to the development of appropriate rehabilitative models.