

Quantitative Research Proposal

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Introduction

In my research proposal, I will take a population, or focus group, and survey what their attitude towards drug use is. My focus group will be high school students in my hometown of Amelia County. I would ask general questions that may apply to more of the students, rather than focusing on specific people or habits. Examples would include: Have you seen drug use in school? Was the drug use during school hours? Do you feel negative, positive, or neutral about drugs? Do you have friends that you know use drugs? How does that make you feel?etc. This research and surveying is needed in schools, to understand if or how drug use is affecting students in school, whether that is positively or negatively.

Review of Literature

Beamer, S., Timmreck, T., & Butterworth, D. (1991). Effectiveness of Drug Intervention Groups in High School Settings. *The High School Journal*, 75(1), 59-72. Retrieved November 19, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40364811>

This article was about how drug intervention works in high schools, and if they work or not. Drug use can change a person's life. Drugs can cause the person to become aggressive, and commit more crimes, or cause them to join a gang, or disregard social norms. The article also goes over the medical side effects of drug use and those include but are not limited to: AIDS, immune deficiency, or heart attacks. The authors mentioned that using drugs, for young adults, meant something more. They viewed this as freedom in a way. Drug use increased in popularity in the younger adults in college, they saw it as growing up and having freedom away from their parents. It seems to have worked its way down in the age groups, and is now mainly in highschools, but seen as the same “freedom”. Depression is also a factor mentioned in this

article when it comes to drug use. People with this disorder seem to rely heavily on drugs to get through life. Since there has been an increase of teens diagnosed with depression, there has also been an increase in the amount of teens who have resulted to drug use.

Finn, K. (2012). Marijuana Use at School and Achievement-Linked Behaviors. *The High School Journal*, 95(3), 3-13. Retrieved November 18, 2020, from

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41343019>

In Kristin Finn's article, she focused on how Marijuana is easily accessible to high school students, and how it affects the students' participation in school. Like many other articles, this one shows that if a student has a history with drugs, they are more likely to be less active in school. This is both socially and academically. The students have less motivation to succeed, and just brush off the fact that they are in high school to learn basic life lessons. Finn highlighted the fact that drug use lowered a students academic performances, and their social standings were not a priority. She also mentioned that since marijuana is so easily accessible to the students, there is a higher probability of more students having access and the temptation to use the drug. Students do not seem to care if they will get caught using the drug or not, because they are not really cautious about when and where they use it. The students have even reported using it in school during the school day. They will sneak around and most of the time go to a bathroom, or even just a hallway or corner in the unpopulated parts of the school. Once they get hooked on the drug, it is like they don't care about anything anymore.

Mensch, B., & Kandel, D. (1988). Dropping Out of High School and Drug Involvement.

Sociology of Education, 61(2), 95-113. doi:10.2307/2112267

The article by Mecsch and Kandel focuses on how drug use in high schools is connected to those who drop out. Students who are using drugs in high school have a higher tendency to drop out. The drug use causes students to misbehave, and this attitude, and mentality causes students to no longer care about their education, and move onto different things. The students who use drugs tend to think that they are mature and grown up and that they can live on their own, but that isn't always the case. These drug users do not want to comply with the social norm, and do not think that the rules apply to them, and that they are capable and intelligent enough to survive the real world without a complete high school education. We can see statistically that this is not correct, and that drop outs rarely make it as big as they think they can, and most who are rational will understand that they made a mistake. If the student is using drugs and is going to complete their high school education, they won't complete it normally. They will be very socially detached, and just coasting through, and simply going through the motions to escape high school. Most times this will result similarly to a drop out, because the student didn't really care about the education, and didn't put in the effort to grow as a person. This doesn't only affect the student who is ruining their education, but it affects society as well. In all, the drug use in high schools is prominent, and pushing more and more kids out of their chance of public education.

Williams, J., Davis, L., Johnson, S., Williams, T., Saunders, J., & Von E. Nebbitt. (2007).

Substance Use and Academic Performance among African American High School Students. *Social Work Research*, 31(3), 151-161. Retrieved November 18, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42659658>

Williams, Davis, Johnson, Williams, Saunders, and Nebbitt focused on how the use of drugs in high schools affected African American students. The study highlighted the G.P.A. of the focus group with the connection of either personal marijuana use, or family history of marijuana use. Since a high school diploma is needed for most jobs, and especially secondary education, resulting in better life chances, the use of drugs really hinders this. Drug use puts many people at a disadvantage in life, and makes it hard to make a living. It is a struggle for anyone who doesn't do well in school, especially for someone who is using drugs. It makes it hard to go to college and get a degree in something that could be a passion, or a goal. It also makes it hard to be consistent in life. When drug use is shown in high school, it is the start of a very bumpy road. There will be plenty of ups and downs, and twists and turns. This article shows that African Americans may be more likely to be users of drugs, and often start at a young age, often in high school.

Yusoff, F., Sahril, N., Rasidi, N., Zaki, N., Muhamad, N., & Ahmad, N. (2014). Illicit Drug Use Among School-Going Adolescents in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health*, 26(5), 100S-107S. Retrieved November 18, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26725559>

This article focuses on the rising number of students in Malaysia who have admitted to using some type of drug. It also mentioned the possible side effects, both medical and not, that the drugs might have on the student. The main result from the use of drugs was aggression. This result can cause a chain reaction. The heightened aggression can cause harm to others. Whether the person is in the right state of mind or not, that can not be an excuse. Some of the assaults can vary from just beating someone up, to sexual assault. Both harm the victim, but vary in severity.

The one who is under the influence of drugs may not even understand or be aware of what they are doing. The article also stated that the main source of influence, when it came to the use of drugs, was friends, or peers. Drug use is heavily reliant on peer pressure, and the want or need to fit in, or on the other hand, the lack of fitting in. We see this in everyday life, the need to fit in. People seem to do anything they can to be a part of something, and fit in with the people around them. Sometimes this desire can make people do things that they otherwise wouldn't do.

Methods

I would create the survey with the help of a partner, to bounce ideas off of, and create a basis of generic questions that would apply to more students. I would start the survey with a series of yes or no questions that would draw the student in to easily completing the questions. I would also connect the questions to one another. For example, if you answered yes, go to question 3, if no, then go to question 4, etc. This makes each survey applicable to everyone, but still keeping it simple. Towards the end, I would add some short answer questions, allowing the students to put the information they feel that needs to be said.

For my survey, I would strive to get a random sampling through the following steps. First I would use my target school: Amelia County High School. This is the only high school in Amelia County, so I would be questioning the largest number of adolescents. I would first have to talk to the school board, and request this survey to be sent out to the schools. Given the answer from the school board was a yes, I would then have to send a request to the principal asking for permission to distribute the survey among the school. Then, after getting a response from the principal, I would need to talk to the parents of the students. I would do this by sending out a mass physical form or an email to the parents of all the students, asking if I have permission to

have their child in the random group of students to choose from for the research. Then among those students that are available to participate in the survey, I will randomly select every third person from an alphabetical list according to the schools homeroom rosters. This would create a random sample, and give me the amount of students I would like to have completed the survey, to accurately show the statistics.

The only downfall to this survey, and the high school students, would be that I would not be able to survey all of the children that are homeschooled in this area. However, I would still be able to reach out to a large majority of high school students that could give insight on attitudes toward drug use in higher education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my research proposal needs funding and support, in order to really understand the impact drugs may have on not just high schools in general, but on young teens. The teenage years are where kids really start growing up. It is where they start making their own decisions, and those decisions can either be in their benefit, or can cause their life to fall apart. If we can better understand these choices and why the kids go down the path they do, maybe we can help them make the right decisions. With the funding for this research, we may help society bloom, by starting with the people that make up that society in the first place.

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