

# Project paper and feasibility paper



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Underage drinking in the United States Underage drinking, by the law of USA, is defined as the use of alcoholic drinks by citizens aged less than 21 years of age. The main causes or independent variables which lead teenagers to drink are social acceptance, psychological problems, poor family environment and curiosity associated with teen years.. The primary dependent variable is underage drinking which is caused by the teenagers' desire for social acceptance, their psychological problems, poor family environments and their natural curiosity to try new things, all of which leads them to drinking. The primary independent variable is desire for social acceptance because drinking is such an important part of American society and all the social events and celebrations, that teenagers just can't separate themselves from it and thus begin drinking at an early age and become victims of accidental injuries and death when they drive after drinking. The primary dependent variable is underage drinking, which is a cause of increasing concern amongst American socialists and policy makers, considering its alarming effects on teenagers health, their academic and occupational performance, sexual behaviors, and most importantly the increasing number of traffic accidents. According to statistics published by the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2007, 31 percent of young drivers (between the ages of 15 and 20) who were killed in traffic accidents had blood alcohol concentrations of 0.01g/dl. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, alcohol is the most commonly abused drug in the United States (more than illicit drugs and tobacco). The American Medical Association states that approximately 11 million American youth consume alcohol, of which 11 percent are people between the ages 12 to 20. A 2007 survey conducted by the Youth Risk

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Behavior revealed that approximately 45 percent of all high school students drank some amount of alcohol, of which 26 percent binge drank and 11 percent drove under the influence of alcohol.

The primary independent variable causing underage drinking is social acceptance. When teenagers enter college, they experience a new sense of freedom being away from home and they begin interacting with more people and attend more social events. The glamorous way in which drinking is portrayed in advertisements, movies and all media generally, has made drinking an integral part of celebrations and having fun. Thus no social event and teenage party is complete without alcohol and the teens start drinking to gain social acceptance.

Another important independent variable is psychological issues amongst children aged under 21. The hormonal changes in their bodies cause anxiety and depression and the social disparity prevalent in the society, academic pressures etc cause loneliness and difficulty in coping with changes and thus teenagers take refuge in drinking.

Poor family environment is another factor contributing to underage drinking. Clashes between parents, their hectic work schedules and little time for their children, low parental supervision, alcoholic parents and thus easy access of the teens to alcohol at home, all constitute an unhealthy family environment and lead teens to drink.

The last independent variable discussed in this paper will be teenagers' natural curiosity to try new things. Even if all is going well and children have a good social acceptance and family environment, they are intrigued by what it would feel to drink and this urge of experimentation leads them to drink.

The 30 observations required for the research can be acquired from the

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National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), which has extensive and current data on all aspects of underage drinking and lots of other sources are available on their official website and have a special wing called underage drinking research initiative. Substance abuse and mental health services administration (SAMHSA), Center for disease control and prevention(CDC), underage drinking research initiative, Harvard school of public health, National institute on drug abuse are others amongst many available sources for obtaining authentic data on this subject.

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