

Impact of high school dropouts education essay



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High school dropouts have become a crisis in the United States that is continuously increasing. There are various reasons as to why students drop out of high school. These reasons range from simple factors having an impact upon why a student drops out to complex reasons as to why a student drops out of high school. On the contrary, there are various factors that keep students in high school. These factors include being involved in extracurricular activities in and out of school and interaction with the family. However, dropping out of high school not only affects the individual who has dropped out. The action will also affect those who surround the individual and as the number of high school dropouts increases, this rate will continue to have an effect on the United States economy.

The negative impact of high school dropouts worsens the economy every time a student chooses to drop out of school. There is no typical person who dropouts of school. This epidemic that is increasing has become a vicious

cycle that must be put to an end. Studies have shown that one must attain a high school degree in order to combat poverty. Moreover, studies have also shown that high school degree is not seen the same now as it was in the past. More often than not, a high school dropout will earn less in a lifetime than an individual who has graduated high school and continued to further their education.

This paper will seek reason as why the rate of high school dropouts has increased with the research that has been conducted in the past and is currently being conducted now. This paper will also propose why the rate of high school dropouts increases with the policies and programs that have been implemented by the government. The findings in this paper will not discuss minorities or gender in regards to high school dropouts. This analysis will discuss high school dropouts in the United States in general. There will also be research showing the correlation between why a student drops out of school and what program can assist them getting back into school.

This research is significant to the society because high school dropouts not only effect them personally and those surrounding them. High school dropouts affect the economy and the society as a whole. Research must continue to be conducted to decrease these rare and eventually stop students from dropping out of high school. If student continue to drop out and this rate increases, eventually there will be very few skilled workers in the United States. This will result in the shipping of jobs overseas, which will weaken the United States economy.

Furthermore, this research is significant in academia. Scholars and researchers must continue to conduct research as to why youth continues to drop out of high school. With the continuation of this research, there is a probability that there will be an end to high school dropouts or the rate of dropouts will significantly decrease. In addition, this research will allow other researchers in academia to draw conclusions and make recommendations in regards to the kind of programs and policies that should be implemented into the law in the future. Then, the government will have the ability to analyze the data that has been collected by scholars in order to put these policies into place.

Theoretical Framework

During this research, there was a use of quantitative data in order to show a cause and effect relationship between the increasing rate of high school dropouts and what needs to be done to decrease this rate. The data will also show how the programs and policies can be reformed in order to decrease the rate of high school dropouts. A survey was constructed in order to better understand why the rate of high school dropouts continues to increase with the research that has been conducted in the past. In addition, the data came from fifty students on campus. The survey consisted of twenty questions that asked general questions about personally knowing high school dropouts. The survey also asked questions that were complex in regards to opinions about what kind of policies and programs the government should implement in the future.

Literature Review

There were four main areas that were discussed by scholars in during the research process. Those areas included (a) the personal and public effects of dropping out of high school, (b) educational equity, (c) dropout prevention and recovery efforts, and (d) the effects of high school dropouts not taking the advantage of second chance opportunities such as attaining a GED.

There were other areas that were discussed as well; however, there was not as much emphasis as the former. Those areas were adolescent employment, parent involvement, and the effects those components have on high school dropouts.

There are several effects that results from dropping out of high school. These effects mount upon one another, which results in one problem turning into another. Dropping out of high school impacts an individual personally and effectively in several ways. Everyday, there are seven thousand high school dropouts. If a student does not complete high school, they will obtain a low income, therefore, contributing less to the society (Rouse, 2005). An individual who has not completed high school is classified as having an inadequate education. High school graduates earn thousands of dollars less than high school graduates and one million less than college graduates in a lifetime.

High school dropouts are more liable to slip into poverty than high school graduates. In regards to personal issues, high school dropouts are more likely to have worse health, employment issues, become pregnant as a teen, and be incarcerated than high school graduates are. This cycle will continue from generation to generation if more programs are not reformed and

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created (Rouse, 2005). In regards to high school dropouts and the society as a whole, there will be less productive workers, which will result in less revenue that would have been made. More often than not, high school dropouts will need government assistance, which is not likely not a need of a high school graduate (Rouse, 2005).

Another topic of discussion that was debated among scholars was educational equity. The United States education is not equivalent among public school systems. There is an achievement gap among students, therefore, creating more dropouts. Studies show that there needs to be more basic work taught in schools and there needs to be tougher academic and attendance standards. These same studies go on to say that higher expectations produce higher achievement. There also needs to be more schools competing to get the best students. According to McLaughlin, this will create a rise in American education. (McLaughlin, 1990). There needs to be a higher standard held by the administrators and the students themselves.

Dropout prevention and recovery efforts need reforming if there is going to be a decrease in the rate of high school dropouts. Some of the programs are not preventing high school dropouts efficiently. There are some programs that have had good results, but

not good enough for what needs to be accomplished in the long run (McLaughlin, 1990). According to Christenson and Thurlow, there should be five factors taken into consideration when creating dropout prevention

programs. Those five considerations towards completion and engagement, and the importance of empirical evidence.

Moreover, there were two areas of discussion during the research process that also impact high school dropouts. Adolescent employment and parent involvement have a major influence on how a student performs in school. According to McNeal, there is a possibility that students are being pulled out of school. McNeal discusses the effects what is occurring with students who work while attending grade school. He goes on to write how in previous studies of high school dropouts, the main focus was how demographics was the main cause of students dropping out of high school. However, there are a plethora of reasons as to why a student drops out of school. These reasons are referred to as “ push” and “ pull” factors that take a student out of school.

Additionally, parent involvement was considered to be another element that influenced a student’s performance in school and whether they remained in school or not. According to Crosnoe, parent involvement enhances academic competence. Parent involvement, just as adolescent employment, not been emphasized in previous studies of high school dropouts. Nonetheless, both are circumstances that effect whether a student will graduate from high school

Interpretation of Results

The results of the data revealed various answers that can be interpreted to understand the correlation between the climbing rate of high school dropouts and what will make this rate decrease. The survey showed how

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many people knew a high school dropout personally and why that individual did not attain a high school degree. There were several surveys that reflected little or no knowledge about programs and intervention for high school dropouts. This disclosed information that answered questions as to why the rate is so high and why the rate has yet to be decreased. Some of the data from the survey can be compared with statistics from other researchers. The results show that there is a lack of knowledge and awareness about the crisis that is occurring within the United States education system. In addition, there is a message that is conveyed through the data that has been collected. The message being conveyed is that there is not a sufficient amount of information being provided because there has still not been a decrease in the number of high school dropouts.

Likewise, there were many results that coincided with one another. There was little or no effect on the student if they were raised in a single parent home. However, if the student was raised in a single parent home and in a tumultuous environment, the student had more of a tendency to drop out of school. There were various factors that motivated a student to graduate from high school. Those factors included family, self-motivation, engagement in extracurricular activities, and school staff such as teachers, administrators, and coaches. There was also an abundance of feedback that showed a majority of the dropouts were dramatically affected by employment. The dropouts either found it difficult to obtain a job or they still are having difficulties in doing so.

There were a few responses that showed that some of the dropouts came from good environments. These outcomes imply that there can be some chaos within a good environment. The environment as a whole may not be chaotic. However, the household which the student lives within may be in disarray. Some of the surveys showed that there were several students who dropped out between sophomore and junior year of high school. There were also answers that had a connection between a disorderly environment and the tendency to drop out of school. More often than not, if the answer was “yes” to living in the chaotic environment such as the inner city, the person also circled that the person they knew who dropped out was either pregnant or had a personal illness, in the criminal justice system, had family financial needs, and did not see the value of education. For the most part, these answers were linked together.

Discussion

Dropout Rate Increases

The rate of high school dropouts continues to increase with the research that has been done. There is no specific answer as to why this crisis is occurring and will persist to worsen if drastic measures are not taken. This national crisis continues to worsen because there is not a single answer to decreasing the rate. The challenge of increasing the graduation rate is difficult because increasing the graduation consists of many components. There are several steps to accomplishing the completion of high school. A student must pass certain tests and must pass the required curriculum before attaining a high school degree. Therefore, the programs to keep students in school must

essentially be compatible with each student because the reasons for dropping out of school differ from student to student.

In addition, high school graduation rates have not significantly decreased since 1990. These challenges become more difficult when the national reform efforts push for higher academic standards. This problem calls for more effort because the students will not have the skills they need after graduating from high school. Dropping out of high school is not something that occurs instantaneously. It is a process that must be stopped before it can stop. Allowing a student to become disinterested in school is a process that should not begin because it will be more of a task to end.

Programs to End Crisis

There have been a number of programs created to decrease the rate of drop outs. The programs assist at-risk youth, students who did not perform well in school, and programs to prevent students from dropping out. Recently, the Obama administration has been focusing on high school dropouts. President Obama has brought it to the attention of the nation that there is a national crisis. According to the National Center for Education (NCES), this is a crisis that has been occurring for over a decade now. The Obama administration is taking the necessary steps to reduce the number of dropouts. President Obama asked the states to pinpoint schools that had graduation rates below 60%. The administration has devoted \$3.5 billion to transform schools that are not performing at their best.

Also, there are programs such as America's Alliance Program (Grad Nation) and the Educational Equity Project. American's Alliance Program is a

partnership alliance committed to ensuring children experience the fundamental resources they need to succeed. The Educational Equity Project is to eliminate the racial and ethnic achievement gap in our nation's public school system. Another program is Gateway to College. This program is a high school dropout recovery program. This program helps dropouts between the ages of 16 and 21 to earn a high school diploma.

Dropping Out Before 18

Some states have risen the dropout age to 18. If a student is not 18, they are not permitted to dropout before 18 without parental consent. Several states have risen the age to 18. However, some states still have the age to dropout at 17 and some states remain at 16 years old. However, the lower the age, the worse the crisis will become. Raising the age to dropout will decrease the rate of dropouts. Some students will take the initiative to graduate instead of dropping out at 18 years old. Also, there are students who graduate high school at 17 years old. This will also decrease the rate of dropouts because they will not be 18 until after graduation. Therefore, legislators should not give not give the option to dropout. If a student chooses to dropout, he or she should receive consequences. However, if legislators do not want to require all states to graduate all students, every state should be made to raise the age to 18.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is still an abundance of progress that must be made. The government should take serious measures in order to make the dropout rate decline. Education is the key to upward mobility. Students have to be motivated in order to remain in school. If not, they will become disinterested

and the contemplation of dropping out will become a process. In addition, if this crisis is going to end, the schools need to have the best educators who are willing to not only teach, but to interact with the students to assure that they are doing their best.

In regards to further research, there will have to be more research done after more programs and laws are implemented. More research has to be conducted in order for the

researchers to better understand how to decrease the rate of high school dropouts and to keep the rate low. Furthermore, there was no research found in regards to how to end the crisis altogether. The main reason for this may be that the rate has to be decreased before researchers and scholars can look into how to rid the nation of dropouts.