

How students that do drugs or have a criminal history fit in with national or loc...

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Literature Review The problem of school dropout is one of the most widespread social and educational problems which has serious causes not only for an individual but for the entire society. One of the latest and the most cited researches conducted on the issue of the school dropout rates in the United States of America and its relation to drug use among students is the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) of The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which is a branch of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. NSDUH combines the data collected during 2002-2010. The respondents whose answers have been analyzed are 12th grade students and 12th grade aged dropouts; all of them are young people at the age of 16 to 18. Figures of this report published on February 12, 2013 show that during 2002-2010 on the average one in seven 12th grade aged young people (about 13 percent) dropped out of school, among whom males prevail (about 14 percent vs. 11 percent of females) (SAHMSA). Hispanics (23 percent) and Native Americans (25 percent) comprise a quarter of all the dropouts; they are followed by African Americans (12 percent), white Americans (11 percent), and Asian Americans (1.5 percent). The overall results of the NSDUH report show that 12th grade aged young people were more likely to be engaged in substance abuse, such as cigarettes, alcohol, binge alcohol, illicit drugs, marijuana etc. For instance, 27 percent of dropouts were marijuana users compared to 15 percent of current students (SAHMSA). Overall, the research shows that there is a correlation between drug users rates among students and the rates of school dropout.

One of the recent studies conducted by Gasper revisits the relationship between drug used among students and the rates of school dropout with the

aim not only to define the percentage of drug users and non-users but the developmental pattern of the processes of drug abuse and school dropout. The main specific feature of this very research is the attendance to differences of experiences and background of students, which could lead to drug abuse and school dropout. The results of the research show that there is the significant difference between those who use drugs and do not use drugs based on their background, such as the data collected from them in 8th grade. More specifically, the comparison of students who use drugs and those who do not use but have similar results obtained in 8th grade, the relationship between drug use and drop out from school fell by one half (Gasper 603). This suggests that taking into consideration the broader context is of great importance in studying the issue. At the same time, even if to take the background into account, the positive correlation between drug use among students and school dropout rates still takes place. The latest studies of the problem, however, deny the existence of the unilateral relationship between drug use and school dropout rates. One of such researches is the one titled “ Americas Dropout Crisis: The Unrecognized Connection to Adolescent Substance Use”. The authors of the article claim that there exists a bilateral relationship between the studied issues. In other words, DuPont, Caldeira, DuPont, Vincent, Shea, and Arria suggest that drug use both causes and is caused dropout from school (35-37). Similar to the research conducted by Gaper, this one also claims that social, biological, environmental and other mechanism (in other words, background) should also be taken into consideration while studying the issue.

The first study under consideration presents bare figures on substance use among 12th grade students and 12th grade aged young people in relation to dropout status, gender, race and ethnicity. The research only suggests that there exists a relationship between all these factors but does not give certain conclusions. The second study goes further and analyzes the importance of the broader context in studying the problem and suggest the necessity to apply the propensity score matching method, which appears to be effective. Finally, the last research reveals the existence of the bidirectional relationship between drug abuse and school dropout rates, which is of great importance for further researches. Still, there is no clear data on the underlying processes that can cause both behaviors. While it is difficult to prevent young people from taking drugs, it is necessary to study the processes that lead from substance abuse to school dropout and vice versa for these two problems have a destructive character and their solving is crucial for the entire society.

#### Works Cited:

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