

Abstract

Are American Adolescents Using Cigarettes More?

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The aim of this research is to study the pattern of cigarette use of American adolescents. This research also aims to determine factors related to cigarette use including 1) individual characteristics: grade point average, intention of life, and skipping school; 2) alcohol and cigarette use of their parents and others in the house; and 3) substance use (cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana) of their best friends.

The research utilizes the secondary data from the Add Health Project. The samples of 6,504 American adolescents from 80 communities in the United States of America have been used for analysis. Descriptive statistics were employed to present percentage, means, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics (Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient(r) and Multiple Regression Analysis) were used to analyze the relationship.

The results show the pattern of cigarette use of adolescents during the past of their lifetime that more than half (55%) ever smoked. During the past 30 days, it was disclosed that only 25 percent of them smoked cigarettes. As for smoking adolescents, on the average they smoked 174 cigarettes and their first cigarette use was at the age of 13 years 1 month.

The findings suggest that the number of best friends using substances (cigarette, alcohol and marijuana) are most correlated with cigarette use of adolescents, followed by grade point average, intention of life and skipping school. However, cigarette use of parents and others in the house are found less likely to correlate with cigarette use of adolescents.

It is recommended that the parents should pay more attention to their children's friends who prove to be the most influential factor on cigarette use. And importantly, the parents should be good role models for children as well.