Pine Ridge Reservation
Student Drop-Out Rate and its Contributing Factors

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“Poverty to us [Native Americans] is the loss of our land, our language, and our culture.”
- Native American audience member at Western Social Science Association Conference

Qualitative Results
4 Most Prevalent Contributing Factors
1. Drugs and Alcohol
Whiteclay, Nebraska
- Population: 14
- Economy: 4 businesses whose sole purpose is to sell alcohol to residents of Pine Ridge
- Cans of beer sold daily: 11,000
- Marijuana currently most prevalent on Pine Ridge
- Being laced with bath salts and other foreign substances

2. Self-Esteem
- Poor self-esteem has been attributed to failure of a proper education
- Some Native American students feel despair, disillusionment, alienation, frustration, hopelessness, powerlessness, rejection, estrangement

3. Cultural Identity
- Some Native American students feel that by going to a school that teaches mainstream education, they are turning their backs on their culture
- Mainstream education robs Native American culture
- History books are written by the winners and are biased
- Creates negative attitude and distrust for continuing mainstream education

4. Family/Peer Support
- Largest causation factor
- Parents who have higher education much more likely to encourage children to attend school
- Students want to be with their friends, many who have already dropped out of school

Research Methods
Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, I compared statistics between the nationwide Native American student drop-out rate and the student drop-out rate on the Pine Ridge reservation. I also researched the causation factors for Native American student drop-outs on a nationwide level and then compared those findings to the current situations on the Pine Ridge reservation to try to pinpoint the exact cause for such a high drop-out rate.

Quantitative Results

Definition of Poverty
The state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support; condition of being poor
- Dictionary.com

Further Research
A proposed qualitative survey would be administered to a group of students at the Wolf Creek Alternative Elementary School and also to a group of students at the Wolf Creek Elementary school for comparative analysis to prove the significance of family/peer support being the greatest contributing factor for student drop-out on the Pine Ridge Reservation

References


For more information, visit: http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-10.pdf

Image taken from: http://www.obeygiant.com/prints/the-black-hills-are-not-for-sale

Further analysis of the poster was conducted by Differential Tuition.