

Demographic and Mental-Health-Related Indicators of Drug Court Program Success

Codey Collins¹
Stephanie Gentry¹
Keemia Vaghef²
Sarah Smudde²

Faculty Advisors:
Daniel Hatch, PhD²
Toralf Zschau, PhD¹

¹Department of Sociology and Human Services, University of North Georgia

²Department of Psychological Sciences, University of North Georgia

Abstract:

Prior research has found that successful completion of drug court programs is linked to mental health factors and various demographics. Butzin et al (2002) relay that “factors associated with program completion included race, education, and frequency of drug use.” Other factors such as employment and prior drug use histories are also attributed to success outcomes of participants in drug courts (Roll et al. 2005). Little is know, however, on the characteristics and influences of these factors in relation to smaller rural drug courts, which often consist of small numbers of participants from which to collect data. To provide partial answers to these questions of program outcome characteristics among rural participants, this study examined rudimentary demographics of a small Rural Family Drug Court in the Southeastern United States. This study consisted of 39 participants, and utilized a mix of survey and archival data. Mental health and substance abuse dynamics among the SRFDC participants will be discussed for their potential to impact progression through the program (Portes and Landolt 2000, White 2009). The findings suggest a robust mental health component in progression through the program, with little variation of demographic correlations to mental health. Implications for future research are discussed.

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