

2020LiechtyRiley-abstract

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that led to the opioid crisis in the United States and Indiana. Increased opioid usage has led to a reduced number of working individuals in the United States and has led to lowered life expectancy (Haskins, 2019). Opioid usage has affected the entire United States, but the impact is not equally distributed as some areas have higher usage and overdose rates than others. This study looked at county level demographics, unemployment, per capita income, and opioid mortality data to find the factors that contributed to the rise of opioid usage using regression analysis at three different levels: United States, Midwestern states, and Indiana. The regression analysis showed factors including income and the population of individuals aged 21 to 25 years old were significant and positively related to the opioid death rate, whereas individuals aged 16 to 20 or 31 to 40 years old negatively impacted the opioid death rate. Sex and unemployment were not statistically significantly related to opioid death rates across the three regressions. Through this research, we hope to obtain and understand where the opioid crisis started in Indiana along with what factors affected where the rise occurred. This research will hopefully be helpful in preventing a future crisis by identifying what groups were at risk.

Honors College
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306