

Case Study

Meta-Synthesis: Female Drug Dealers

Maher and Hudson (2007) performed a meta-synthesis examining the qualitative literature on women in the illicit drug economy to identify and integrate key themes. The authors spelled out their methods meticulously, describing the characteristics they used to select studies that met their criteria. They first searched many databases (e.g., Criminal Justice Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts) for research using various key terms such as *drug market*, *drug economy*, and *women dealing*. Studies were selected only if they “generated findings in relation to female participation in the drug economy” and the “primary data collection used qualitative or ethnographic research” (Maher & Hudson, 2007, p. 809).