

The association between participant characteristics and awareness of reproductive policy among young adult Black women in the United States

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Background

- After the overturning of Roe v. Wade, many states across the U.S. enacted restrictive abortion policies.
- Restrictive policies are anticipated to negatively impact young adult Black women (YABW) considering disparities in care.
- However, it is unclear whether YABW are aware of the reproductive policies of their state.

Objective

Analyze the relationships between participant demographic characteristics and concordance between participant rating of their state's reproductive policy and Guttmacher Institute categories of reproductive policy by state [1].

Methods

- Study design:** Cross-sectional online study
- Sample:** 483 YABW (18-22 years of age) across the United States
- Survey:** Participants self-reported their age, state of residence, current and perceived childhood socioeconomic status (SES), health insurance status, current education level, whether they previously attended a private or public school, community type (urban, suburban, or rural), relationship status, sexuality, ethnicity, and past pregnancy.
- Analysis:** Binary con/discordance outcome comparing participant rating and category of policy. Point-biserial correlations for age and SES. Chi-square tests and adjusted standard residuals for other variables. Multivariable logistic regression for significant covariates.

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Results

- 49.3% of participants demonstrated discordance between their rating of their state's reproductive policy and the Guttmacher Institute category for their state.
- Discordance was associated with higher current SES ($r = 0.04$, $p = 0.46$), higher childhood SES ($r = 0.11$, $p = 0.01$), previously attending private school ($\chi^2 = 8.40$, $p = 0.02$), and currently living in the Northeast ($\chi^2 = 4.43$, $p = 0.04$).
- Participants who were bisexual were likely to be concordant ($\chi^2 = 5.25$, $p = 0.02$) compared to participants with other sexual orientations.
- Participants who previously attended private school and were currently residing in the Northeast had an increased odds of discordance above and beyond other demographic characteristics (see Table 1).

Table 1. Multivariable Logistic Regression Assessing Odds of Discordance

Characteristic	Odds Ratio	95% CI for Odds Ratio	
		Lower	Upper
Private school (Ref = Other)	2.03*	1.03	4.02
Northeast (Ref = Other)	1.73*	1.08	2.77
Childhood SES	1.12	0.88	1.44
Current SES	1.10	0.85	1.43
Bisexual (Ref = Other)	0.66	0.40	1.08

Logistic regression model for the variables: private school (vs. other school types), living in the Northeast (vs. other U.S. regions), childhood SES, current SES, and bisexuality (vs. other sexuality). Childhood and current SES are continuous variables.

* $p < .05$

Discussion

- Awareness of state-level policies is important for informed sexual and reproductive health decision-making, yet half of participants demonstrated discordance.
- Our findings suggest that among YABW being unaware of state reproductive policy is associated with having attended private school and living in the Northeast.
- YABW who live in U.S. regions with more restrictions or grew up economically-disadvantaged may be aware of state-level reproductive policy because they are likely to be affected by restrictions to care.
- Social media and organizations like Planned Parenthood are preferred platforms for information on reproductive rights among young adults [2] and should be used to promote awareness regarding state policy among YABW.

References

- [1] Guttmacher Institute. (2023, Oct.). *Interactive map: US abortion policies and access after Roe*. <https://states.guttmacher.org/policies/>
- [2] Allison, B. A., Odom, R. M., Vear, K., Hoopes, A. J., & Maslowsky, J. (2023). A nationwide sample of adolescents and young adults share where they would go online for abortion information after *Dobbs v. Jackson*. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 73(6), 1153–1157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2023.05.010>

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