

Abortion Attitudes in Cook County post Dobbs V. Jackson

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Dr. Dana Garbarski and Dr. David Doherty: Cook County Community Survey

Introduction

In 1973, *Roe V. Wade* legalized abortion in the United States. In 2022, after almost thirty years, Roe fell. On June 24th, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the *Dobbs V. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, overturning Roe. The court case involved a challenge to a Mississippi ban on abortion, at 15 weeks of pregnancy. With this ruling now in full effect, abortion is no longer a constitutional right. Without federal protection abortion access across the United States has been under scrutiny for the past two years. In fact, whilst writing this Mifepristone, one of the pills used to aid medication abortion has been taken to court. Upon further editing, Arizona state upheld a ban from 1864 (April 10th, 2024). On average nearly one and four birthing people will have an abortion in their lifetime (Guttmacher Institute, 2017). In 2021 alone, it was reported that there were a total of 625,978 abortions in the District of Columbia and 46 states (Pew Research Center, 2024).

After the Dobbs V. Jackson decision, there has been a spike in restrictions and laws outlawing abortion. Despite these laws, people are still getting abortions. It is noted by The World Health Organization that 45% of all abortions performed are unsafe. Restrictions do not stop people; they just make abortions dangerous. In fact, unsafe abortions are one of the leading "but preventable cause of maternal deaths and morbidities" (WHO, 2021). The lack of access to safe and affordable abortion care continues to be a leading issue for AFAB healthcare across the globe. The dismantling of laws like Roe increases the chance of a preventable abortion related death.

Nearly two years after the Supreme Court ruling, abortion continues to be all over the news. As of 2023, 12 states have enacted some form of a ban on abortion care, whereas in states like Michigan and Ohio, citizens voted to protect abortion. As it is just a few years after the court's decision, there is not a lot of data examining the ways in which abortion attitudes have shifted regarding the turmoil caused by Dobbs. This current study seeks to identify how the social demographics of Cook County (race, gender, political party, and location), a county in Illinois, one of the states that expanded access to abortion after the Dobbs decision, are associated with abortion access.

Research Question

How do Cook County Residents feel about abortion services and maternal health care in the context of Dobbs?

Language Key

Birthing Person: any individual with a uterus is capable of pregnancy, this term encapsulates all identities, not just women

Maternal Supplies: Defined in CCCS survey as: diapers, formula, and other supplies

Methods

Cook County Community Survey Project: Fielded by Dr. Dana Garbarski and Dr. David Doherty, CCCS is a collaboration between the Political Science and Sociology department. Every year faculty and students produce a survey on Qualtrics to examine the attitudes and behaviors of Cook County Residents.

Survey: Cook County Community Survey Project

Sample: 1,200 Cook County residents, to maintain diversity in responses, the group selected via Dynata mimics the general makeup of Cook County demographics.

Duration: This data is exclusively from the 2023 wave of CCCS. Since 2021, CCCS has been sent out annually.

Exclusion: Gender has been reduced to Man and Woman due to lack of response, Race has similarly been reduced to Black, White, Latine and Asian.

Statistical Techniques: The data was analyzed on Stata 18. Chi-Square tests of independence were performed between the independent and dependent variables.

Results

Frequency table of Abortion Access by Political Party affiliation of Cook County Residents, CCCS 2023

Access	Democrat	Independent	Republican	Total
Easy	643	108	151	902
	85.62	61.02	55.72	75.23
Difficult	108	69	120.28	297
	14.38	38.98	44.28	24.77
Total	751	177	271	1,199
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Frequency table of Abortion Access by Location, CCCS 2023

Access	Non-Chicago Resident	Chicago Resident	Total
Easy	404	499	903
	72.53	77.60	75.25
Difficult	153	144	297
	27.47	22.40	24.75
Total	557	643	1,200
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Frequency table of funding for Post-Partum supplies by Abortion Access, Cook County Residents, CCCS 2023

Post-Partum Care	Easy	Difficult	Total
Increase	688	187	875
	76.19	62.96	72.92
Remain the same	171	86	257
	18.94	28.96	21.42
Decrease	44	24	68
	4.87	8.08	5.67
Total	903	297	1,200
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Frequency table of funding for Maternal Supplies by Abortion Access, Cook County Residents, CCCS 2023

Maternal Supplies	Easy	Difficult	Total
Increase	678	170	848
	75.15	57.24	70.73
Remain the same	169	93	262
	18.74	31.31	21.85
Decrease	55	34	89
	6.10	11.45	7.42
Total	902	297	1,199
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Discussion

Abortion Access and Social Demographics: While it was expected for political affiliation to be related to abortion access, I was surprised to find that neither race nor gender had any statistical significance. Due to abortion pertaining to those AFAB, I was expecting gender to have relevance. In fact, the data regarding gender had less than 1 percentage point difference for those in support of access. Unfortunately, the data does only reflect men and women, so there is missing information. In relation to race, I was expecting there to be some difference between black and white respondents. According to the research done by Kretschmer et al, on abortion attitudes, Black women are much more likely to align themselves with their race and gender not political affiliation. For further research I think an investigation of political identities prove to be the most varying results across the board. I believe that if this research were to be conducted at a national level, results would vary to a greater degree. Illinois is a blue state, and I believe that location would carry more weight in a red state. For instance, examining state attitudes in a red state to a blue county within that state.

Abortion Access and Post-Partum Care: The data shows that regardless of how people feel about abortion access, they believe there should be an increase in post-partum care. This data was not surprising to me, but I expected those who believe abortion should be more difficult to access, would encourage more funding for post-partum care. It is my understanding that if people must bring their pregnancy to term there should be more support for them.

Abortion Access and Maternal Supplies: As expected, majority of respondents wanted an increase in maternal supplies. The data does show a similar pattern to the results of the post-partum care data.

Citations

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