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The Impact of Socioeconomic Status Differences on Women's Abortion Rights in the United States

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Abstract: This paper attempts to address the abortion dilemma faced by women of different social statuses after Roe v. Wade. This paper argues that socioeconomic status can influence the impact of abortion on women. Socioeconomic status differences in medical protection and, family and social status all affect a woman's willingness to have an abortion and her ability to choose one. Although the law cannot guarantee reproductive justice for low SES women, this paper suggests that investing in the education of low SES women, including sex education and health education, to build human capital for them can achieve their abortion rights in the long run. In addition, the paper argues that more investment in education for women may also lead to a difference in economic level.

Keywords: Roe v. Wade, abortion, education

1. Introduction

It is known that the United States Supreme Court has ruled against a woman's right to an abortion. Roe v. Wade in 1973 has been called America's "second Civil War". The legal status of abortion rights was not established until the Supreme Court ruling. In other words, "legalized abortion" in the modern United States is less than 50 years old. But in 2022, Roy. The Wade case was overturned. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas says abortion is illegal. V Wade, who paved the way for legalizing abortion rights, "didn't get a shred of support". The issue of abortion rights remains controversial in the United States. As this case has triggered a social discussion on women's rights to abortion, there are many reasons that affect women's abortion, such as religion, education, and so on. The impact of socioeconomic status on female abortion is a key issue because the economy can best reflect a person's social values, including social rights. Having a good economy means having access to better education and support. Therefore, from the perspective of social economy, this paper will describe the differences in women's lives caused by having different economic levels, and how these differences affect women's psychology toward abortion and provide solutions to solve the differences in economic levels.

Previous scholars have focused on the research on the basis that the right to abortion has not been overturned. Some scholars believe that the right to abortion is related to human rights, and some external factors have been studied on the impact of female abortion. This paper takes social and economic differences in external factors as a research gap.

To reveal the influence on women's abortion rights under different economic conditions in the United States. This study reviewed the differences in body autonomy and abortion rights due to economic differences between high-income and low-income women.

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2. The Impact of Socioeconomic Status on American Women's Willingness to Have an Abortion

Women of lower socioeconomic status or color were more likely to have the disease than white women and women of higher socioeconomic status [1]. These figures are used by opponents of abortion to claim that low-income and minority women are victimized by abortionists and that laws are consequently necessary to safeguard women. This misses the underlying reason for the discrepancy. Initiatives to limit abortion are likely to aggravate health disparities since they would not affect these underlying causes and would instead encourage more women to postpone abortion or have unintended pregnancies. Pregnancy rates are high for both high and low income groups, but poor people are more likely to have abortions because they cannot afford to have children. A 2015 study by the US Department of Agriculture found that raising two children from birth to age 17 costs about $230,000, an average of 13,000 a year when both parents are middle class. In 20222, the figure is adjusted for inflation, even slightly above 250,000. The federal poverty line for a family of three is 21, 000 a year, so having more children is a bigger burden. So low-income people are more likely to have abortions.

2.1. Sufficient Economic Support to Ensure External Conditions of Completing Abortion Successfully

According to the 1973 Supreme Court decision, in principle, all women in the United States have equal access to abortion services Women need this in order to confidently make healthy reproductive decisions. Minors under the age of 18 who need abortions sometimes have trouble getting them because of the high expense and governmental limits on parental involvement. Because there are few abortion providers in more than 75% of U.S. states, women living in rural areas are less likely than women living in metropolitan areas to have direct access to family planning services, including abortion. When women's income is below 249 percent of the federal poverty level, there are significant barriers that prohibit them from obtaining pregnancy prevention and abortion services. Among the several women's organizations most affected by the abortion policy, women are the group of color most harmed [2], as women of color reportedly have higher rates of access to abortion services than other groups of women because of their own poverty and other economic disadvantages. Low-income women in this situation usually fall into a dilemma of abortion intention. First, they may want to have an abortion, but they give up the abortion because of economic reasons. Some people may not want to have an abortion, but choose to have an abortion because they are concerned that they will not be able to have a child properly. However, for high-income women who can choose whether to have the child or not after pregnancy, because they have the sufficient economic strength to choose a healthy, comfortable and safe abortion, they may be inclined to choose abortion.

2.2. Different Levels of Education Supported by Various Socioeconomic Statuses Influence Women’s Thoughts on Abortion

In 2000, there were more than 40 abortions for every 1,100 low-SES women and about no more than 15 abortions for every 1,000 high-income women. The American Psychological Association states that children who grow up in low social and economic status circumstances learn to read more slowly, acquire language skills more slowly, and develop their learning skills more slowly. Women with higher SES typically have access to more educational options than women with lower incomes. Every society's progress depends on education, and the economy's quality and size are directly related to the level of education in the population. Low SES women with educational possibilities and economic growth are more likely to have access to abortion rights than those without a financial base. High-quality education is required to significantly contribute to economic growth and development. The idea of human capital, which is closely related to the emphasis on education as a capital good, places a strong emphasis on skill

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development as a crucial element of productive activity. Although low-income women frequently lack the funds to get an abortion, this does not stop them from wanting one. According to the 1973 Supreme Court decision, in principle, all women in the United States have equal access to abortion services [3]. This is what women need in order to feel confident about making sound reproductive choices. Access to abortion and to vulnerable groups of women under the age of 18 is difficult due to high costs and legal restrictions on parental participation. Because approximately 80% of counties in the United States do not have an abortion provider [4], women living in rural areas are less likely than women living in urban areas to have direct access to family planning services, including abortion. Women with incomes below 200% of the poverty line find themselves at a significant disadvantage in accessing and providing family planning and abortion services. However, women of color are also among the groups of adult women most affected by the politicization of abortion policies [2] as women of color are reported to have higher rates of access to abortion services than other groups of women due to their own poverty and other economic disadvantages.

Therefore, women of color may be more likely to have abortions. In addition, a good education can improve people's ability to get well-paid jobs. If women of lower socioeconomic status are given equal educational opportunities, they are able to find stable jobs, achieve self-sufficiency, and have the ability to make their own decisions and claim their rights, the gap between socioeconomic classes will gradually narrow, which will contribute to improving the standard of living of society as a whole. The study showed that between 1970 and 2016, the educational attainment of working women aged 20 to prior to retirement age increased substantially. With more education, women will learn more about protecting themselves, reducing the likelihood of unwanted pregnancies at the root, and making better judgments about pregnancies. Higher-income can also help them raise their children, so better education and higher income can reduce women's willingness to have abortions and give women more autonomy in abortion.

2.3. Better Economic Status Can Help Women Get Rid of Constraints on Abortion from Man

In comparison to men's incomes, women's earnings have grown throughout time. Before 2000, full-time working women made about 60% of what males made; by 2010, that percentage had increased to almost 80% or higher [5]. Since individuals who earn more money in society tend to have more control over family finances, men always have a greater voice in their households. But with the improvement of women's economic ability, women have more say in the family. It may be that for women in low-income groups, they want to decide whether to have an abortion or not, but they can't do it because they don't have the right to speak. However, women with improved economic strength may choose not to have an abortion because they have the right to speak, so the abortion rate will decrease or increase.

3. Effects of Socioeconomic Status on Medical Support for Abortion among American Women

Most women seeking abortions pay for their care out of pocket, in part because of legal limits on insurance coverage. These costs may cause hardship for many women. Advocates have tried to secure abortion coverage, but being able and willing to accept it has been an open question.

3.1. Differences in the Level of Medical Care in Different Residential Areas

Different regional economies have an effect on healthcare in different ways. Due to their higher likelihood of being uninsured, rural communities also have poorer access to all forms of healthcare than metropolitan inhabitants. Additionally, due to a lack of healthcare professionals, access to care is frequently restricted. Americans are becoming more numerous without health insurance. Data from the Census Bureau through 2000 show that there are currently around 40 million more Americans without health insurance [6]. As a

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result of the vulnerability of rural and frontier populations, more rural inhabitants than urban individuals (who make up about a quarter of the population) have been without insurance for more than three years. However, a larger proportion of urban residents have never had health insurance, and rural people spend slightly more on health care than their urban counterparts. The total median expenditure on health care for the rural population is about $420, slightly higher than that for the urban population of about $410. Rural residents pay no more than 30 percent of their medical expenses out of pocket, compared with about 20 percent for urban residents. In such contrast, women in low-income areas are more likely to become pregnant because of the low level of medical care and the low prevalence of medical knowledge. Because of regional differences, women in low-income areas may not be able to raise a child even if they want to, and the costs of abortion may further affect their family situation [7]. But in high-income areas, unintended pregnancy rates are low due to high levels of medical care and medical knowledge, and universal insurance also helps high-income people get abortions more easily than low-income people.

3.2. Insurance Cover for Different Economic Levels

Women of different economic levels enjoy different health insurance statuses. An estimated more than 110 million. American adults are struggling to pay for healthcare. And some insurance does not cover abortion or birth assistance. Moreover, the costs borne by women in accessing abortion care are not insignificant. In 2009, the median cost of nearly 90% of induced abortion procedures was about $465-470, and the cost was as high as more than $600. In addition, women face costs associated with travel, lost work time and caring for existing children. For an instance, observed that well over half of the women in their sample sacrificed rent, utilities, and even food to spend more than a third of their monthly income on abortion-related expenses [8]. One in three women selects abortion over pregnancy because they cannot afford the services, demonstrating how cost can occasionally be a complete barrier to abortion.

3.3. Affected by Varying Degrees of Medical Help on the Body and Later Recovery

As mentioned above, the economy affects the level of medical care, including insurance coverage, as well as post-maternal recovery. Due to the difference in medical level, women with low socioeconomic status may receive poor abortion services, which may lead to physical diseases and a lower abortion success rate. And because of the high cost of abortion, families may not be able to afford good food, which can have an impact on later recovery. Lack of nutritional support for maternal health will also have adverse effects, such as malnutrition and so on. Women of high socioeconomic status have good insurance and can also receive good care after abortion, such as eating nutritious food and receiving good postnatal care.

4. Protecting Women's Right to Abortion through Education

4.1. Brief Introduction to Human Capital Theory

By talking about how low SES women know what they can rely on to reduce the impact of abortion on them, because there is a significant difference between low SES women and high SES women in terms of abortion, so this paper wants to find ways to change the status of low SES women, To bridge the gap between low socioeconomic status women and reproductive justice. The perspective of human capital theory can provide some answers and resources to our questions.

The human capital theory was developed by Schulz and Becker as an economic theory, but it has since been applied in many other fields such as policymakers. According to human capital theory, manpower is a kind of capital similar to other physical capital. Thus, human capital theory suggests that society and individuals should invest in a person in education as if they were investing in a machine in order to increase their productivity. Although the human capital theory may be criticized as violating the idea that people are dignified and free beings, many theorists still believe that human capital theory can actually

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improve human welfare and freedom. The human capital theory emphasizes how education can improve people's economic productivity. Formal education is viewed as an investment in human capital, and supporters of the notion contend that human capital is just as valuable as, if not more so than, physical capital. The proponents of the human capital theory hold that investment in human capital leads to improvements in worker quality and skill levels, which also benefit social welfare. This idea inspired later human capital theorists, who theorized this basic idea, formed a mature theoretical framework of human capital and continued to attach importance to education. Investing in human education can improve a person's welfare and freedom, such as more job opportunities at the individual level, and lead to economic growth for the country. As long as a society invests enough money in human education, inequality can be gradually reduced.

4.2. How Is the Theory of Human Capital to Help Women with Abortion Rights

The application of human capital theory to the education system can effectively promote the development of society. When people consider people through the perspective of human capital theory, they will invest a lot in people, especially in a person's education [9]. The more investment a person has in education or training, the more productive he will be. By this educational philosophy, the productivity of the population is growing and diversifying. Besides, the higher one's salary. Based on human capital theory, it does imply that education is the best way out of poverty. Human capital theorists attribute the causes of poverty to the lack of human capital investment and the correlation between the significance of education level and income level and socioeconomic status level [9].

4.3. What else Can Education do to Improve the Impact of Abortion on Low-income Groups

However, there are additional variables to consider when applying human capital theory to lower socioeconomic status women to ameliorate the impact of abortion. The development of human capital not only means more training and education programs for women to increase their productivity and income but also means more resources for sex education and health education should be more widely available. In the book "The Importance of Sex Education" (2020) by Rocho Rodriguez and Brianna Payan, research shows that students who grow up in low-income families are less likely to be exposed to sex education. On the other hand, children in families with parents with higher income have a higher prevalence of education, because their parents have more resources and a certain knowledge background to provide help. This is an important reason why teenagers from poor backgrounds are more likely to become pregnant and become teenage parents. Thus, by receiving more sex and health education as a human capital investment, women of low socioeconomic status are more likely to lead healthier lives, including reproductive health [10]. At the individual level, a good education is a better proxy for good job opportunities. If women with low socioeconomic levels are educated, they can find stable jobs, achieve self-sufficiency, and be able to make their own decisions and claim their rights.

5. Conclusion

This article examines the intention of people of different socioeconomic statuses to have an abortion, and how the level of medical care under economic influence affects abortion in different socioeconomic groups. Finally, study how to improve the plight of socioeconomic groups. To sum up, low-income people are more likely to get pregnant than high-income people, but less likely to have an abortion. The level of medical care in different areas affected by different economic levels also affects women's willingness to have an abortion. To determine the abortion rate in the area. But through education, through human capital theory, the world can educate low-income people by investing in the masses. Reducing the economic impact of abortion on women. How to give women more autonomy and equal rights through education is the research significance of this paper. It is hoped that society will begin to pay attention to the impact of

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abortion after the overthrow of Rov. Wade on women of different economic levels, and take measures to reduce the differences between the two and provide more educational and economic support to women.

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