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Don't Tilt My Crown: The Impact of Hair Discrimination on Minorities

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Eastern Illinois University

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Abstract

Hair discrimination is a significant issue that has not been given adequate attention nor the proper application of legislation to combat it across the United States. It is currently disproportionally impacting minorities, especially minority women, as it is not only emotionally and mentally damaging to them, but it can lead to health issues as well. This research will further analyze what causes some states to endorse anti-hair discrimination policies as opposed to others. I believe there are many common factors amongst states that have passed laws related to this issue, and that these factors are main indicators of why other states have been hesitant to do so, seeing as though they may lack many of these similar characteristics. This will be done by gathering data on different states within the U.S-- from liberal states, to conservative states, to moderate states. Given that this is a current civil rights issue, and polarization is consistently growing in our country, the racial and political composition of each state may be two primary elements.

Introduction

Background and history

This research is aimed at determining how discriminatory policies on hair in the workplace and schools disproportionately affect minorities, predominately focusing on the actions that are taken by states within the United States to combat this issue. This is an important topic regarding the social development of the United States. The U.S has come a long way in terms of advancing equality regardless of race, gender, national origin, and other protected characteristics, or in other words, the civil rights of individuals. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects employees from being discriminated against by employers (EEOC 1964). The Act also lead to the establishment of the EEOC, or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Hair discrimination in the workplace, or schools, is similar to race discrimination. It singles out and prevents certain protected groups from opportunities that they qualify for, and it can also be viewed as prejudice. In the same light, it can also be just as embarrassing or painful as racial discrimination. As *Cision PR Newswire* reports, at least 44.3% of women have reported hair discrimination, 46.5% have been told that their hairstyles are unprofessional, and 52.3% feel like they are being pressured to style their hair differently for work (All Things Hair 2020).

In 2019, California became the first state to enact the CROWN Act. The purpose of this legislation was to prohibit hair discrimination based on hairstyles that correlate with a specific race (116th Congress 2020). So far, about thirteen states have enforced the CROWN Act; however, the Act is slowly being recognized and considered by other states within the country.

According to the American Bar Association, or ABA, African American women are more likely to experience hair discrimination and be sent home from work because of their hair (Arefin 2020). However, this sort of discrimination does not occur solely within the workplace; it

also takes place within schools. For instance, Asia Simos, a 17-year old cheerleader at a high school in Louisiana, was dismissed from her team in February 2020 solely due to her hair texture. Her family stated that Asia's hair was too thick for the half-up, half-down hairstyle that the team wore for games, and she received violations due to her hair, which eventually led to her being kicked off the team (Asmelash 2020). In the same light, in 2010, Chasity Jones, a black woman, was selected for an interview at Catastrophe Management Solutions. Jones had blonde, curled dreadlocks; an easier-to-maintain hairstyle achieved by locking or braiding the hair to form various rope-like strands. Dreadlocks are a significant hairstyle in black culture, whether it be religiously, for fashion, or for other personal reasons. Jones was told by the manager that she would have to cut off her dreads prior to being hired by the company, due to the fact that they did not allow employees to have dreads (U.S EEOC 2013). Jones did not agree to cut her dreads, which resulted in the company removing their offer to employ her. The U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission filed suit on the grounds that the company's ban on dreads violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which, as mentioned previously, prevents discrimination on the basis of race. In other words, the EEOC argued that the ban discriminated against both physical and cultural African-American characteristics (U.S EEOC 2013). Although Simos and Jones are individuals, their stories impact, or represent, millions of minorities across the U.S who have, or could likely experience, hair discrimination.

The issue of hair discrimination within the workplace and schools is a significant concern to minorities, especially women, for many reasons. Besides the fact that it is unjust, it also may lead to health issues amongst individuals that experience it. For instance, in their article, Donahoo and Smith mention the New York City Human Rights Law (2019), which references the negative impact, or consequences, that maintaining or styling hair to meet the expectations of

White emulating hairstyles can have on minority hair, specifically African Americans. What is more, it points to the fact that producing these hairstyles on African American hair can cause their hair to thin, break off, alopecia, and even scalp burns (Donahoo and Smith 2019). However, the consequences do not end there, Donahoo and Smith also include that many of the chemicals that are used to straighten and style African American hair can increase the chances of developing breast cancer and fibroids. Ultimately, fibroids can affect the ability of these African American women to reproduce and may lead to the need to have a surgical operation to remove all, or part of their uterus, otherwise known as a hysterectomy. With that being said, hair discrimination can lead not only to emotional and mental damages to minorities but physical as well.

As I stated previously, this research will examine how discriminatory policies on hair in the workplace and schools disproportionately affect minorities. More specifically, this study set out to answer the following question: What causes some states to establish laws protecting minorities from hair discrimination sooner, or more willingly, than other states? In other words, what characteristics about a state makes them more likely to pass legislation for this issue? (e.g., party identification, racial composition, etc).

It should be noted that 13 states have adopted the CROWN Act: California, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Colorado, Washington, Maryland, Connecticut, New Mexico, Delaware, Nebraska, Oregon, and Nevada. All of these states are typically Democratic states, with the exception of Nebraska. Worth mentioning, as Donahoo emphasizes in her article, state laws only protect the women who live within that state, so it fails to offer the same equal protection to *all* minorities in the United States (Donahoo 2021).

In addition, historically, many Democratic states have consistently been the first to uphold laws that ensure social equality and combat injustice within society, and this is evident in the evolution of feminism, or movements that endorse women's rights. Imbornoni provides a timeline of key events within the American women's rights movement. As it demonstrates, Colorado, a Democratic state, was the first to adopt an amendment that granted women the right to vote (Imbornoni 2006).

Central theory introduction

As emphasized by Michener et al. in "African American Women: Intersectionality in Politics," despite being excluded, black women have found ways to intervene politically to fight for justice. For instance, the majority of the feminism movements, or advocacy for women's equal rights on the basis of gender, predominantly supported white women as opposed to Latina and Black women. As Michener et al. explained, "white women systematically shut them out of organizations and political programs" and black women started to establish strategies that defined race as one of the main aspects concerning their struggle for equal rights (Michener, Dilts, and Cohen 2021). In other words, hair discrimination was blatantly ignored by policymakers and politicians because they did not acknowledge the voices of minority women in the same way that they responded to the concerns of white women. Given this, this research will focus on the theory of intersectional feminism. In "Women, Power, and Politics…" authored by Han and Heldman, they discuss Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American lawyer, critical race theory scholar, and activist who coined the term intersectional feminism (Han and Heldman 2017). Intersectional feminism is the belief that in order to adequately address inequalities in gender, we have to consider intersecting identities, and how these identities result in different experiences regarding gender oppression. In other words, it suggests that as women, we have contrasting

experiences due to our dissimilarities in terms of race, religion, or social class. Additionally, hair discrimination has become an issue that not *all* women experience, and a factor that appears to be a consistent determinant of individuals who do encounter these unfortunate situations is race.

Literature Review

First and foremost, the term "intersectionality" within itself refers to the interactions between categories, like race and gender for instance, as well as other unique characteristics amongst the lives of individuals, their social practices, culture, and other factors that generally impact their experiences (Davis 2008). As I stated previously, Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term intersectional feminism in 1989, which is the belief that in order to fully address issues regarding gender inequality, intersecting identities and how they lead to different experiences and oppression must be considered (Han and Heldman 2017). During an interview with *Time*, Crenshaw argued that "All inequality is not equal" (Women 2020). To add, Crenshaw endorses the idea that the social identity of individuals could overlap, which intensifies their discrimination experiences.

Historically, many feminist movements primarily endorsed the equal rights of white women as opposed to minority women such as Black or Latina. Additionally, Few and Allen explained an argument about neoliberal feminism, a rising concept. The argument suggests that neoliberal feminists did not put adequate effort into combating oppression for individuals who did not hold a status that would be considered "dominant" in terms of race, class, and ethnicity. This means that individuals and people within these communities have very few options aside from being subject to adapting to the same system that oppresses them (Few and Allen 2020). As Dent argues, neoliberal feminism focuses on women who are individualized and privileged, as opposed to collective social justice (Dent 2019).

As I alluded to previously, historically minority women have often faced challenges that have proven to be solely linked to their race, and many of them are still ongoing issues. For instance, although minority women and White women may both face issues such as rape or challenges regarding employment or health, they are often experienced or dealt with differently.

As Crenshaw explains in her Stanford Law Review, in regard to the context of rape, when considering race and gender factors, the concept of intersectionality may provide clarity to ways in which racism and sexism have shaped concepts of rape to explain how minority women are vulnerable to these "converging systems of domination" and analyzes how minority women are marginalized in discussions involving anti-racist and anti-rape (Crenshaw 1991). Historically, rape was not considered a crime if it involved a black woman, especially in Southern states. In 1859, the Mississippi Supreme Court dismissed a case involving the rape of a black female slave, reasoning that "masters and slaves can not be governed by the same system or laws (Wriggins 1983). Wriggins also points out that forced sexual intercourse of Black women by White men during slavery was a crucial weapon in regard to white supremacy; it wasn't unusual. Although some laws regarding rape were race-neutral, if it involved Black women, the legal system within the U.S treated it as if it were invisible, or didn't exist. In addition to this, Wriggins explains that "black women were vulnerable to rape in several ways that white women are not" (Wriggins 1983). For example, as the author explains, forced sexual intercourse amongst black women was used by the KKK and other racist mobs during the Reconstruction era. To add, during the post-civil war period, black women were more exposed to sexual assault by employers due to the fact that they worked outside the home, as opposed to white women who worked inside the home (Wriggins 1983). Today, it is evident that the legal system still takes the rape of Black women more lightly as opposed to White women. There are studies that demonstrate that judges

typically establish sentences that are more severe when the rape victim is White, as opposed to Black victims. In more recent studies, as Wriggins points out, similar conduct is observed within white jurors. White jurors often settle on less severe consequences for defendants when the victim was Black. It is also worth noting that the study demonstrates that Black jurors did not behave with such bias (Wriggins 1983).

In terms of employment, unequal pay is an issue faced by all women; however, minority women experience it to a greater extent. With this, it should be noted that data has shown that Black women typically make less than White women. Milli et al. accurately stated that in regard to the workforce, women account for almost half of the population, however, on average they earn less than men in many occupations. For instance, in 2015, women working full-time made 80 cents for every dollar that a man earned (Milli et al. 2017). In addition to this, the authors explain that if progression towards this issue continues at the same rate, women will not be paid equally until 2059. However, the calculated year does not account for *all* women. Hispanic and Black women will have to wait even longer for pay equity. Hispanic women won't receive equal pay until 2248, and Black women won't receive it until 2124 (Milli et al. 2017). This is a clear example of intersectional feminism. As Beal states, "this racist, chauvinistic, and manipulative use of black workers and women, especially black women, has been a severe cancer on the American labor scene" (Beal 2008).

Moreover, earlier I mentioned the health issues that could potentially be faced by minorities arising from hair discrimination. It is worth noting that Beal also emphasizes health issues that are disproportionately faced by minorities regarding birth control. Many black mothers, poor individuals, and young women are often being compelled or convinced into undergoing sterilization procedures. As Beal states, some Southern states, for example,

Mississippi, are well known for endorsing this conduct. The author argues forced sterilizations, the absence of safe contraception, and the inability to receive an abortion are all detrimental to the health of black women, and ultimately, black people in their entirety (Beal 2008). For instance, in New York City, almost 50% of deaths involving child-bearing were caused by abortions, and 79% of them included non-white individuals (Beal 2008).

Gaps in the Literature

Furthermore, although the scholarly literature authored by Wriggins, Milli, and Beals provide us with excellent information regarding ways in which minority women experience certain issues to a greater extent, or in other words, intersectional feminism, I believe there is additional research that should be done which involves a closer examination at states. There is room for research to be conducted that analyzes the states in which these issues are experienced by minority women, and whether it occurs at a higher rate in certain states as opposed to others. The authors often mentioned Southern states in which many of these situations occurred; however, I think their research can be further advanced if there were comparisons made between states in other areas of the country. There is sufficient data that demonstrates that historically, leaders of Southern states were less likely to endorse racial equality. For instance, as Blee and Creasap state, during the civil rights movements, white political leaders in the South were less likely to clearly, or explicitly, support segregation and white privilege, instead, they adopted many rights and liberties that were used to justify white political and economic supremacy (Blee and Creasap 2010). However, the readings do not sufficiently analyze the behaviors of other states in terms of enforcing, or not, the equal rights of *all* women, specifically in more liberal states. My research will fill in this gap by comparing the behavior of both conservative states as

well as liberal states when dealing with issues involving civil rights and discrimination, specifically hair discrimination.

Methods

This research will determine the impact of hair discrimination towards minorities within the workplace and schools by state. It will also be aimed at examining how this issue is developing and being resolved. In other words, I will compare how different states are addressing hair discrimination, and what makes it more likely that a state has passed anti-discrimination laws for hairstyles. I will take into consideration the similar factors that the states that have passed anti-hair discrimination legislation have, as opposed to those that have not, for instance, the racial composition of those states. I hypothesize that the political makeup of the state(s) will be the primary common factor amongst states that have endorsed legislation regarding hair discrimination, such as the CROWN Act. For instance, as I mentioned earlier, historically, states that lean more Democratic tend to willingly propose, or endorse laws that address the social inequality that is unjust. To add, many of the states that have already begun to pass legislation on this issue are typically considered to be blue states. Given this, I believe that states like Texas, Florida, and Kansas, which are typically red politically, do not endorse such laws as readily because they typically prioritize individual rights, while blue states focus more on diversity and combating social inequality through legislation.

Pitts states that although the CROWN Act has been recognized in various states, there are still many states in which the Act has not passed. There are also states (e.g., Florida) that have still have little to no success in passing other bills that can protect individuals from experiencing hair discrimination (Pitts 2021). Given this, many minorities are not properly afforded the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of hair, due to the fact that they are subject to missing

out on various opportunities, for instance, education. To prevent this, there should be more laws preventing individuals from being discriminated against due to their hair. An example of this sort of discrimination can be observed through the experience of two sisters: 9-year-old April and 10-year-old Brooke. Their mother stated that they were not allowed to perform in their dance academy's "Black Nutcracker" production because their hair was in braids (Woods 2019). It should also be noted that the sisters were expelled from the dance academy because their mother would not adhere to the "safety policy" that her daughters' braided hair somehow violated, even if it were placed into a bun. This is just one example, but there are plenty of instances in which minorities, even children, have missed out on opportunities due to their hair.

Essentially, my variables of interest include what makes some states likely to have anti-hair discrimination laws as the dependent variable, and what differences account for this circumstance (e.g., Democratic state governments and racial diversity) as the independent variable. I plan to test my hypothesis by using qualitative methods. Specifically, I plan to take a structured focused case study approach. This approach will consist of comparing my question(s) across a set of cases; the states. The questions will be treated as the independent variables that I mentioned previously (e.g., does racial diversity of the state influence some states to enforce anti-hair discrimination legislation). I will provide background information, and then focus on the variables at hand.

Specifically, I am studying and/or observing if and how different states, such as Texas, Wisconsin, and California, have addressed the issues similar to discrimination on the basis of hair. With this, I will be examining how these states have handled other issues in regard to civil rights. I chose those three states because of how different they are politically. For instance, Texas is typically a Republican state, as California is a safe Democratic state, and Wisconsin has

consistently held the status as a swing state. I will compare the Republican, Democratic, and moderate states through the use of questions such as (1) are states more likely to pass anti-discrimination laws on the basis of hair when it includes greater racial diversity?" and (2) are states more likely to pass anti-discrimination laws if they are Democratic, Republican, or moderate states? Exploring these questions will help me determine what has caused some states to enact laws as opposed to those that have not. All in all, I believe the political makeup of the state as well as its racial composition, as I stated previously, will be significant factors.

Although the structured focused case study approach will help provide insight and background information when determining what makes states more likely to pass anti-hair discrimination policies as opposed to others, there are potential weaknesses that could exist. For instance, even though the racial or political makeup of states can be consistent, they can also change throughout the years. For instance, following the Civil War, Illinois was typically a Republican state. The state shifted to a Democratic state during World War II, and then back to a Republican state up until the late 1980s. Today, Illinois is considered to be a safe Democratic state in respect to their majority vote for Democratic representatives in the past few elections. Many states have a similar history of their party identification majority converting throughout the years. Given this, a new study involving a structured focused case study may be necessary within the future as states continue to become polarized and more diverse. But for now, my current research will determine what makes states more likely today to establish such anti-discrimination laws.

Analysis

Racial diversity

In terms of racial diversity, there is evidence that alludes to the idea that it can be considered as a significant factor in terms of distinguishing what causes some states to enact certain policies and laws as opposed to others. This includes racial diversity within elected representative positions as well as the states' population in its entity. This is also evident in terms of bigger governmental entities, such as the House of Representatives. For instance, as Matsubayashi and Rocha explain, the voting patterns of House members tend to be more liberal when African Americans make up a greater proportion of their constituency (Matsubayashi and Rocha 2012). In other words, elected officials that represent districts with populations that include a greater number of African American citizens are more likely to endorse legislation and speak on issues regarding race.

On the other hand, Matsubayashi and Rocha also explain that representatives from districts that are homogenously white typically have minimal interest in representing the interest of minorities (Matsubayashi and Rocha 2012). These representatives are more likely to endorse policies that are racially conservative or satisfy the interests of their constituents and residents who are located near areas that include minority residents, but not necessarily amongst them. Given this, it is proper to infer those states with larger minority populations will more than likely elect Democratic leaders who will support policies and laws pertaining to equity and combating racial issues. This is due to the fact that minorities, specifically African Americans, tend to identify with the Democratic party. For instance, data reported in 2018 demonstrates that 84% of African Americans tend to lean toward the Democratic party, while only 8% of African Americans identify with the Republican party (Pew Research Center 2018). To add, the modern Democratic party, as I alluded to previously, tends to endorse issues such as voting rights,

LGBTQIA+ rights, and minority rights as well as speak against issues that involve discrimination.

Findings for States
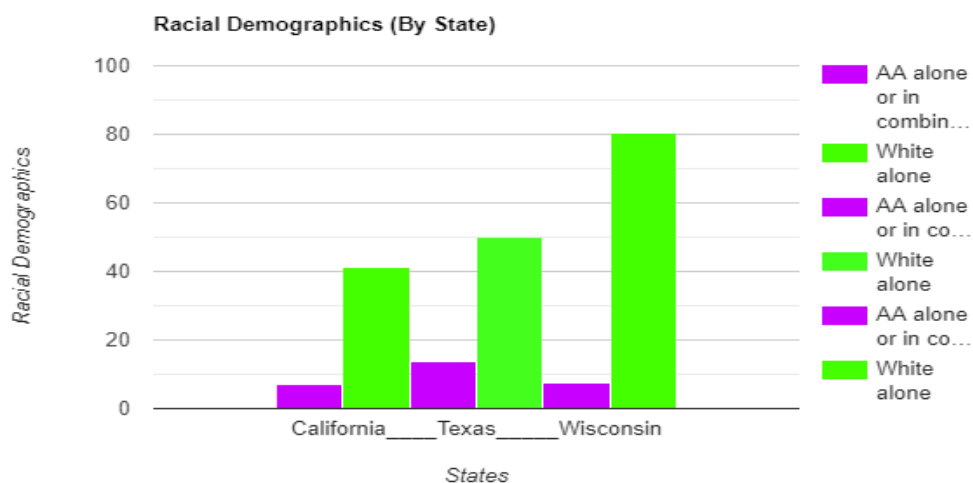
As I mentioned earlier, the first question that my research explores is: Are states more likely to pass anti-discrimination laws on the basis of hair when it includes greater racial diversity? I was able to produce this graph using data from the United States Census Bureau, and gather information pertaining to Texas, California, and Wisconsin. With this, I found that regarding California, 7.1% of participants identified as African American alone or in combination with another race group, while 41.2% identified as White alone. In Texas, 13.6% of participants identified as African American alone or in combination with another race group, and 50.1% identified as White alone. Finally, in Wisconsin, 7.7% of participants identified as African American alone or in combination with another race group, and 80.4% identified as White alone (US Census Bureau 2021).

Party ID of States

The political makeup of states is another factor that could explain why some states more readily endorse or enact legislation to combat discrimination and similar issues that tend to negatively impact minorities as well as other underrepresented classes. This is evident in many of the states that support issues such as the death penalty, LGBTQIA+ rights, anti-discrimination laws, slavery reparations, and affirmative action. For instance, the death penalty is supported and still legal in many states that lean more Republican such as Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming (Procon.org 2021). The existence of the death penalty disproportionately affects African Americans. The 2018 U.S Census demonstrates that although African Americans only make up 13.4% of the population, they account for over 40% of defendants on death row (Abon 2019).

Additionally, Democrats are more likely to support slavery reparations, which includes entities that participated in slavery, such as universities and local and federal governments, compensating African Americans for suffering caused by slavery. According to a Gallup poll, as of 2019, an overwhelming 90% of Republicans voters felt that the government should not make cash payments to African Americans who are descendants of slaves, while only 8% felt that they were eligible (Younis 2019). A significant difference is evident in terms of opinions based on party identification, due to the fact that nearly half of the Democratic voters voted that they should receive reparations.

Prior to the Supreme Court case, Obergefell v. Hodges, which legalized same-sex marriage, 13 states still banned such marriages. Almost all of those states were Republican states: Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, South

Dakota, Nebraska, Tennessee, and Texas (Procon.org 2016). The stance that many states take

concerning these controversial topics demonstrates that the political makeup of states has

historically, and still does, seem to be an indicator for what states will endorse in terms of

policies and legislation.

Findings for States
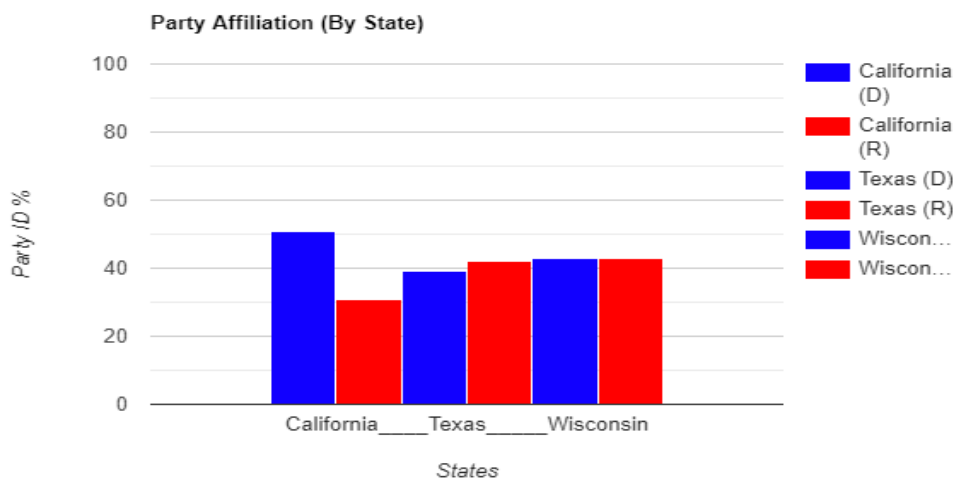
The second question that my research explores is: Are states are more likely to pass anti-

discrimination laws if they are Democratic, Republican, or moderate states. The graph above

demonstrates an outlook of the citizens in the state(s) who identify as either Democrat or

Republican. I've produced this bar graph using data from 2018 deriving from *Statista*, in which I

gathered information specifically for California, Texas, and Wisconsin. With this, I found that in

the state of California, 51% of citizens identified as Democrat, and 31% identified with the

Republican party. In Texas, 39% of citizens identified as members of the Democratic party,

while 42% were Republicans. Lastly, in Wisconsin, 43% were affiliated with the Democratic

party, and 43% with the Republican party (Statista 2019). Additionally, this is a clear

representation that Wisconsin, as I mentioned previously, is typically a moderate state today. The

data also confirms what I mentioned previously; California is typically a blue state, and Texas is typically a red state.

Conclusion

In regard to the CROWN Act, as I mentioned previously, California was the first state to enact the CROWN Act in 2019. Although Wisconsin in its entity has not passed the CROWN Act, Dane County, which is the second-most populous county in the state, proposed an amendment to an ordinance that would prohibit the discrimination of protective hairstyles (Tornabene 2020). Similarly, to the CROWN Act itself, the amendment would not only prohibit hair discrimination, but in essence, it also prohibits discrimination on the basis of race due to the fact that it protects the ability of individuals in the workplace to wear hairstyles that have been historically tied to race and/or culture. However, unfortunately, the CROWN Act has been filed but did not pass in Texas. The bill, which was aimed at eliminating discrimination on the basis of hair, died in the Texas Legislature in May of 2021 because the deadline was reached before the officials got to the bill in order to pass it (Goudeau and Chukwu 2021). When interpreting the data and background history that I noted earlier, this information comes as no surprise.

I hypothesized was that the political makeup of the state(s) would be the most common factor amongst states that have endorsed legislation regarding hair discrimination (the CROWN Act). According to the data presented above, my hypothesis was correct. It was been historically evident that states that lean more Democrat will more likely support legislation that addresses the issue of social inequality and racism. Many Democratic states, like California, which is the most Democratic state when compared to Texas and Wisconsin according to the party affiliation graph, have been extremely supportive of the CROWN Act. Texas, which is the most Republican state when compared to California and Wisconsin, have essentially ignored the bill. This aligns

with what I mentioned earlier about red states not readily endorsing such laws because they focus more on individual rights as opposed to diversity and addressing discrimination through legislation. Given this, the political makeup of states is a significant determinant of whether they will support legislation that deals with the issue of discrimination.

In terms of the racial diversity of each state, I was able to infer from the racial demographics graph that race seems to have a minimal, or small impact on states' behavior concerning passing anti-discrimination legislation. For instance, out of the three states that were studied, Texas has the greatest population of African Americans within the state, however, they did not endorse the CROWN Act as expected *if* my hypothesis were to be correct. Additionally, if what I hypothesized were to be true, California, which was the first state to enforce the Act, would have been the least expected to do so because they have the lowest population of African Americans according to the graph. This alludes to the idea that racial diversity is not a big influence regarding whether states would establish such legislation.

There are potential weaknesses that could be considered in light of these findings. As I mentioned previously, the political and racial makeup of states is not set in stone, as they all have the potential to shift throughout the years. It is also worth noting that this is a fairly recent and ongoing issue, so although states like Texas have not yet to establish such laws, they may do so in the future, similar to the Obergefell case, as the issue continues to progress and impact many individuals across the country.

Earlier I mentioned intersectional feminism, which alludes to the conception that women have contrasting experiences due to dissimilarities in regard to social class, race, and religion. Hair discrimination in the workplace and schools disproportionately affects minority women, due to the fact that it prohibits hairstyles that have been historically linked to race and culture (e.g.,

dreadlocks). As Few and Allen explained, individuals and people within communities in which they are negatively impacted by the oppression that is placed upon them because they are not considered "dominant" in terms of race or ethnicity are subject to adapting to the unjust system (Few and Allen 2020). This is clearly evident in the data presented concerning Texas. Minority men and women are not being afforded the right to freely express their culture through their hairstyles within the workplace and schools because the state, being that they are predominately Republican, does not focus on addressing or endorsing legislation that involves social equality. With this, they have little to no option but to suffer from oppression and/or discrimination as long as they reside in the state until Texas acknowledges such rights as a necessity to ensure equality.

To further expand the research at hand, there are additional questions that could be explored. For instance: What are ways that we can get states who have yet to endorse the CROWN Act to do so? In *Obergefell*, we saw a significant change when the issue was brought the to the Supreme Court. May that be necessary in a case like hair discrimination, seeing as though it is technically a civil rights issue due to its historic ties to race? Another question that could be considered is: Do states that have not passed the Act have similar reasons for doing so? Or is it a case-by-case consideration? Could it be that these states are just not prioritizing the issue at this time, or do their arguments have more substance as to why it should not be passed in its entirety? All in all, my research has set out to demonstrate that the political outlook of states is significant as a determining factor for which states will enforce anti-hair discrimination laws, while racial diversity of states appears to have minimal impact.

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