

Participation in the Massachusetts (MA) Adult-Use Cannabis Industry by Race/Ethnicity and Gender Across Job Titles

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Background

- U.S. states are increasingly legalizing cannabis for recreational purposes (adult-use) through privately-run establishments.
- Legalization has partially emerged in response to inequitable prohibition enforcement which disproportionately harmed Black and Hispanic/Latino communities and cohorts.
- The extent to which people from communities and cohorts that were most affected are included in the legal industry is unknown.

MA Legislative Provisions for Equity

- Legislative mandate to promote equity
- Positive Impact Plans⁺
- Diversity Plans⁺
- Areas of Disproportionate Impact⁺
- Economic Empowerment Certification⁺
- Social Equity Program⁺
- Prohibition on excluding someone from industry based on cannabis conviction (excluding distribution to minors)
- Cap on number of businesses a person or entity may own or control⁺
- Reinvestment of tax revenue into disproportionately harmed communities
- Ability to expunge cannabis records
- Research requirement⁺

⁺Legislative provisions with regulatory flexibility in implementation, enforcement, and accountability.

Methods

- First, we extracted MA adult-use industry agent registrations (10/15/18-4/28/20). We used a unique identifier to merge data for people with multiple registrations.
- Next, we created binary variables for each race and ethnicity and for gender. Persons with >1 job title were included in their most senior title.
- Descriptive statistics show agents by demographic characteristics.* Agent data is also shown stratified by two levels: (1) white/non-white, and (2) male/female.**
- Chi-square tests tested differences between the demographic makeup of people in less-senior job titles compared to those in senior job titles.

Results

Participation in the Massachusetts adult-use cannabis industry skews white and male, and this trend is pronounced in senior job titles.

MA Adult-Use Industry At a Glance* (n=4,907)

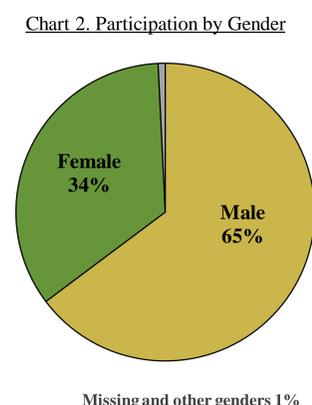
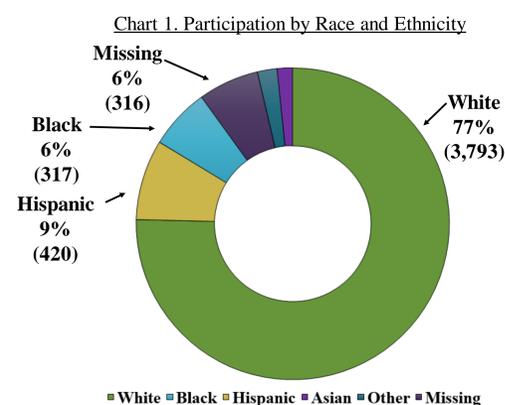


Chart 3. Participation by Race/Ethnicity, & Gender**

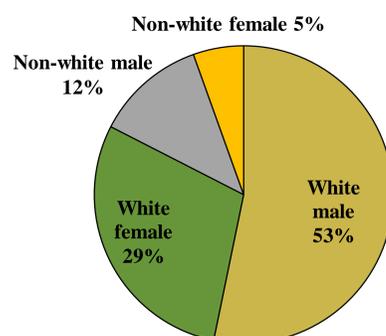
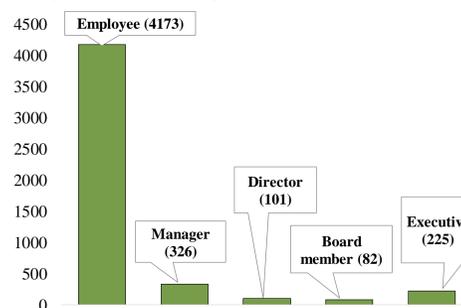


Chart 4. Participation by Role (least to most senior)

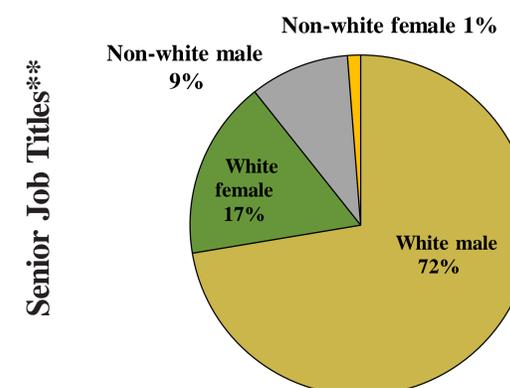
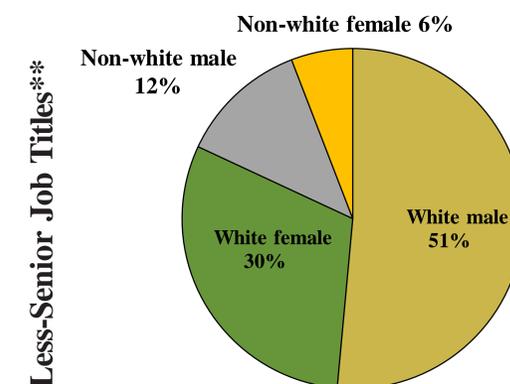


*Data may not sum to 100%, as more than one race/ethnicity can be selected. Data is rounded to the nearest percent. Race/ethnicity & gender are typically reported by a supervisor, not self-reported, representing a limitation.
**Percent shown is among agents with non-missing race/ethnicity & gender data (n=4,560). Agents that selected 'White' and another race/ethnicity (n=103) are included in white cohorts, representing a limitation.

Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Vary By Job Seniority***

Less-senior positions (n=4,166)** *Employees, Managers*

Senior positions (n=394)** *Owners, Executives, Board members*



***Differences between the racial and gender makeup of less-senior compared to senior positions were significant at the level of $p < .001$.

Conclusion

Findings suggest continued and greater investment in equity is needed to increase diversity within the Massachusetts adult-use industry. Future work should stratify by intersectional identities, including race, ethnicity, and gender in order to more fully understand participation.