

Windhoek, Namibia
19 June 2024

News release

Namibians support access to contraceptives and sex education, split on termination of unwanted pregnancies

Namibians strongly support access to contraceptives regardless of age or marital status, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

Most citizens think sex education should be included in school curricula, with the strongest backing coming from younger and more educated respondents. And there is a notable consensus that pregnancy should not interrupt a girl's education.

Solid majorities say the termination of a pregnancy is justified if the pregnancy poses a health risk or results from rape or incest. A slim majority consider economic hardship an acceptable justification. But views are divided on other reasons for terminating a pregnancy.

Key findings

- More than three-fourths (77%) of Namibians support the idea that contraceptives should be made available to everyone irrespective of marital status, while 15% disagree with this perspective, including only 4% who “strongly disagree” (Figure 1).
- A similar proportion (74%) of respondents say contraceptives should be available to everyone who is sexually active, regardless of age (Figure 2).
 - Women, younger respondents, and educated citizens are particularly likely to endorse these perspectives (not shown).
- Overwhelming majorities of Namibians say that sex education should be taught in schools (83%) and that girls should be allowed to continue their schooling if they become pregnant or have children (85%) (Figure 3).
 - Younger and educated citizens are more likely to favour these viewpoints (not shown).
- A similarly strong majority (81%) say women should decide for themselves when and how many children they want to have. More educated citizens (84%), women (85%), and youth (85%-88%) are more likely to share this view (Figure 4).
- A majority of Namibians say it is “sometimes” or “always” justified for a woman to terminate her pregnancy if her health is at risk (72%), if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest (60%), or if economic hardship would prevent her from taking care of a child (52%). Views are divided on an unwanted pregnancy (Figure 5).
- About two-thirds (65%) of respondents say a woman who chooses to terminate a pregnancy should be sent to prison (Figure 6).

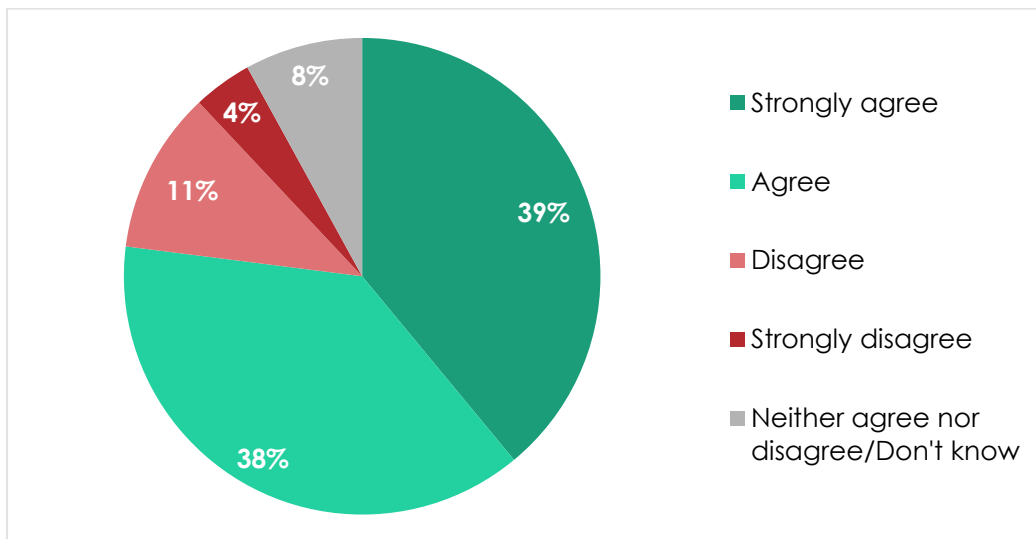
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Nine survey rounds in up to 42 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 10 surveys are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Namibia, led by Survey Warehouse, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult citizens of Namibia in March 2024. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Namibia in 1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2019, and 2021.

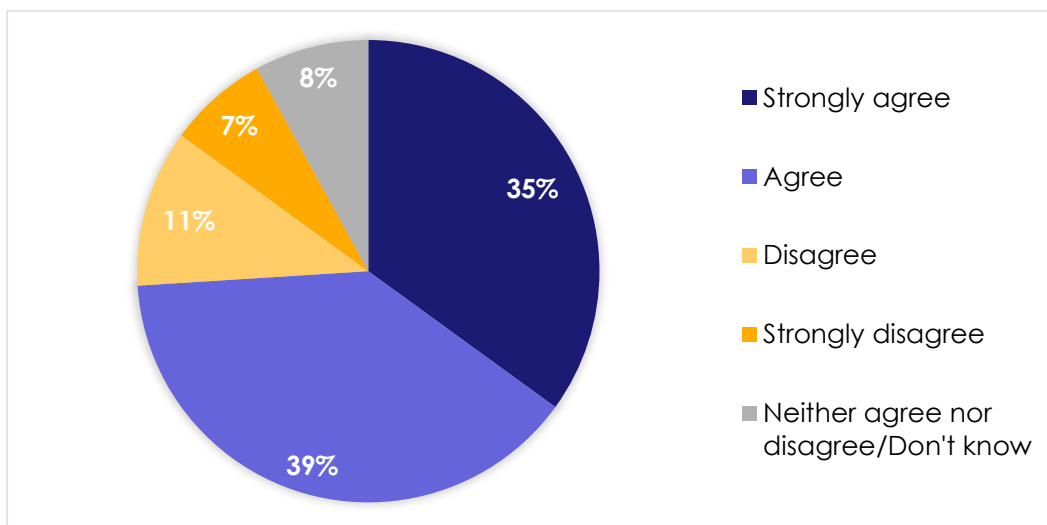
Charts

Figure 1: Contraceptives should be available to everyone regardless of marital status
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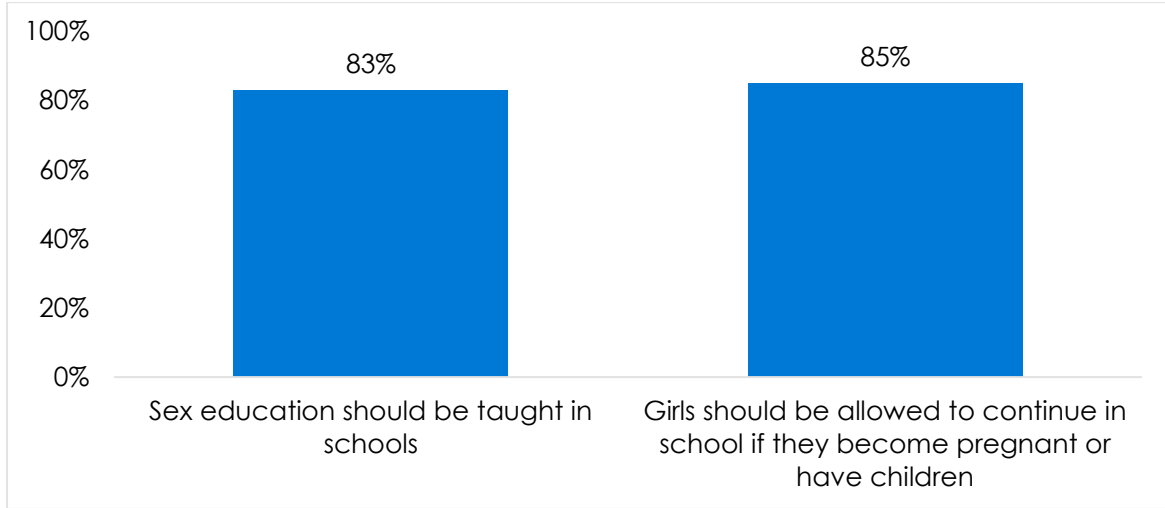
Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you disagree or agree: Contraceptives should be available to everyone regardless of marital status.

Figure 2: Contraceptives should be available to everyone who is sexually active regardless of age
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Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you disagree or agree: Contraceptives should be available to everyone who is sexually active regardless of age.

Figure 3: Support for sex education and girls continuing school if they become pregnant or have children | Namibia | 2024



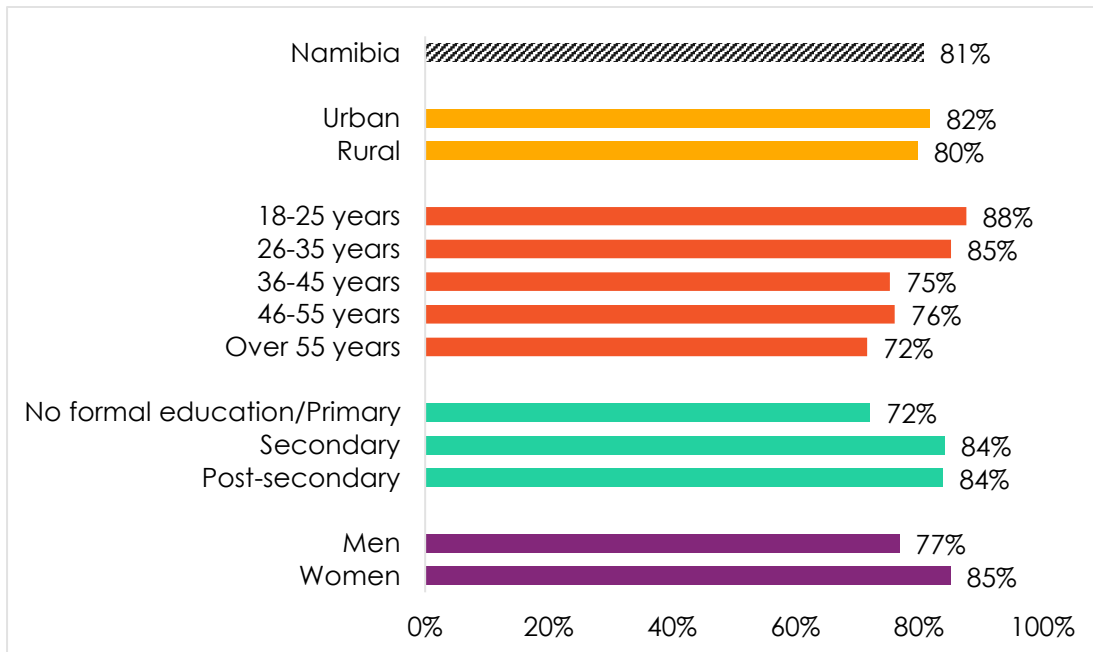
Respondents were asked:

Please tell me whether you disagree or agree: Schools should teach sex education to young people to help them make informed decisions.

Girls should be allowed to continue their schooling even if they become pregnant or have children.

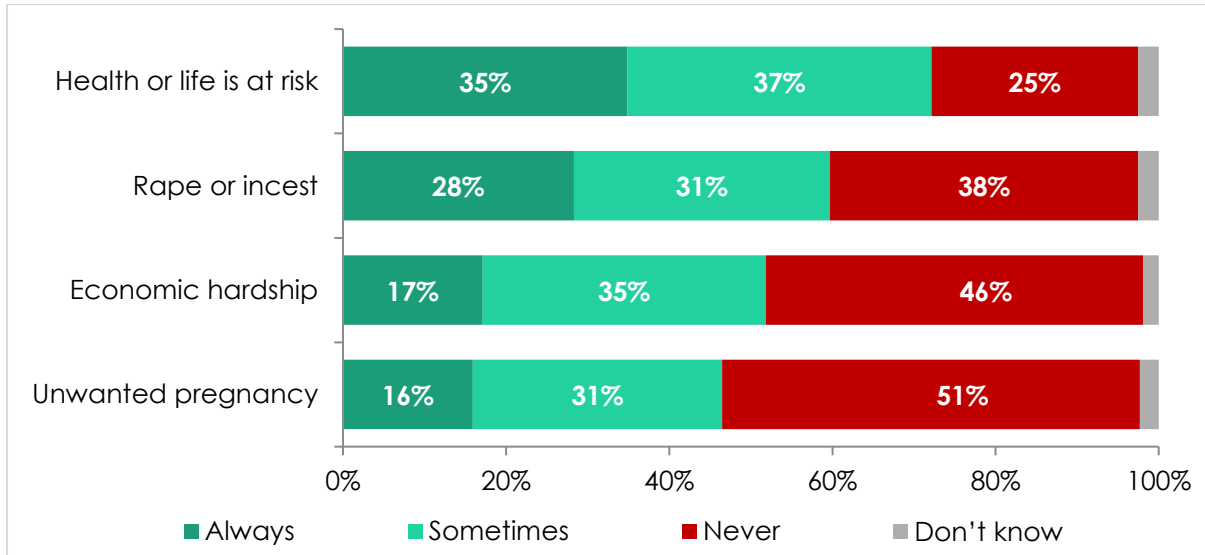
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 4: Women should decide timing and number of children | Namibia | 2024



Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you disagree or agree: Women should decide for themselves when and how many children they want to have. (% who "agree" or "strongly agree")

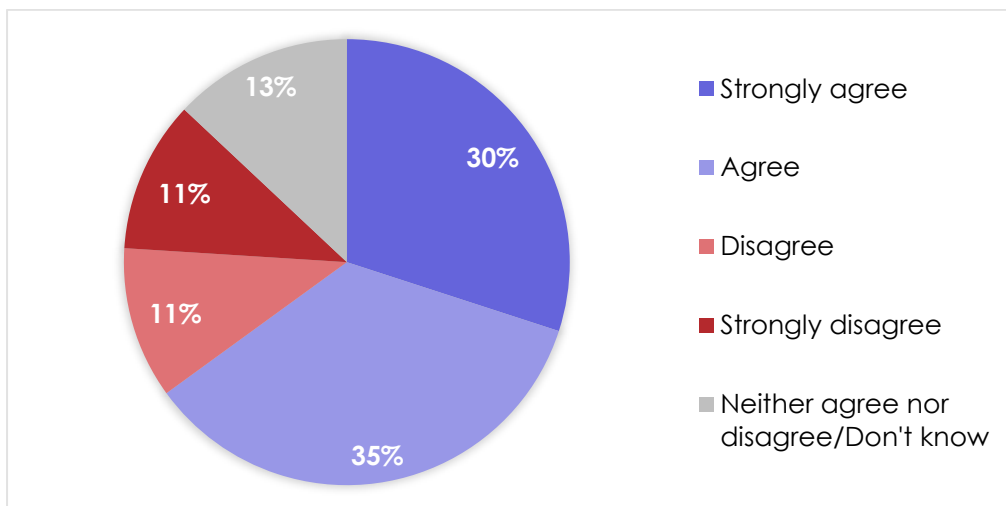
Figure 5: Is it justified for a woman to terminate a pregnancy? | by reason | Namibia | 2024



Respondents were asked: For each of the following situations, please tell me whether you think it can always be justified, sometimes be justified, or never be justified for a woman to terminate a pregnancy if:

- The pregnancy is as a result of rape or she has been impregnated by a close relative such as her father or brother?
- Her health or life is in danger if she keeps the pregnancy?
- She is going through economic hardships and cannot take care of a child?
- She does not want to keep the pregnancy for any reason?

Figure 6: Should women who choose to terminate a pregnancy be sent to prison? | Namibia | 2024



Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you disagree or agree: A woman who chooses to terminate a pregnancy should be sent to prison.

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