

REGIONAL INEQUALITIES IN ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED HEALTHCARE IN THE BRAZILIAN UNIFIED HEALTH SYSTEM

Authors: Andressa Braga, Caio Huerta, Larissa Cardoso, Mirian Terra, Ivan Zimmermann, Marisa Santos



BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

Access to healthcare plays a vital role in heart disease screening and treatment. The most used imaging technique for assessing heart structure and functioning is the echocardiography.

Analyse the distribution of outpatient transthoracic echocardiograms carried out in the Unified Health System (SUS) in Brazil in 2019.

METHODS

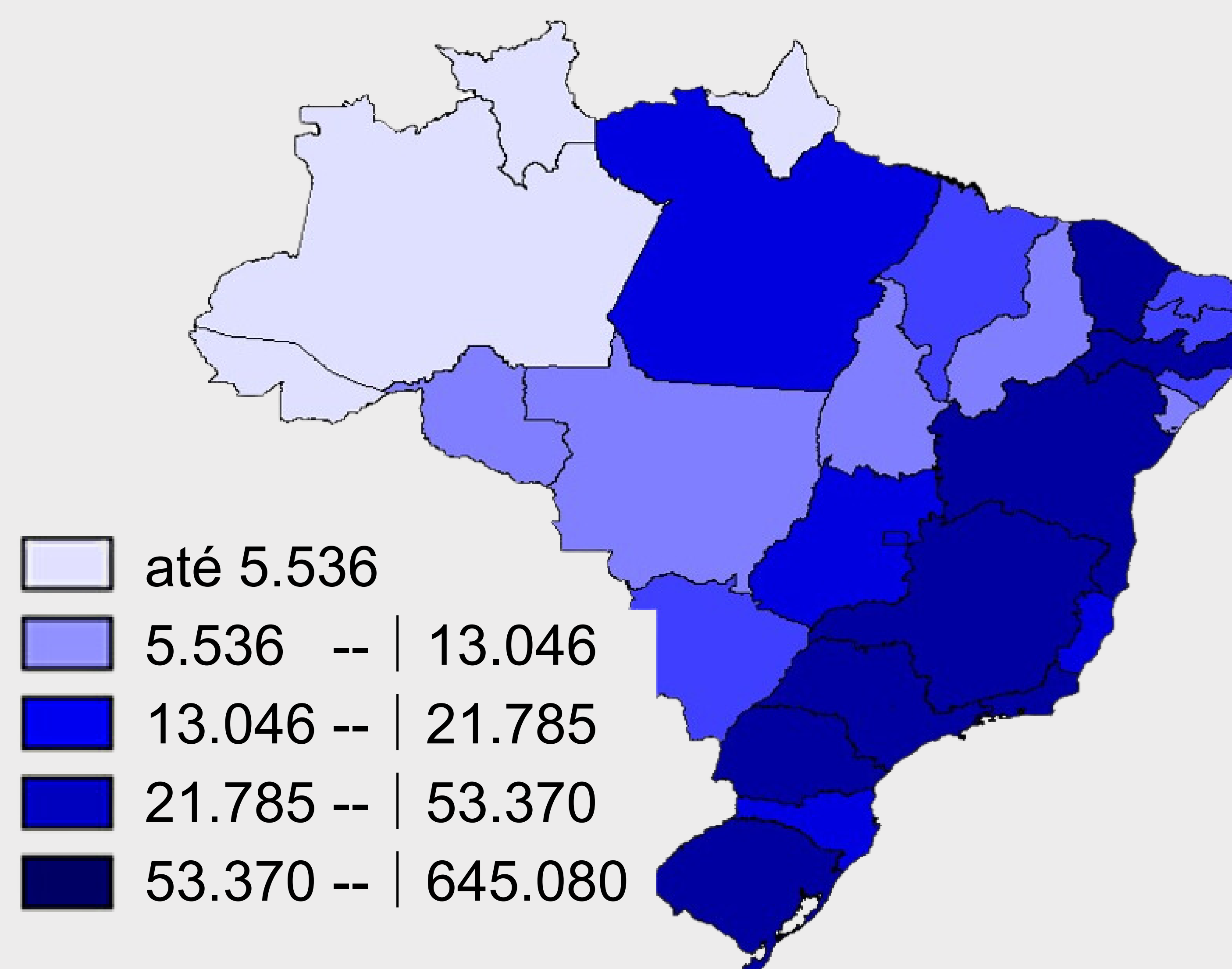
We used data from echocardiography exam registered in public Outpatient Health Information System (SIA-SUS) as proxy to assess the availability of specialized healthcare in Brazilian Unified health System. In a cross-sectional analysis, we adjusted the total number of registered echocardiograms by population of all states in Brazil.

RESULTS

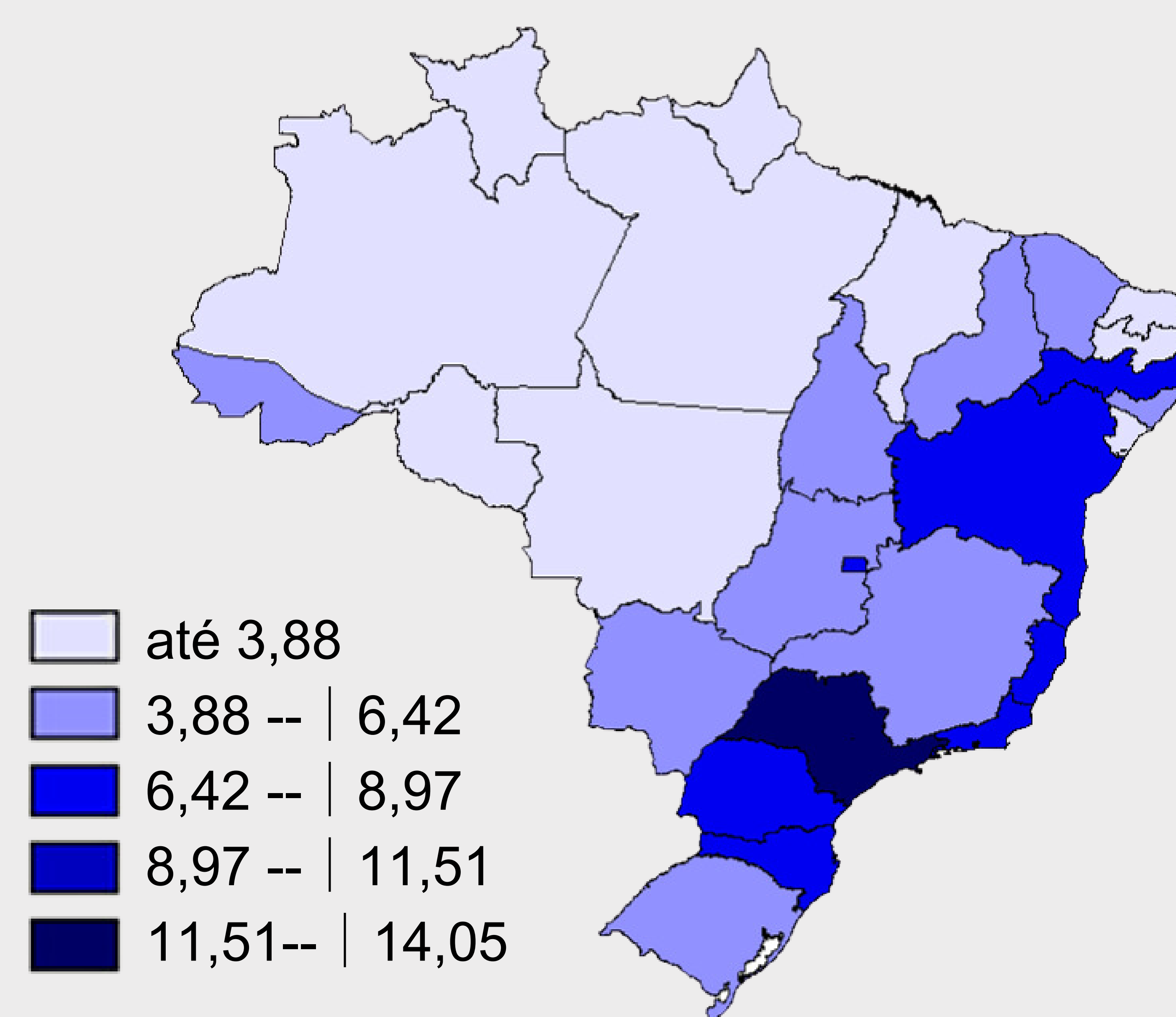
In 2019, Brazil recorded 1,533,851 echocardiography exams, predominantly in the Southeast (58%), followed by the Northeast (21%), South (13%), Midwest (5%), and North (3%) regions.

Federation Unit	Exams / 1.000 inhabitant	Total (%)
Roraima	2.39	1,445 (0.1)
Amapá	348	2,947 (0.2)
Acre	3.99	3,518 (0.4)
Amazonas	1.34	5,536 (0.4)
Rondônia	3.64	6,466 (0.4)
Tocantins	4.71	7,411 (0.5)
Sergipe	3.81	8,760 (0.6)
Mato Grosso	2.71	9,433 (0.6)
Piauí	3.99	13,046 (0.9)
Rio Grande do Norte	3.79	13,300 (0.9)
Mato Grosso do Sul	5.33	14,815 (1.0)
Paraíba	3.70	14,858 (1.0)
Alagoas	5.66	18,879 (1.2)
Maranhão	3.08	21,785 (1.4)
Distrito Federal	7.54	22,729 (1.5)
Pará	2.83	24,388 (1.6)
Espírito Santo	6.95	27,930 (1.8)
Goiás	4.71	33,061 (2.2)
Santa Catarina	7.45	53,370 (3.5)
Rio Grande do Sul	5.09	57,857 (3.8)
Ceará	6.37	58,214 (3.8)
Pernambuco	7.49	71,582 (4.7)
Paraná	7.48	85,479 (5.6)
Minas Gerais	4.34	91,912 (6.0)
Bahia	6.79	100,991 (6.6)
Rio de Janeiro	6.90	119,059 (7.8)
São Paulo	14.05	645,080 (42.1)
Total	7.30	1,533,851

TOTAL NUMBER OF EXAMS



RATE PER 1,000 INHABITANT



CONCLUSION

These findings indicate regional inequalities in performing echocardiogram exams, with the Southeast region, characterized by higher human development index (HDI), conducting a greater number of exams. On the other hand, regions with lower HDI, such as the North and Northeast, had fewer exam entries.

