Fertility and Childbearing – experiences, thoughts and attitudes.
A further piece to the puzzle?

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Background

Higher studies, precarious employment, insecure housing market

Reach maturity, economic independence

Mean age at first child 29 years

Lack of knowledge regarding fertility

Background

Maternal health care in Sweden
Good access to family planning services
Reduced prices on contraceptives

Health promotion work
- prevention of unwanted pregnancies and STI
- lifestyle information
Overall aim

To reach a deeper understanding of fertility and childbearing among Swedish women in the age of 20-30 years, not yet mothers
Design
Experiences of fertility

Experiences of fertility was described using phenomenology

Interviews with 10 women
Age 23-27


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Thoughts on childbearing was interpreted using life-world hermeneutics

Nine women interviewed
Age 20-30
Design

Attitudes to fertility and childbearing

Attitudes to fertility and childbearing was assessed and compared toward socio-demografic factors\(^1\) using the Attitudes to Fertility and Childbearing Scale (AFCS)\(^2\)

424 women
Age 20-30

Websurvey


Results

Experiences of fertility

Fertility is experienced as paradoxical

- A power important to female identity
- Future finite possibility
- Own responsibility of fertility governed by expectations in society
Results

Thoughts on childbearing

Childbearing is stagnant and interferes with a free and active life and withholds development as subject

Childbearing is a future project, which should be prepared for
- Visualized in the present
- Relevans to female identity
Results
Attitudes to fertility and childbearing

Mean age of 24.7 (n=424)

68% had a partner
61% higher studies
59% lived in metropolitan areas or large cities
52% first child at age 25–29 y
36% first child at age 30–34 y
Results
Attitudes to fertility and childbearing

Importance for future

Hindrance at present

Female identity
Fertility and Childbearing

- important dimensions of female identity projected to the future

- fertility lack a self-evident place in life

- it is important to have the ability to conceive and to have the possibility to choose childbearing

- fertility implies responsibilities and expectations
Fertility Awareness

- education in scientifically proven signs of fertility

- increasing interest in wanting to learn more about fertility and menstrual cycle


Advantages of a body that talks

- empowerment
- tool to identify and communicate sexual and reproductive health
- contraceptive choice with full disclosure

Advantages of a body that talks

Self-knowledge

fertility becomes visible in women’s present lives

a window to the individual fertility and health