



*Family Formation in Flux –
Causes, Consequences and Possible Futures*

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**WP2: What are the reasons for not wanting children or postponing?
Are values linked to being a parent?**

Most Youth Still Want Children

- FinEdu data (N=1050) → At **age 20/22**, 3% had children and **80%** considered it very likely that they'll have children in the future. 75% estimated that they would receive their first child in the age range 25-30
- At **age 32/34**, 52% had children
- What were the reasons to not have or postpone having children?

Reasons for *not* wanting to have a child:

The top 5 most likely reasons for not wanting a child at age 32/34 FinEDu (N=207, about **20%**)

1. I don't want to tie myself to children (77%)
2. I'd have to give up my current lifestyle (54%)
3. Children don't fit my plans for the future (50%)
4. Children aren't current in my relationship (36%)
5. I do not like children (27%)

Lifestyle
choice

Reasons to postpone or not have (more) children:

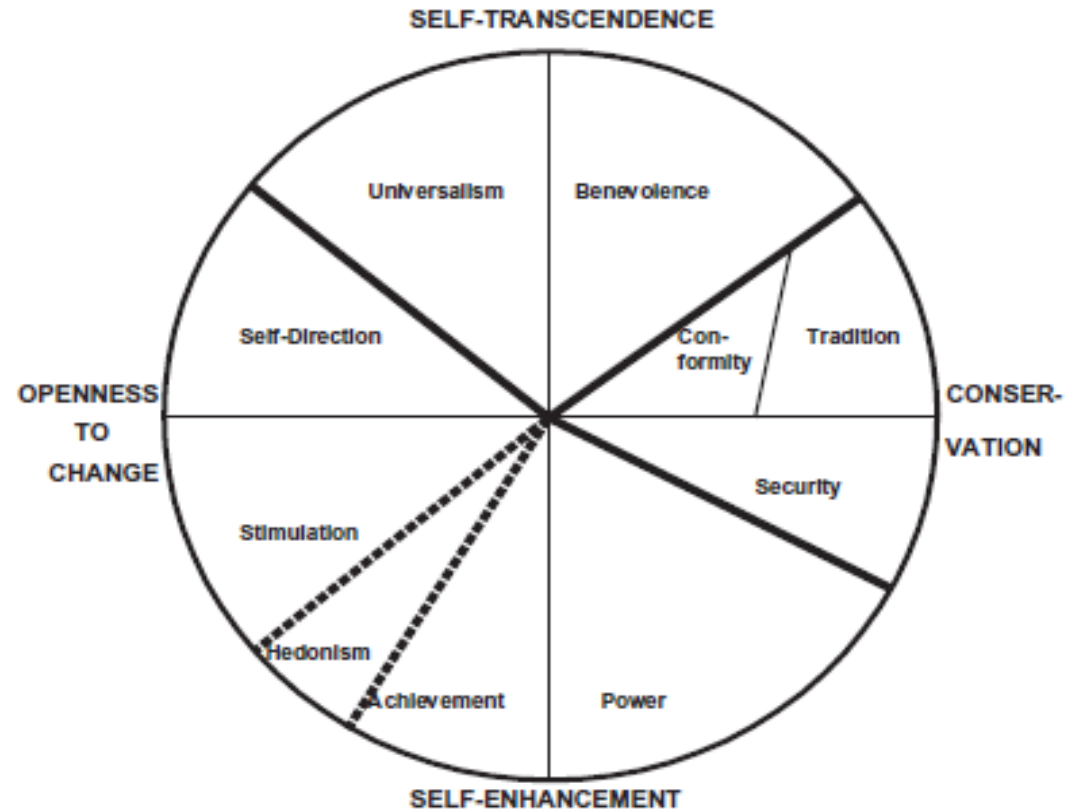
The Finnish Family Barometer sample comprised 3468 participants aged 20-44 years who reported reasons to postpone or renounce childbearing (Savaliéva, Jokela, & Rotkircht, 2022):

- My own or my family's financial situation prevents me
- My (or spouse's) work situation is uncertain
- Insufficient support from society
- My own or my spouse's unfinished studies
- The current apartment is too small
- It would be difficult to arrange childcare
- I would have to give up my current lifestyle
- I want to do the other things that interest me
- I don't like children
- I don't think I am suitable for parenting
- I don't want (any longer) to tie myself to small children
- I'm still too young, or I do not feel mature enough

UNCERTAIN LIFE SITUATION
(strongest factor)

LIFESTYLE PREFERENCES

Personal values and Parenthood



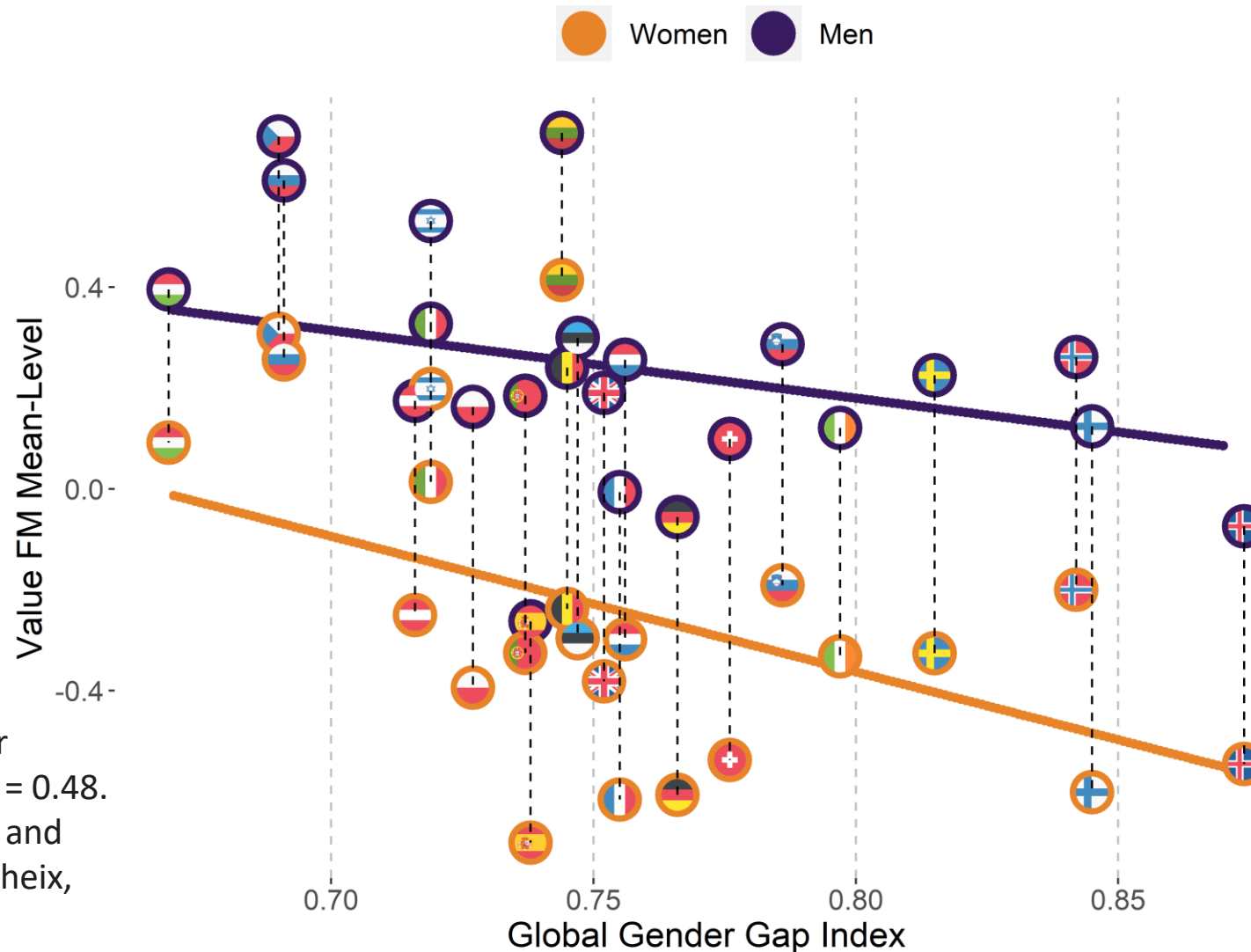
Schwartz' two dimensional model of values

Fig. 1. Schwartz's model of the relations between values. Note: From "Universals in the context and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries," by S. Schwartz, 1992, *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 25, p. 45. Copyright 1992 by Elsevier. Adapted with permission.

Finnish women who had children reported higher Conservation and Self-Transcendence compared to non-mothers.

Men who were fathers, as compared to non-fathers, scored higher on Self-Transcendence values (Lönngqvist, Leikas, & Verkasalo, 2017, ESS).

Does the Gender Gap in Values predict Parenthood?



ESS8. Average multivariate gender difference across countries was $D = 0.48$. Minimum was $D = 0.30$ (Hungary) and Maximum $D = 0.73$ (Finland) (Sortheix, Ilmarinen, et al. in progress)