

Fertility awareness among italian university students: a pilot study

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Introduction

Approximately 15–20% of couples experience infertility, influenced by age at first pregnancy, lifestyle and environment. Social freezing is increasingly relevant. This study evaluated fertility awareness and attitudes toward non-medical fertility preservation among 70 non-medical university students.

Methods

A population-based survey was conducted using the “Fertility Awareness Questionnaire” among students of all sexual orientations.

Conclusion

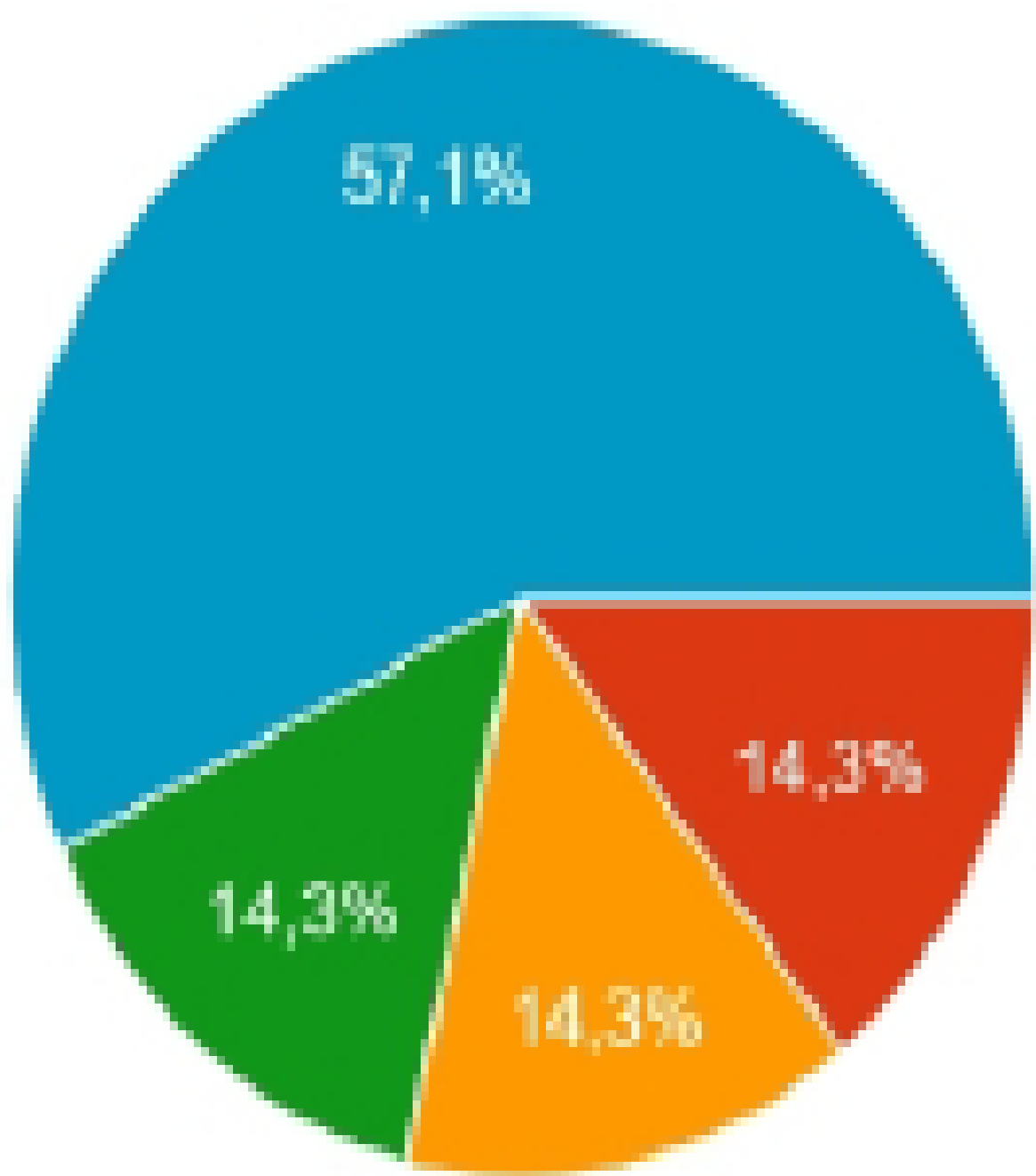
University students show limited awareness of age-related fertility decline and misconceptions about social freezing. Targeted education and public health strategies are needed to improve fertility awareness and support informed reproductive choices.

Results

Preliminary data show most respondents were female (75%), aged 18–22 (50%), nulliparous (87.5%), and in a relationship (62.5%). Awareness of social freezing was variable: 50% familiar, 25% partial knowledge, 25% unaware; main sources were social media (50%) and school/university (33.3%), with none from healthcare professionals. Self-perceived knowledge was low (75% ≤2/5). Most (87.5%) desired future children, with 75% planning their first pregnancy after 30; 62.5% considered pregnancy “too late” only after 45yo All believed social freezing guarantees future pregnancy. Among females, 57.1% would consider social freezing for non-medical reasons, 42.9% were uncertain; 75% rated it ethically acceptable (≥4/5). Financial cost was the main concern (100%), and 87.5% supported coverage by the National Health System.

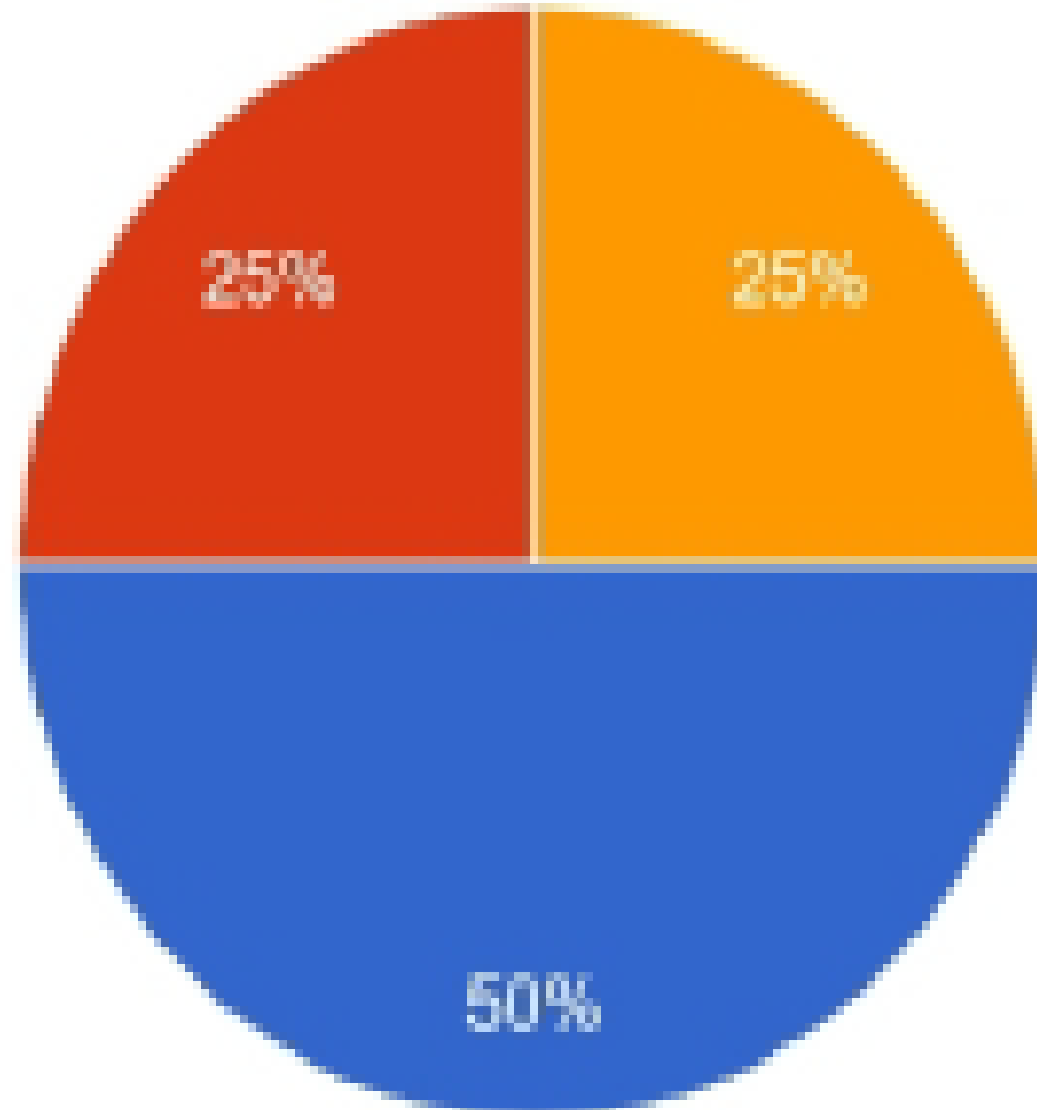
Which of the following reasons for social freezing do you agree with?

- To allow women to find the right partner
- To postpone pregnancy for career reasons
- To feel ready to become a mother
- To achieve financial stability
- None of the above
- All of the above



Have you ever heard about social freezing?

- Yes, I know what it is
- Yes, but I am not exactly sure what it is
- No, I have never heard about it



If yes, where did you hear about it?

- Family/friends
- Social media
- School/university
- Gynecologist/General practitioner

