

Impact Of Age And Gender On Optimism Amongst Residents Of Uae

Sana Nadeem Burney^{1*}, Areeba Aamir², Haaniya Ahmed³, Caye Francheska Carandang⁴

^{1*,2,3,4}Department of Psychology Bath Spa University Academic Centre, Ras Al Khaimah, UAE, ssaburney1234@gmail.com, areyounis@gmail.com, haaniyahmed24@gmail.com, franchiseskacarandang1@gmail.com

Citation : Sana Nadeem Burney et al, (2024), Impact Of Age And Gender On Optimism Amongst Residents Of Uae, *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 8129-8133

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i5.4315

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Optimism, a curse and a blessing. The quality of being full of hope and emphasising the good parts of a situation (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022). This study aimed to investigate the relation between gender and age on optimism. Does gender play a role in optimism or does age play a role? Whether both can play a role too. The aim of the report was to find what the impact of gender and age is on optimism and to analyse the data using Two-way ANOVA. This was achieved through a quantitative methodological approach where the data was collected by giving out a survey for participants to answer. Random Sampling was used to obtain the data. Males and Females (N=225) were randomly selected to answer the survey questions, their ages divided into 3 groups ranging from 15 to 35. The answers did not really have a rhythm and the results put into Two-way ANOVA analysis turned out to be insignificant for gender $F(1, 219 (\infty)) = 1.232, p < .05$ whereas age $F(2, 219 (\infty)) = 28.981, p < 0.5$ had a significant impact on optimism. Nor did gender and age together have an affect on optimism $F(2, 219 (\infty)) = 10.975, P < 0.05$.

Keywords: Gender, Age, Optimism, Two-way ANOVA, Linear Regression, UAE Residents.

Introduction

A hopeful perspective on the future is characterised by optimism. Optimists often see challenges as opportunities for improvement or minor setbacks. They have the certainty that "tomorrow will be better," even on the most difficult of days (Scott, 2022). Despite philosophical debates over the causes of optimism and its effects have existed for millennia, Scheier and Carver (1985) ground-breaking study on outcome expectations marked the beginning of the empirical research on optimism. The degree to which people have generally positive expectations for the future has been defined as optimism (Scheier and Carver, 2010).

The primary purpose of this investigation is to understand more about how age and gender affect optimism. To see if the age and gender of an individual influence how optimistic they are. To stimulate new research, this study will define optimism and raise new questions for future studies.

Research Question

What is the impact of age (3 groups) and gender (male/female) on optimism amongst UAE residents?

This research report attempts to find solutions to the mentioned question by applying the following objectives:

1. Define optimism.
2. Investigate how age and gender affect optimism.
3. Use Two-Way ANOVA to examine how gender and age affect optimism.
4. Use previous research publications that support our findings.

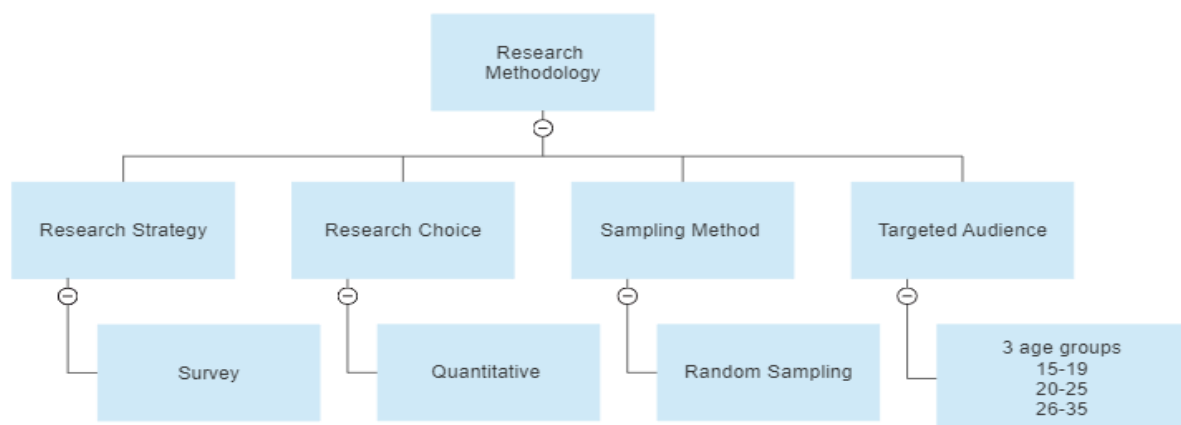
The study is primarily designed to provide information to aspiring researchers who are attempting to determine ways to keep people optimistic, and what aspects and circumstances cause someone to become more pessimistic. The initial investigations on optimism and physical health were carried out in 1985 by Scheier and Carver (PMC, 2019). Scheier and Carver (1987) suggested that optimism as a character trait, may be beneficial to health because of a greater interest in the mechanisms underlying behaviour self-regulation. In other words, people's actions are greatly influenced by their perceptions about the expected outcomes of their actions.

Numerous studies prove that while pessimism is linked to health concerns and an inappropriate personality, optimism is beneficial for one's physical and mental wellness (Alarcon, Bowling and Khazon, 2013; Carver, 2018). There have also been numerous studies on how optimism levels change throughout a person's life, and which gender is more optimistic. A previous study investigates the gender disparities in economic optimism. A study recognizing if CLP (Cleft lip and palate) causes distress and dispositional optimism among male or females, a survey was done on 142 nations and was identified that females of younger age are much more optimistic than men about their health issues even if they are highly in distress, but due to different coping strategies their pessimism lowers down (Gallagher, 2013). However, one of the previous studies spoke about the country's economic situation and observed if optimism affected gender. A Swedish survey data was done and discovered that males are more optimistic than females, even if males' predictions might be false, during severe economic crises both genders' optimism level vanished (Bjuggren, 2019).

Numerous studies have also examined the ways in which optimism evolves as people age. For instance, a 2013 study published in the Journal of Psychology and Aging, the researchers studied 11,131 Germans over the course of 11 years, including a range of ages. According to the findings, young adults gave their predicted life satisfaction a 7.27 rating, whilst middle-aged participants gave a 6.45 rating and seniors gave a 6.14 rating (Lang et al., 2013). A second study conducted for a 4-year time period on 9,790 senior citizens looked at age variations and long-term alterations in optimism; it showed that older age was linked to a worse level of general health. Proving that beyond the age of 70 with poor health were more pessimistic, due to the seriousness of their health issues they had no positivity and hopefulness left (Gray, 2020).

Methodology

Methodology is an important part in a research report as it helps the reader understand the papers validity and reliability. This part of the report will discuss the procedures and methods taken to conduct this study.



Source: Diagram Maker, Smart Draw

Hypotheses:

H0: There will be no significant impact of gender and age on optimism

H1: There will be a significant impact on gender and age on optimism

Sampling Methods and Targeted Audience

The target audience chosen for this research report were 3 groups with distinctive ages, 15-19, 20-25, 26-35, along with the gender's male and female. Exclusion criteria includes of participants with any psychological disorders and participant who do not reside in the UAE. Since every individual has an equal probability of responding to the questions, the random sample method was chosen (McCombes 2019). 225 Respondents in total answered the survey (N=225) amongst which were 125 female and 100 male participants.

Procedure of Data Collection

The survey was developed using Google Forms, quite a convenient form maker as it had a lot of options to use from. The questions were taken from a Revised Life Orientation Test (LOT-R) developed by Michael Scheier and colleagues (1994). The scale consisted of both optimistic and pessimistic questions, but only the optimistic questions were chosen to be added in the survey. There were 3 optimistic questions chosen in total.

The Questionnaire consisted of 5 questions in total, the types being:

- 1) Demographic Questions (ex. age and gender)
- 2) Linkert Scale Questions from strongly agree to strongly disagree

Results

Demographic Findings

Table 1. Frequency & Percentage of Gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	100	44.4
Female	125	55.6
Total	225	100.0

The sample consisted of approximately 225 respondents. 100 (44.4%) respondents are Males and 125 (55.6%) Females. (N= 225).

Table 2. Frequency & Percentage of Age.

Age Groups	Frequency	Percentage
15-19	87	38.7
20-25	69	30.7
26-35	69	30.7
Total	225	100.0

The top common age group responded was 15-19, n=87, (38.7%). While age groups 20-25, n=69, (30.7%) and age group 26-35, n=60, (30.7%) sit equally together as the second highest respondents. This indicates most of the respondents were teenagers and young adults.

Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Age

Table 3 Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Age

Age	M	SD
15-19	7.46	2.425
20-25	7.67	2.688
26-35	6.55	2.349
Total	7.24	2.519

Note: M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

The table above shows the mean score and the Standard Deviation for the 3 age groups. The highest measure of optimism established to be for 20-25 (M=7.67, SD=2.688). Second highest being, 15-19 (M=7.46, SD=2.425). The last and lowest level of optimism being 26-35 (M=6.55, SD=2.349). The lowest recorded Standard Deviation was found to be for the 3rd age group 26-35 (SD=2.359). A low SD indicates the data is reliable as it is clustered around the mean.

Two-way ANOVA

Table 4 Two-way ANOVA

	df.	Mean Square	F	Sig.	ηp^2	Observed Power
Gender	1	1.232	2.348	.655	.001	.073
Age groups	2	28.981	4.704	.010	.041	.784
Gender*Age	2	10.975	1.781	.171	.016	.370

Note: df.= degrees of freedom, F= F distribution, Sig= Significance Level, ηp^2 = Partial eta-square

Optimism scores were subjected to a two-way analysis of variance having two levels of Gender (male, female) and three levels of age groups (15-19, 20-25, 26-35). All effects were statistically significant at the .05 significance level. The main effect of levels of gender yielded an F ratio of $F(1, 219(\infty)) = 1.232$, $p < .05$, indicating that there was no significance between optimism and gender, due to the fact that the sig. value (.655) was greater than the p value (0.05). The main effect of levels of age yielded an F ratio $F(2, 219(\infty)) = 28.981$, $p < 0.5$, indicating that there was a significant impact of age on optimism as the sig. value (.010) is smaller than the p value (0.05). The main effect of levels of age and gender, both, yielded an F ratio $F(2, 219(\infty)) = 10.975$, $P < 0.05$. The sig. value (.171) being higher than the p value (0.05). Thus, the null Hypothesis for all was accepted. Gender showed no effect size as the partial eta-square was ($\eta^2 > .001$, 0.1%) which means that gender by itself accounted for only 7.3% of the overall variance as it indicated a small effect. Age showed effect size as the partial eta-square was ($\eta^2 > .041$, 4.1%) which means that age by itself accounted for 78.4% of the overall variance as it indicated a large effect. On the other hand, gender*age showed an effect size as the partial eta-square was ($\eta^2 > .016$, 16%) which means that age by itself accounted for only 37.0% of the overall variance, even though the Two-way ANOVA showed insignificant results. Guideline used for partial eta squared used was: $\eta^2 = 0.01$ indicates a small effect, $\eta^2 = 0.06$ indicates a medium effect, $\eta^2 = 0.14$ indicates a large effect.

Linear regression

Table 5

H1: There will be no significant impact of gender on optimism

H2: There will be no significant impact of age on optimism

Linear Regression						
Hypothesis	Regression Weights	Beta Coefficient	R ²	F	Sig	Hypothesis Supported
H1	Optimism—> Gender	0.62	0.00	0.34	.855	Yes
H2	Optimism —> Age	-.431	.020	4.595	.033	No

Note: .R²=R Squared, F= F distribution, Sig= Significance Level.

Hypothesis 1 tests the impact of gender on optimism. The dependent variable Optimism Scores were regressed on predicting variable Gender to test the hypothesis. Gender insignificantly predicted Optimism $F(1, 223) = 0.34$, $p < .855$, which indicates that gender plays an insignificant role in shaping Optimism ($b = 0.62$, $p < 0.05$). These results direct no effect of gender on optimism, moreover $R^2 = 0.00$ depicts the findings showcases 0% of the variance in Optimism. Hypothesis 2 tests the impact of age on optimism. The dependent variable Optimism Scores were regressed on predicting variable Age to test the hypothesis. Age significantly predicted Optimism $F(1, 223) = 4.595$, $p < .033$, which indicates that age plays a significant role in shaping Optimism ($b = -.431$, $p < 0.05$). These results direct the negative effect of age on optimism, moreover $R^2 = 0.20$ depicts the findings and showcases 20% of the variance in Optimism.

Discussion

The data obtained from the surveys were collected and analyzed, with a total of 225 participants, comprising both the genders male and female, where 100 participants were male making a percentage of 44.4% and females being 125 in total making 55.6%. However, these participants were distributed in three separate age groups 15-19 years, 20-25 years, and 26-35 years, from which 87 participants with a percentage of 38.7% made up the first age group (15-19 years), whereas the other two groups 20-25 and 26-35 years had the same number of participants 69 in total, both making a percentage of 30.7%. The highest mean score and standard deviation was for the age group 20-25 years with a mean score of 7.67 and standard deviation of 2.69. The least having a mean score of 6.55 and a standard deviation of 2.35 was the 26-35 years age group.

To identify if gender or age had an impact on optimism Two-way ANOVA was used, the results obtained reflected that gender had no significant impact on optimism, while age on the other hand showed a significant impact on optimism. A correlation between gender and age showed that there is no significant impact of gender*Age of optimism.

However, previous existing literature to identify if gender has an impact on optimism with a greater sample size have indicated that males tend to be more optimistic than females in a study conducted on Swedish population (Bjuggren and Elert, 2019). Another research survey was done on 142 nations and identified that females of younger age are much more optimistic than men (Gallagher, 2013).

Research was conducted to identify if age has an impact on optimism and it proved that from the age of 15 to 70 people grow more optimistic, but after exceeding the age of 70 they start to become less optimistic and more

pessimistic, this longitudinal study of 11 years was conducted on 11,131 Germans (Lang et al. 2013) and a study on senior citizens aged 70 to 104 also predicted the same results (Kotter-Gruhn and Smith, 2011; Dholakia, 2016). Another research done in 2017 identified that after the age of 30 people tend to be more optimistic with their lives, however, it was concluded that the young generation are less optimistic for ageing, but the optimistic level might change as they age (Agha, 2017).

Conclusion

The study of data from 225 individuals produced fascinating new insights about the relationship between optimism and gender and age. While optimism was shown to be unaffected by gender, age was found to be a key influence predicting optimistic attitudes. The age range 26–35 had the lowest mean optimism score, whereas the age group 20–25 possessed the greatest. A two-way ANOVA research that showed how optimism is influenced by age validated these findings. A review of previous studies provides more evidence that age has a significant influence on optimism levels. These studies usually imply that optimism rises to a certain age and then falls. Notably, patterns of optimism related to age have repeatedly been found in studies with large sample sizes that are longitudinal and include a wide range of demographics.

References

1. APA PsycNet. (n.d.). <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2013-03022-001>
2. Bjuggren, C. and Elert, N. (2019) Gender differences in optimism. *Applied Economics*, 51(47), 5160–5173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2019.1610714>
3. Bjuggren, C. M., & Elert, N. (2019). Gender differences in optimism. *Applied Economics*, 51(47), 5160–5173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2019.1610714>
4. Bjuggren, C. M., & Elert, N. (2019b). Gender differences in optimism. *Applied Economics*, 51(47), 5160–5173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2019.1610714>
5. Brooks, C. (2020, July). *Study shows humans are optimists for most of life*. Msutoday. <https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2020/study-shows-humans-are-optimists-for-most-of-life>
6. Dholakia, U. (2016, July 24). Do we become less optimistic as we grow older? Psychology
7. Gallagher, M. W., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.). (2019). *Positive Psychological Assessment: A Handbook of Models and Measures*. American Psychological Association. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1chrtd4>
8. Gallagher, M. W., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.). (2019). *Positive Psychological Assessment: A Handbook of Models and Measures*. American Psychological Association. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1chrtd4>
9. Kotter-Grühn, D., & Smith, J. (2011). When time is running out: Changes in positive future perception and their relationships to changes in well-being in old age. *Psychology and Aging*, 26(2), 381–387. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022223>
10. Lang, F. R., Weiss, D., Gerstorf, D., & Wagner, G. G. (2013). Forecasting life satisfaction across adulthood: Benefits of seeing a dark future? *Psychology and Aging*, 28(1), 249–261. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030797>
11. Lang, F. R., Weiss, D., Gerstorf, D., & Wagner, G. G. (n.d.). Forecasting life satisfaction across adulthood: Benefits of seeing a dark future? *Psychology and Aging*, 28(1), 249–261. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030797>
12. McCombes, S. (2023). Sampling Methods | Types, Techniques & Examples. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/>
13. O'Shea, R., & O'Shea, R. (2022, November 9). *The Gender Optimism Gap | Trajectory*. Trajectory | the Futures Partnership. <https://trajectorypartnership.com/the-gender-optimism-gap/>
14. Scheier, M. F., & Carver, C. S. (1992). Effects of optimism on psychological and physical well-being: Theoretical overview and empirical update. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 16(2), 201–228. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01173489>
15. Scheier, M. F., & Carver, C. S. (2018). Dispositional optimism and physical health: A long look back, a quick look forward. *American Psychologist*, 73(9), 1082–1094. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000384>
16. Scheier, M. F., Carver, C. S., & Bridges, M. W. (1994). Distinguishing optimism from neuroticism (and trait anxiety, self-mastery, and self-esteem): A reevaluation of the Life Orientation Test. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67(6), 1063–1078. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.6.1063>
17. Scott, E., PhD. (2022, November 14). *What is optimism?* Verywell Mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/the-benefits-of-optimism-3144811>
18. today. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-science-behindbehavior/201607/do-we-become-less-optimistic-we-grow-older>
19. *Yahoo is part of the Yahoo family of brands*. (n.d.). <https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/exact-age-become-pessimist-study-050434632.html>