

Examining Sex Differences in the Relationship between Subjective Age, Chronological Age, and  
Health and Psychosocial Outcomes in Young Adults Attending University

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## Summary

Past research explored the relationship between chronological age and subjective age: how old a person feels. In younger adults, older subjective age appeared to predict health and psychosocial outcomes. Results in terms of biological sex were mixed. The objective of the study was to expand the research base regarding the correlates of subjective age in both male and female university-aged adults

Objective 1 examined the relationship between chronological age and subjective age and predicted a positive relationship; Objective 2 examined the sex differences in subjective age and predicted females would report an older subjective age; Objective 3 examined whether subjective age differently predicted health and psychosocial outcomes while controlling for chronological age. It was expected that older subjective age would result in increased life satisfaction, positive affect, stress, and unhealthy behaviours.

Online survey data was analyzed from 125 participants aged 18-22 (105 female, 20 male), from first and second year classes at Brandon University. The online questionnaire intended to assess: biological sex, chronological age, subjective age, stress, positive and negative affect, life satisfaction, exercise, sleep, and heavy drinking.

The results indicated that chronological age and subjective age were significantly and positively correlated: as chronological age increased subjective age also increased. Contrary to expectations, the analysis found no significant effect of biological sex on subjective age.

Furthermore, there was no significant relationship between subjective age and the proposed outcomes. These results suggested that older subjective age did not significantly predict any of the proposed outcomes. However, the supplementary analysis found that feeling the same as

one's chronological age resulted in greater life satisfaction and lower stress, when compared to feeling different than one's chronological age.

The current findings suggested the contrast between same and different subjective age made significant predictions regarding health and psychosocial outcomes. Considering subjective age as same vs. different contributed to previous research regarding subjective age and the outcomes associated. In addition, the results pose further questions regarding what may predict subjective age.