AARP Disrupt Aging Research: Consumer Aging Confidence Study

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# Table of Contents

**Consumer Aging Confidence Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed Findings</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of Aging Across the Ages</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of Ageism Across the Ages</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations on Aging and Health</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aging Outlook</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AARP Research Team</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive Summary
Executive Summary

• Nearly half (47%) of those age 18-39 indicate they believe it’s “normal to be depressed when you are old.” In contrast, just 10% of respondents age 60 and up believe old age is a “depressing stage of life.”

• Those age 60 and older report higher levels of life satisfaction than their younger cohorts, and are more likely to feel ‘younger than I am’.
  – Sixty-seven percent of those 60 and older report they are satisfied or very satisfied with their life, compared to 61% for those 18-39 years of age and 60% for those age 40-59.
  – Fifty-seven percent of those 60 or older feel ‘younger than I am’ compared to just 27% of those age 18-39.

• At least half of all adults believe that older customers are not well served by a variety of industries. The top industries are: the fashion industry (68% believe ‘younger consumers are better served’), technology industry (62%), sports (58%) and entertainment (55%).
  – Consumers who are 60 or older believe this more strongly than their younger counterparts.
Executive Summary

• Raising the visibility of ageism matters.
  – Only about 40% think ageism against people who are older is a serious issue, and
  – Even less (26%) think ageism against people who are younger is a serious issue

• Expectations regarding aging as they relate to physical health, mental health and cognitive functioning do not differ by age.

• Opportunity exists to influence how people feel about aging. Two out of every five adults in America have a more negative outlook on aging, having the perception that society is driven by youth and as people age, they contribute less.
Detailed Findings:
Perceptions of Aging Across the Ages
People 60 and older report higher life satisfaction than their younger counterparts.
The older you are, the younger you feel.

Q215. Which of the following statements best characterizes how you feel?

I feel younger than I am

- 18-39: 27%
- 40-59: 42%
- 60+: 57%

Total percent agreeing with statement: 40%

Indicates significant difference vs. all other age groups: 8%
The younger you are, the more pessimistic your perception about aging.

Old age is a depressing time of life

It’s normal to be depressed when you are old

Q240. To what degree does the following statement describe your view: Old age is a depressing stage of life? Describes view perfectly/very well;

Q450: How do you feel about: It’s normal to be depressed when you are old? Somewhat/definitely true
Younger adults hold more negative views about mental, physical, and social domains of the aging process.

- I am slower mentally as I age: 26% 21% 14%
- I think it will be difficult to live in my own home as I age: 30% 22% 16%
- I have lower expectations of how healthy I can be as I age: 24% 26% 21%
- I have less energy as I age: 40% 39% 31%
- I find it harder and harder to get up and around as I age: 31% 25% 18%
- I’m less optimistic as I age: 32% 25% 17%
- I feel like I have fewer social connections / personal relationships as I age: 42% 30% 27%

Q310. Please indicate how each of the following statements describes you. Describes view perfectly/very well

Percent ‘Describes View Perfectly/Very Well’
Fashion, Technology, Sports, and Entertainment Industries are seen as primarily serving younger consumers better than older consumers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Younger consumers better</th>
<th>Consumers of all ages equally well</th>
<th>Older consumers better</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Industry</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Industry</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Industry</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment Industry</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Industry</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Industry</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Services Industry</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Industry</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Industry</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q400. For each of the following, please tell me if you think...
People 60 or older are significantly more likely to feel these four key industries serve younger consumers better.

The Industry Serves Younger Consumers Better

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>18-39 Year Old</th>
<th>40-59 Year Old</th>
<th>60+ Year Old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Industry</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Industry</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Industry</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment Industry</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q400. For each of the following, please tell me if you think...
Detailed Findings: Perceptions of Ageism Across the Ages
Raising the visibility of ageism as a serious issue is key.

Only about 2/5 think it is a serious issue, and 1/10 are discussing it.

Q525. For each of the following types of discrimination, how serious of an issue do you think this is for America?

- Racism: 58% “Serious issue”
- Sexism: 45%
- Ageism against people who are older: 39%
- Ageism against people who are younger: 26%

Q530: How often do you talk about this issue with other people?

- Only about 2/5 think it is a serious issue, and 1/10 are discussing it.
The opportunity to challenge the issue of ageism against people who are older exists within the younger age groups. They are significantly more likely to consider it a serious issue as well as significantly more likely to talk about it compared to those 60 or older.

Q525. For each of the following types of discrimination, how serious of an issue do you think this is for America?

Q530: How often do you talk about this issue with other people?

Indicates significant difference compared to those 60 or older
The opportunity to challenge the issue of ageism against people who are younger exists within the younger age group.

They are significantly more likely to consider it a serious issue as well as significantly more likely to talk about it compared to those 60 or older.

Q525. For each of the following types of discrimination, how serious of an issue do you think this is for America?

Q530: How often do you talk about this issue with other people?

Ageism against people who are younger

- **Ages 18-39**
  - Serious Issue: 33%
  - Talks About It: 16%

- **Ages 40-59**
  - Serious Issue: 23%
  - Talks About It: 7%

- **Ages 60+**
  - Serious Issue: 17%
  - Talks About It: 3%

Indicates significant difference compared to those 60 or older
Detailed Findings:
Expectations on Aging and Health
Younger age groups have similar expectations regarding aging as do the older age groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Physical Health Score</th>
<th>Mental Health Score</th>
<th>Cognitive Function Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-39 years old</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-59 years old</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+ years old</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Q450. How do you feel about...? True/False
- When people get older, they need to lower their expectations of how healthy they can be
- The human boy is like a car, when it gets old, it gets worn out
- Having more aches and pains is an accepted part of aging
- Every year that people age, their energy levels go down a little more
- I expect that as I get older I will spend less time with friends and family
- Being lonely is just something that happens when people get old
- Quality of life declines as people age
- It’s normal to be depressed when you are old
- I expect that as I get older I will become more forgetful
- It’s an accepted part of aging to have trouble remembering names
- Forgetfulness is a natural occurrence just from growing old
- It is impossible to escape the mental slowness that happens with aging
Detailed Findings:
Aging Outlook
While each individual has both positive and negative feelings about aging, almost four in ten have a more negative outlook than a positive one.

Outlook derived using regression modeling

| 62% More Positive | 38% More Negative |

A healthy personal outlook on aging and a perception that society supports people of all ages

Key attitudes held by those with a more positive outlook:
- Life has more possibilities as we age
- We have the freedom to choose to live how we want to live as we age
- We are more attractive as we age
- Friends are a bigger part of our life as we age
- We will have the healthcare coverage we need as we age
- We will know how to better cope with stress as we age
- We will have access to ways of learning new things as we age

A perception that society is driven by youth and as people age, they contribute less

Key attitudes held by those with a more negative outlook:
- Learning is harder as we age
- Older people are more set in their ways
- We are less optimistic as we age
- We have less energy as we age
- Older people have fewer social connections as they age
- It is difficult to live on our own as we age
- Older people rely mostly on Social Security and Medicare as they age
Appendix
# Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODE</th>
<th>Online Survey (offered in English and Spanish)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LENGTH</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATES</td>
<td>November 21 - December 15, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUDIENCE</td>
<td>n=2,601 U.S. Residents, ages 18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOGRAPHY</td>
<td>Nationally representative on key demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>including age, gender, region and ethnicity</td>
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Research Team
This research was designed and executed by 50+ Research:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>AARP Research, 50+ Research</th>
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