

Indirect Influence of Expectations of Aging on the Relationship between Age–Stereotypes and Sedentary Behaviour

K. Sargent–Cox, C. Donnelly, T.Vanags, C.Aitkin & K.J. Anstey.

Background

- Lifespan positive and preventive health behaviours = ageing well
- MVPA



→ Reduces health risks
→ Declines with age

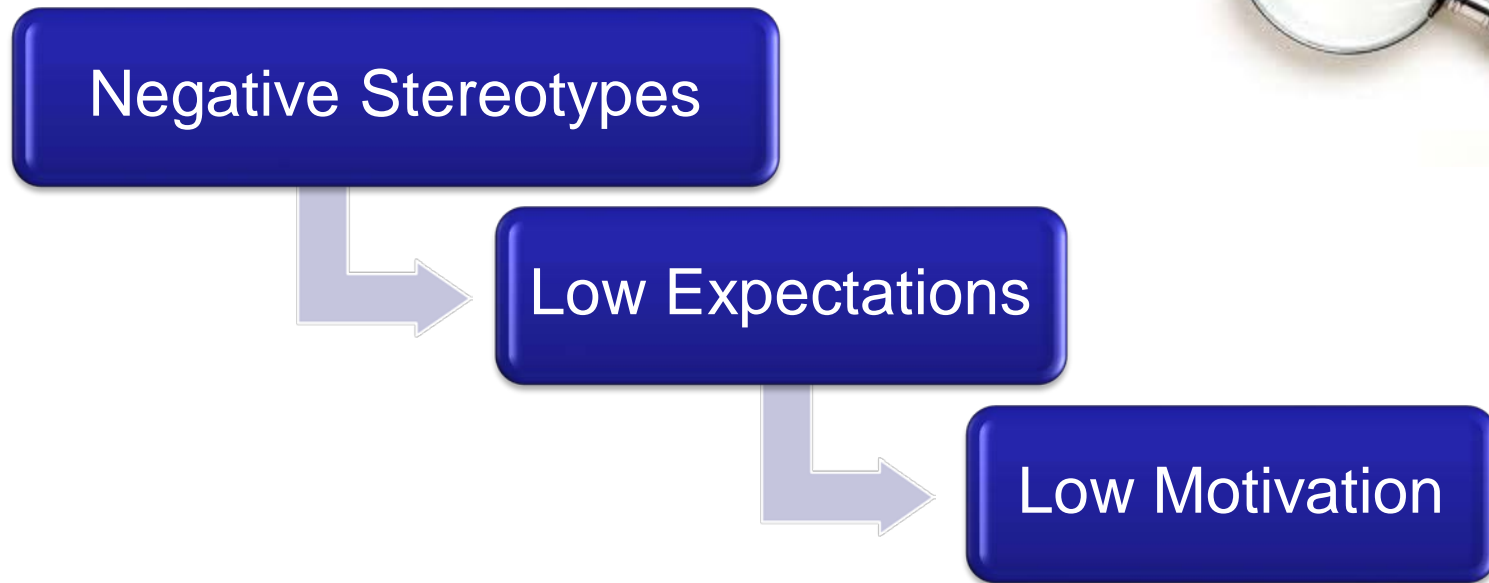
Background

- Social Cognitive Models of Health
 - Motivation and Adherence
- Attitudes – Assumptions – Beliefs
 - “age is related to inevitable physical and cognitive decline” (Golub & Langer, 2007)



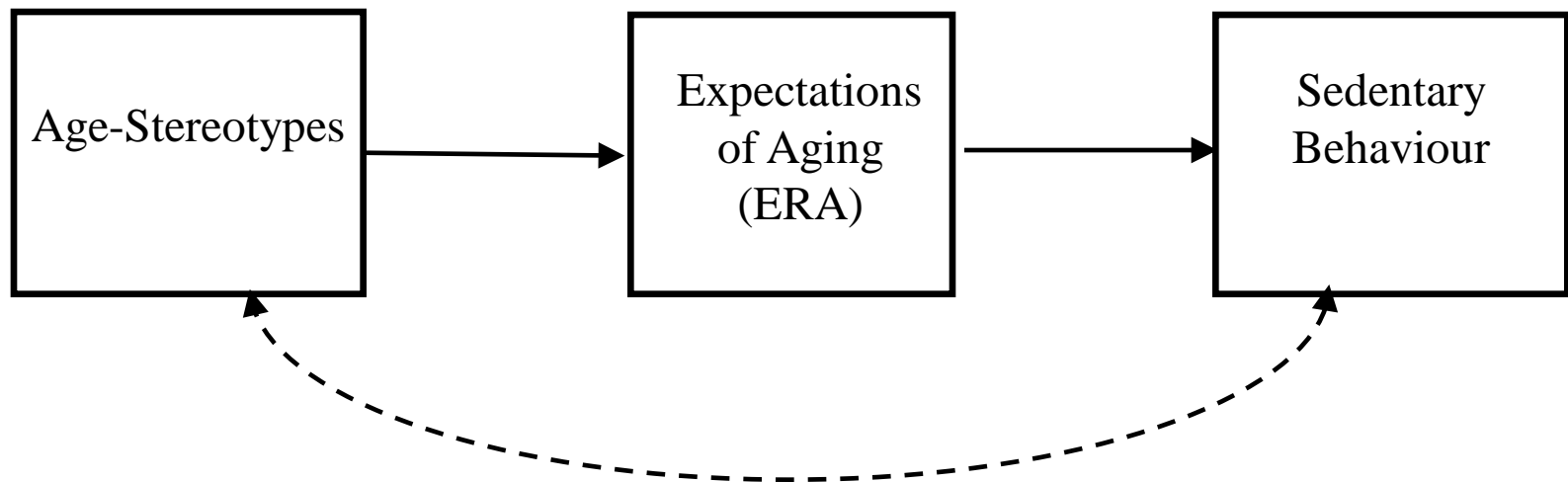
Background

- **Stereotype Embodiment Theory** (Levy, 2009)
 - Internalised age-stereotypes



Background

- Negative age–stereotypes asc with
 - cardiovascular events over 20 yrs (Levy et al, 2009)
 - Poorer functional health (Sargent–Cox et al, 2012)
- Lower expectations of ageing asc with
 - Reduced PA and healthcare seeking in older adults (Sarkisan 2002; 2005)



Background

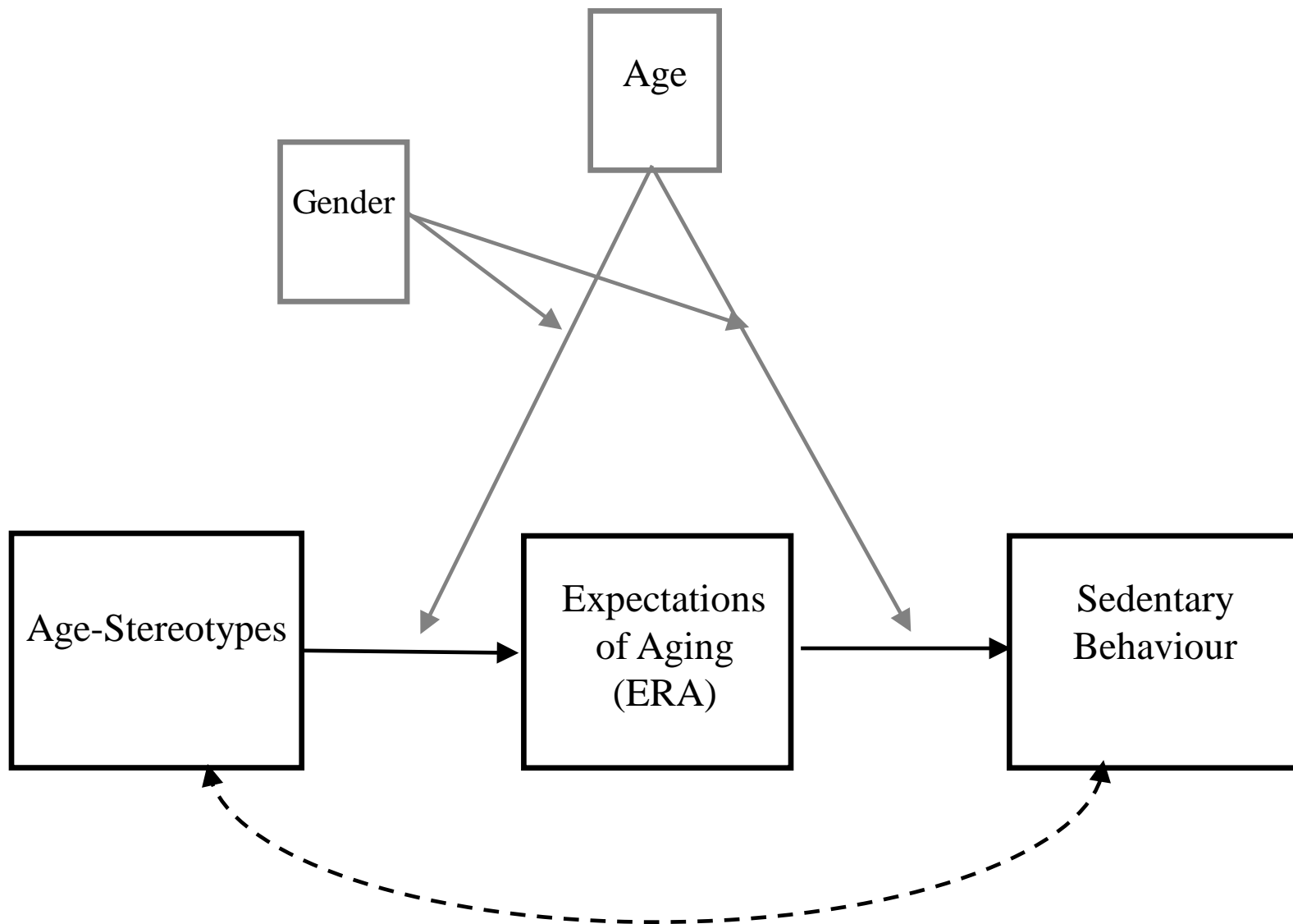
Age

- Most work to date – older adults 55+
- Lifespan Stereotype Embodiment
 - ↑ exposure to stereotypes = > internalisation
 - ∴ older = stronger r/ship between stereotypes and expectations

Background

Gender

- “Double Jeopardy” ageism for females
 - Potential for stronger effects of stereotypes on expectations for females



ACTWell Survey

- September 2011 – 3000 randomly selected invitations – Canberra region
- 783 returned questionnaires (26%)
 - 20–97 years (M=57.5, SD=13.89)
 - 57.2% male
 - Majority married (65.8%)
 - Full time (64.7%)
 - Highly educated sample (23.9% bachelor degree, 19.4% HD)



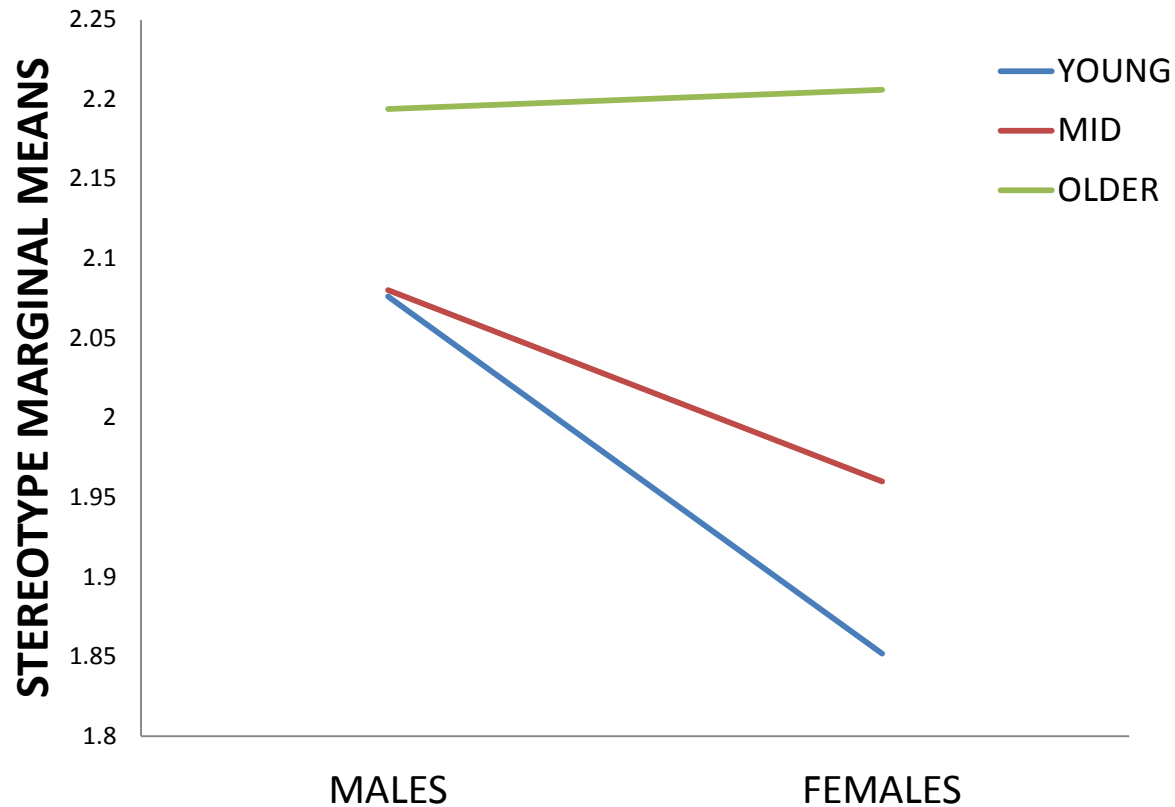
ACTwell Measures

- **Age–Stereotypes – Fabroni Scale of Ageism**
 - “Old people complain more than other people do”
 - 10 items – 4 pt– strongly disagree to strongly agree
- **Expectations Regarding Ageing (ERA)**
 - “I expect that as I get older I will become more forgetful”
 - 12 items – 4 pt – definitely true to definitely false
- **MVPA –**
 - 2 questions on amount / level PA in last 4 weeks
 - Calculated based on Australian PA guidelines (2012)
 - 0 – “met criteria for MVPA”; 1 – “sedentary”

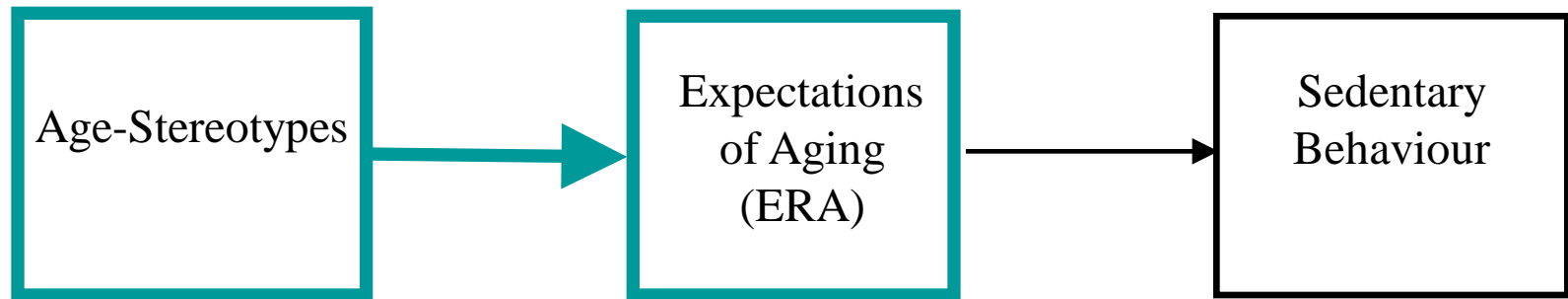
Sample Description

	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES	YOUNG 20-40	MID 41-60	OLDER 61 +
Stereotypes	2.09 (.43)*	2.13 (.40)	2.04 (.46)	1.97 (.45)	2.03 (.45)	2.20 (.41)
ERA	52.30 (16.07)	50.57 (16.51)	54.67* (15.17)	56.95* (16.21)	53.81 (14.54)	49.03 (17.10)
Sedentary	37.8%	36.8%	39.1%	41.8%	38.5%	35.6%

Descriptives – Stereotypes, Age & Gender

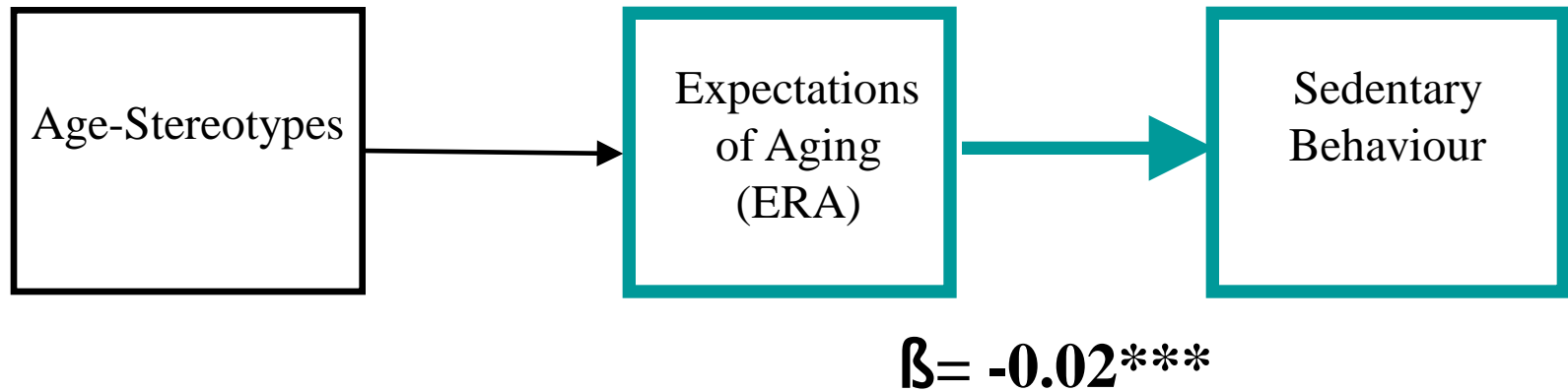


Results – Direct Effects

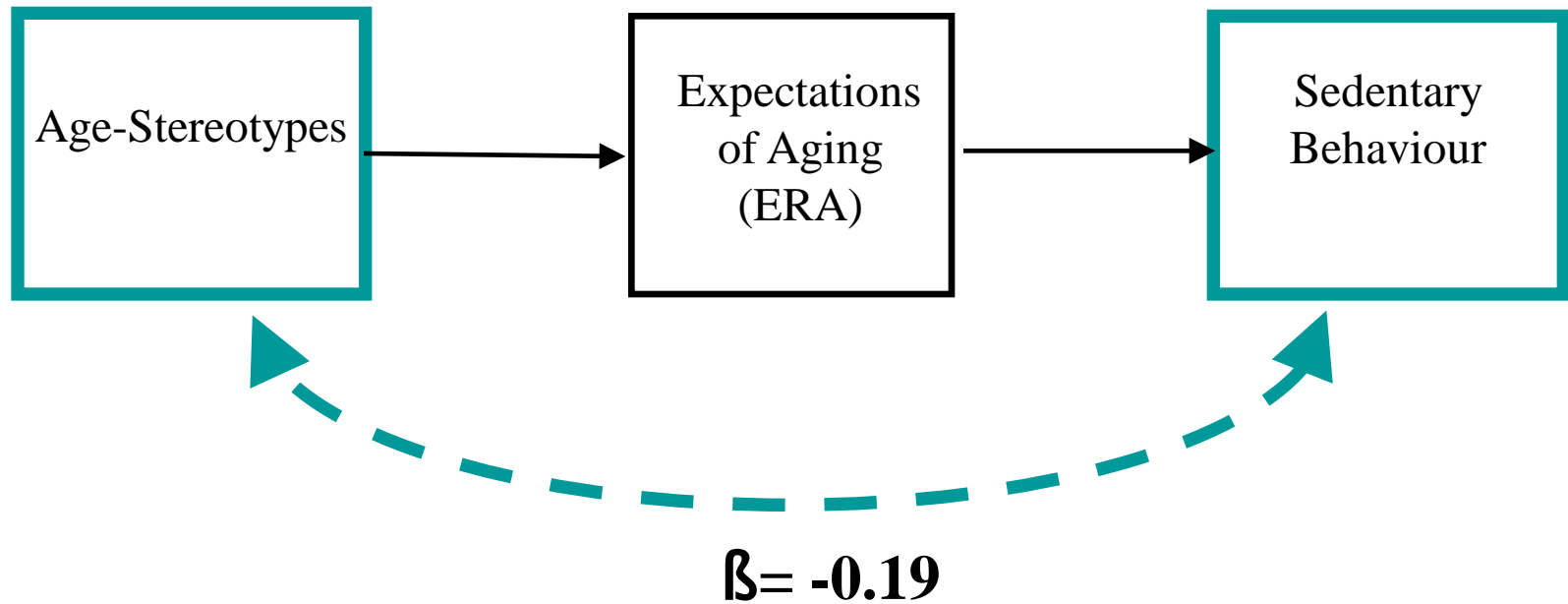


$$\beta = -16.27***$$

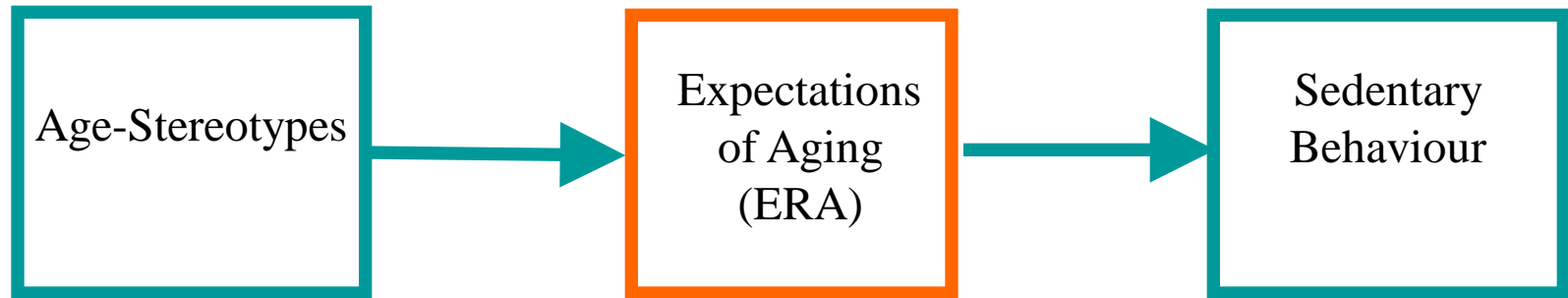
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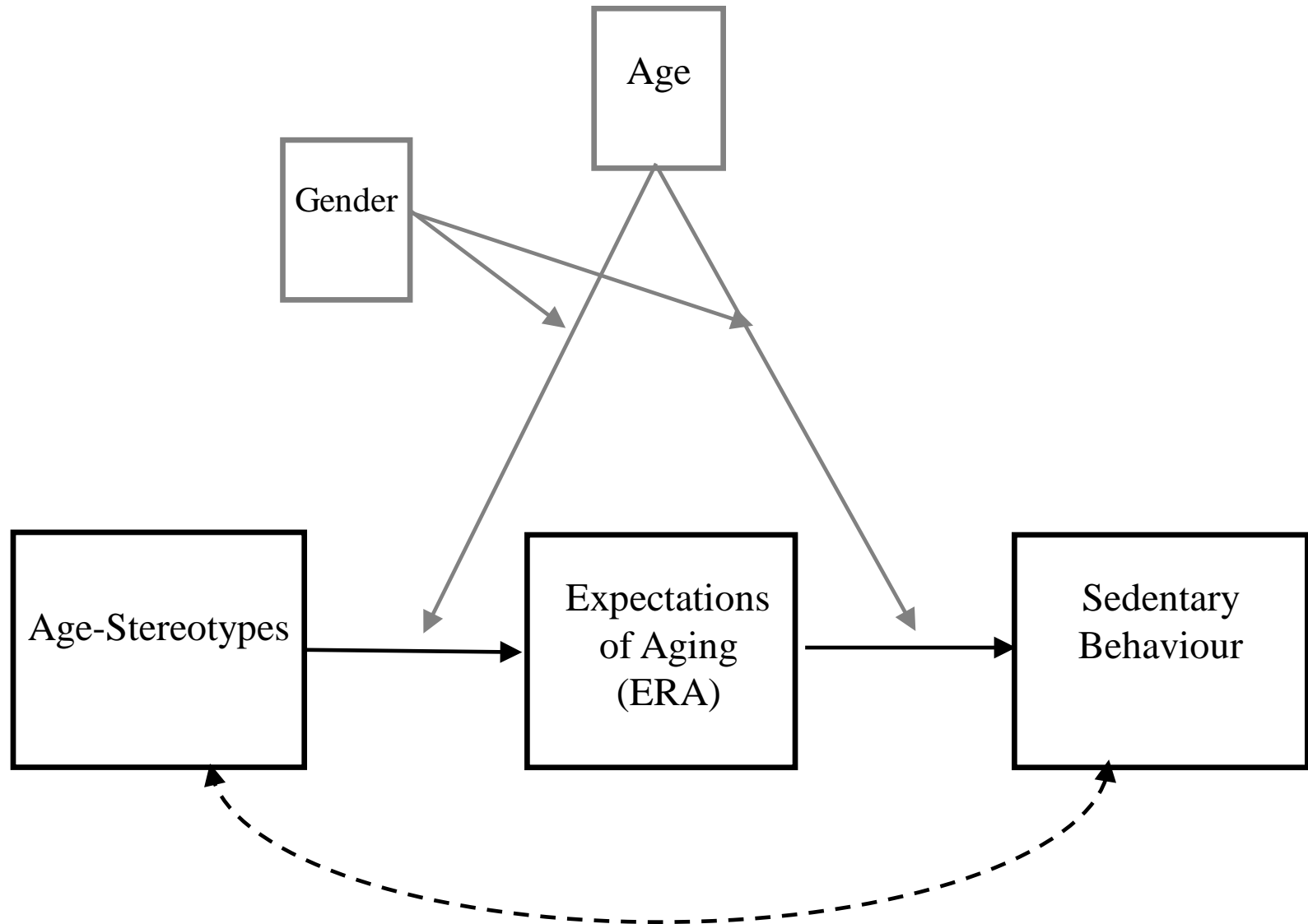
Results – Direct Effects



Results – Indirect Effects



$\beta = 0.35$ (95% CI = 0.16, 0.57)



Results - Moderation Effects

AGE	GENDER	β	95% CI
39 years	Male	0.44	0.11, 0.86
	Female	0.11	0.00, 0.28
43 years	Male	0.39	0.13, 0.70
	Female	0.19	0.06, 0.35
58 years	Male	0.33	0.11, 0.58
	Female	0.24	0.08, 0.43
67 years	Male	0.27	0.03, 0.57
	Female	0.26	0.02, 0.054
75 years	Male	0.22	-0.08, 0.61
	Female	0.26	-0.09, 0.68

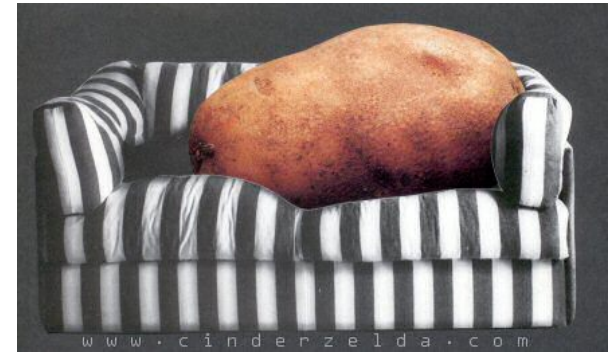


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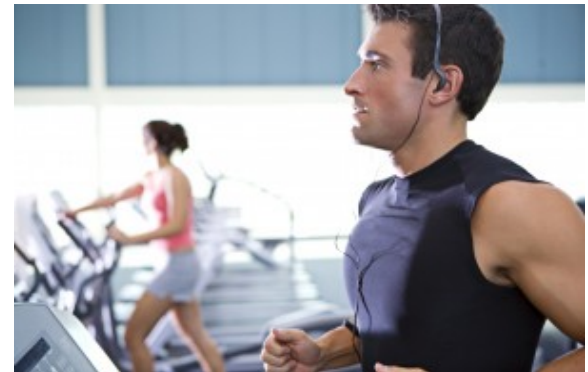
Discussion

- Significant indirect effect of stereotypes on sedentary behaviour thru ERA
 - More negative age-stereotypes associated with poorer expectations of ageing which is associated with greater likelihood of being sedentary



Discussion

- Significant indirect effect of stereotypes on sedentary behaviour thru ERA
 - Less negative age-stereotypes associated with higher expectations of ageing which is associated with greater likelihood of NOT being sedentary



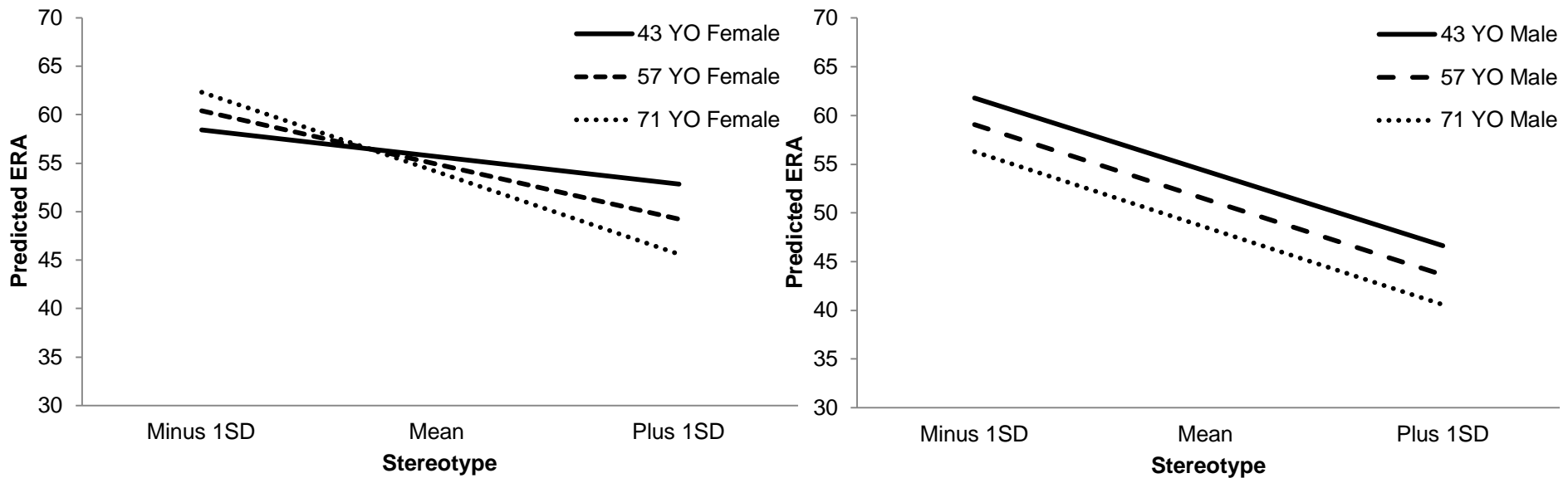
Discussion

- Moderated by age and gender
 - Males
 - With age – this indirect relationship gets weaker
 - Females
 - Weaker indirect relationship compared to males
 - In comparison to males r/ship appears to strengthen with age
 - Age
 - oldest adults – no indirect relationship

Discussion

- Gender effects – not as expected
 - Stronger relationships for males
 - Domain specific stereotypes?
 - “Physically Strong”
 - Males may succumb earlier to “feeling old”? – particularly if they have stronger age–stereotypes
 - Males show greater fear of aging across ages (Lasher & Faulkender, 1993) – Is this an important driver for preventive health behaviors?

Stereotype → ERA by Age and Gender



Implications

- Theoretical / Research
 - Consider age-expectations / attitudes along with age and gender – for > understanding of adherence and motivation to exercise / preventive behaviour engagement
- Public Health and Social Policy
 - Acknowledge and address influence of age-attitudes in health campaigns aimed at promoting health behaviours

Acknowledgements

- Prof Kaarin Anstey – Co-Investigator
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