

Correlates of Ageism among Older Persons in Rural Eastern Uganda: A Pilot Cross-Sectional Survey of the WHO Ageism Experiences Scale

Wandera, S.O.*, Kisaakye, P.*, Kawooya,S.*, Otim, J.*, Diaz, M.M.**, Nakasujja*, N., Li, X***., Murray, A.L, Thiyagarajan, J.A***, Mikton, C***.
*Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, E: swandera@gmail.com
**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Medicine, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA
*** World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

1. Introduction

- Globally, 8.5% of the population is aged 60 years and older, to 16.7% by 2050.
- In Uganda, adults aged 60 years and older account for about 5% of the 45 million.
- The WHO Ageism Experiences Scale (**WHO-Ageism-E15**) was developed to more effectively assess individuals’ experiences of ageism.
- However, the scale has not been piloted and tested in Uganda.

2.1 Data & Methods

- Study design:** Cross-sectional survey of 598 older adults (Pokala et al., 2025).
- Study Districts:** Busia and Namayingo
- Data collection:** 12 December 2023 – 30 Sep 2024
- Ethical approval:** TASO Research and Ethics Committee (**TASO-2022-179**) and the Uganda UNCST (**HS2693ES**).
- Ageism: WHO ageism scale (WHO-A-E15).** Measures self-directed ageism (A-S), Interpersonal ageism (A-IP) and Institutional Ageism (A-INS).
- Statistical analyses:** Descriptive characteristics & Ordinary Least Square (OLS) / multivariable linear regression models

2.2 Location of Uganda in Africa



Map of Uganda UG-02 World Atlas (2025)

3.1 Results: Descriptives

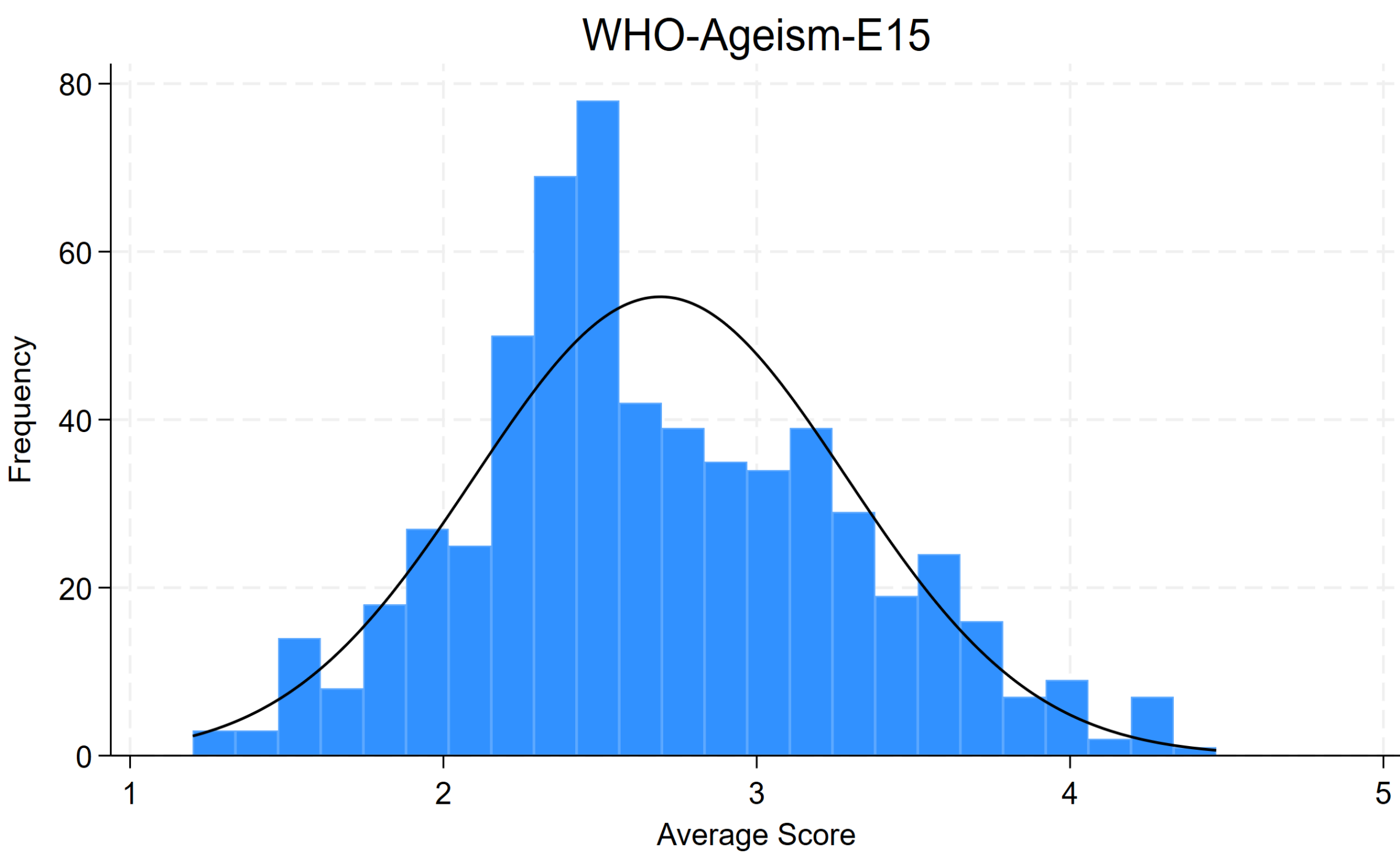
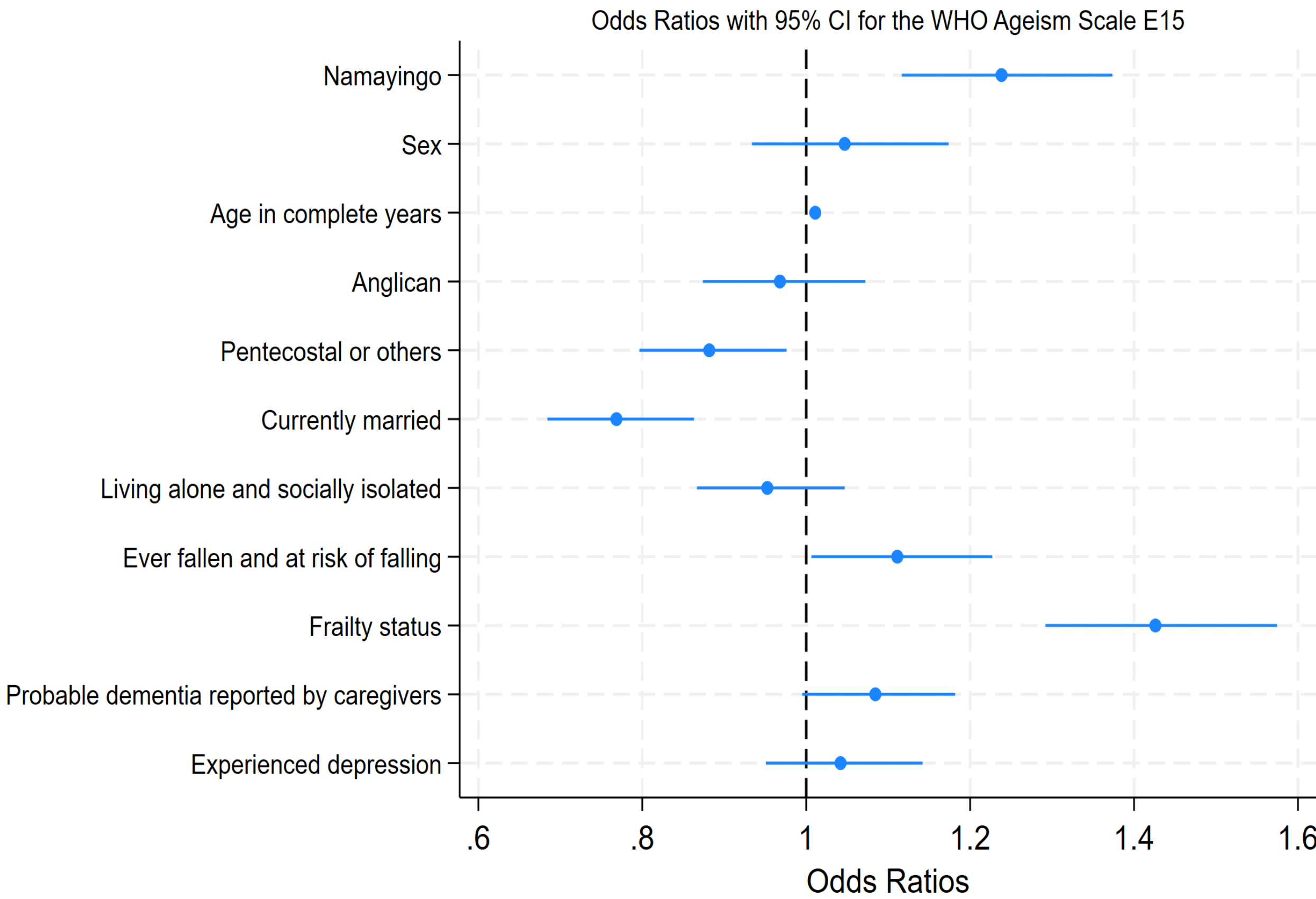


Fig.1 Ageism Scale (WHO-A-E15 Scores)

- Item 5**, which reflects to **self-directed ageism** (There are things I would like to do if I did not consider them inappropriate for my age group), **received the highest score**.
- Followed by **item 13 (Policies made by the government** (for instance, on housing, social security, health care) **do not meet the needs of the people my age**).
- Institutional ageism had a higher average score** followed by the interpersonal ageism.

3.2 Correlates of Ageism



- Older adults in Namayingo district, with higher ages, had ever fallen, were frail and had probable dementia had significantly higher ageism experiences.
- Older adults who were affiliated to Pentecostal religion, and were currently married, had lower ageism experiences

3.3 Conclusion

Older adults in Uganda reported experiencing moderate levels of ageism, with institutional ageism being the most prominent.

Reference

Pokala, S., Wandera, S. O., Kawooya, S., Victoria, A. E., Odo, L. W., Nakasujja, N., & Diaz, M. M. (2025b). Dementia knowledge and caregiver burden among carers of older adults in rural eastern Uganda. *Alzheimer's & Dementia*, 21(8), e70587. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/alz.70587>

Murray, A. L., & Li, X. (2025). Rapid review to inform the selection of a set of brief set of universal indicators for use in large-scale cross-national ageism research. *Aging & mental health*, 29(4), 669-678. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2025.2450265>

Acknowledgement

Funding from the Alzheimer’s Association (AARGD-NTF-22-975156), Study participants, Research Assistants and District officials