Harnessing the Wisdom of Experience: Age, Grit and Alchemy of Transforming Negative Emotions into Proactive Action

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The significance of positive feelings is the main emphasis of current emotion research; however, as organizational contexts have changed, discrete behaviors have also changed, which means the emotional foundation of behaviors is changing as well. Different emotions elicit different sorts of behavioral responses. Researchers are becoming increasingly interested in emotional control and interpersonal emotional management. Based on Socio emotional Selectivity Theory (SST) and Conservation of Resource (COR) theory this research study proposed that employee negative emotions of anger and fear predict proactive behaviors depending upon one's age and levels of grit.

Design/methodology/approach: A cross-sectional survey data of 668 employees shows that anger and fear relate positively with proactive employee behaviors.

Findings: Results show that aging employees have a greater tendency to behave proactively as compared to younger employees. Moreover, grit enhances the ability and motivation of an individual to behave proactively.

Originality/Value: This study is the first which discusses the importance of age and grit in controlling negative emotions. This study contributes theoretically which proves that anger and fear leads to proactive behaviors, by showing how age and grit play their role in converting negative emotions into positive behavioral reactions.

Introduction

Research on organizational behavior has promising potential of understanding and exploration of how emotions work in life and transform individual behavior and emotions (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000; Menges & Kilduff, 2015; Peng et al., 2018). Current research on emotions focuses on value

of positive emotions, however, discrete behaviors have evolved with the advent of changes in organizational environments, meaning emotional base of behaviors is also evolving. Human behaviors are a subset of felt emotions which impact individual's professional, personal, and social life (Andalibi & Buss, 2020; Stanley & Burrows, 2001). The more leaders are under pressure to meet deadlines and conform to the changing environments, proactive employee behavioral support is a blessing (Urbach & Fay, 2020). Different forms of emotions instigate varying kinds of behavioral reactions. Emotional regulation and interpersonal emotional regulations has gained extensive researcher interest (Haper, 2020). Negative emotions are considered toxic for their contagious impact (Chu, 2014). Excessive emotional controls and emotional exhaustion effect psychological well-being of employees (Ugwu et al., 2021). Anger, fear, and sadness are frequently experienced reactions to negative workplace events (Oh & Farh, 2017). However, recent research has challenged the conventional wisdom. Lebel (2017) proved that anger and fear lead towards proactive behaviors (PB). Individual specific, contextual negative feelings instigate retaliating, escaping or withdrawal behaviors from sources which trigger such feelings. (de Mesquita Silveira, 2023; Lazarus, 2006; Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001). So, research concentrating on how these emotions trigger varied behavioral responses may add value to theory development (Lindebaum & Jordan, 2012) as these discrete negative emotions may help individuals survive under critical circumstances (Ashkanasy et al. 2017). Emotional intelligence and employee performance has a strong relationship (Grobelny, 2021; Akanni et al., 2019). PB are valuable as personal initiatives of individuals to improve their current situations are beneficial for both individuals and organizations (Bakker et al., 2023; Fay & Frese, 2001; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Contemporary theories like equity theory, goal setting theory and expectancy theory present passive and contextual view of individual behaviors, however proactive approach to such behaviors still needs exploration and investigation. This research explores how negative emotions of anger and fear trigger proactivity among individuals based on personal characteristics like age and career ambitions i.e., grit.

Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST), contests that cognitive processing is affected by motivational shifts, as preference of positive over negative emotional experiences increases with age. This makes individuals to become selective in their social interactions, choosing only those which may end in positive emotional experience. Based on Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST), this study contests that as individuals age, they become increasingly selective in investment of emotions keeping in view meaningfulness of goals and activities performed (Carstensen, 2021; Carstensen, 2000; Carstensen, 1992).

Similarly, Conservation of Resource (COR) theory presented by Hobfoll in 1989, contests that stressed individuals often try to conserve their current resources and try to retain their energies for useful future investments. However, individuals need some motivational base to trigger the conservation behaviors. They try to protect their resources from being lost. For that they try to maintain "primacy of resource loss" or the invest personal resources to protect the existing resource e.g., the individual coping mechanisms to prevent future emotional losses. The prime motive is to protect some future desirable states. Different types of motivational goals derive human reactions and behaviors in life. These include knowledge acquisition, career progression, emotional regulation and goals for meaningful social associations paying off in future. Based on this, contribution of present research is to identify why employees working in high goal pressure environments convert negative emotions of anger and fear into PB depending on their age and grit.

Figure 1:
A proposed model of employee emotions and proactive behaviors
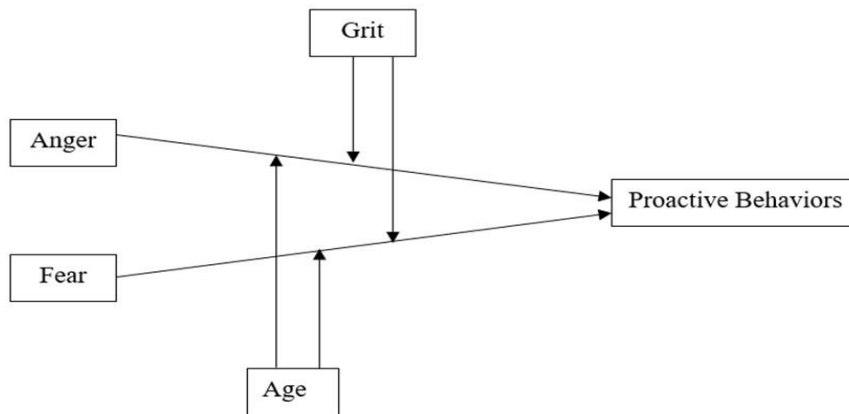
Proactive Behaviors (PB)

PB are self-motivated intent to control and alter current environments based on personal goal orientation. Focused efforts are exerted to seize opportunities, prevent problems and using innovative ideas to transform working environments (Fay & Frese, 2001; Frese *et al.*, 1996; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker *et al.*, 2010). These are conscious, steady behaviors to initiate contextual changes aligned with organizational mission (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Locke & Latham, 1994; Frese *et al.*, 1996). Proactivity is dependent upon three key attributes i.e., (i) futuristic outlook; (ii) individual intent to transform; and (iii) self-driven. PB may comprise of recommendations (Detert & Burris, 2007) of policies, procedures, and innovative practices (Frese & Fay, 2001).

Parker *et al.* (2010) presented a process-oriented model of employee PB, contesting that individual personality & life values, skills, knowledge, capabilities, and emotions along with contextual variables (like leadership quality, organizational climate, job characteristics and social processes) influence motivation and goal processes. It includes proactive motivational attitudes, proactive goal setting and strategies which may benefit organizations. Individuals with specific future-oriented goals shape their behaviors accordingly to realize future outcomes. This may involve changing oneself or changing one's context or others around. Similarly, emotion process model presented by Lebel (2017) contests that negative emotions of anger and fear may spark proactivity depending upon individual self-efficacy, support from leadership and co-workers, emotional regulation efforts, prosocial motivation, and one's personal identification with organization.

Dual systems model contests that, individual behaviors are dependent on controlled and automatic systems. Controlled systems involve conscious behavioral modelling based on logical decision-making efforts using cognitive resources. Automatic systems involve behavioral modelling without conscious emotional and cognitive efforts to transform behaviors (Evans, 2003). The interplay of these two systems, their role in instigating PB at and idiosyncratic aspect - 'why' - is still missing. Research has discussed several subjective and contextual contexts of proactivity including conscientiousness, desire to control (Parker *et al.*, 2010), openness to change life values (Schwartz, 2016), learning orientation (Parker & Collins, 2010; Tuckey *et al.*, 2002), future orientation (Aspinwall, 2005; Parker & Collins, 2010) anger and fear (Lebel, 2017) are common factors that incite PB. This study is focusing on anger and fears as antecedents of PB and observes role of age and grit as moderators.

Anger, Fear and Proactive Behavior

Anger is a felt emotion at workplace in response to varying kinds to negative workplace events (Peng *et al*., 2018). Whenever an individual feels that he is treated unjustly, there is a feeling of percieved or felt attack, perception of threat against achieving personal goals and anger is a common outcome (Stanley & Burrows, 2001). Other triggers may include social provocations, abuse (Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001) and being wrongly held responsible for someone else's mistakes (Peng *et al*., 2018). Sole purpose of demonstrating anger is to eliminate harm (Oh & Farh, 2017) through verbal, non-verbal and behavioral signals, which may effect interpersonal relationships at work (Coté, 2005). Researchers argue that action tendency in case of felt anger is to "fight", where individual retaliates and show anger to who ever is triggering such feelings (Peng *et al*., 2018). However, this may engage individuals in reputation maintenance and preservation behaviors (Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001). According to Fitness (2000) anger helps individuals to take preemptive corrective measures for perceived futuristic problems and engage in problem solving behaviors.

Consequently, fear is another commonly felt emotional response triggered by negative workplace events (Oh & Farh, 2017) which may provoke individuals to quit or escape from source (Peng *et al*., 2018). However, this may prompt voice behaviors, where individuals may be inclined towards suggesting innovative solutions for current problems hindering their performance (Liang *et al*., 2012). Action tendency in this case is to "flight" as they may try to control future situations to avoid future recurrence of such negative triggers (Peltokorpi, 2018). In the wake of it, individuals try to modify their behaviors to become more competent, develop reputation and struggle to improve their performance (Peng *et al*., 2018). So, fear initiates feeling of 'self-preparedness' among individuals (Izard & Ackerman, 2000).

Recent research has challenged conventional wisdom that negative emotions always generate negative behavioral reactions (Peng at al., 2018; Ashkanasy *et al*., 2017). Research conducted by Lebel (2017) presents an emotion process model, explaining that individual behaviors involve three phase appraisal process including (i) appraisal phase; a stimulus triggers thought process leading to perception development and meaningful translation of events; (ii) emotional experience phase; generation of feelings and emotion in response to perception developed; (iii) behavioral response phase; specific behavioral pathways in response to felt emotions. Certain ordinate, subordinate and situational factors moderate these processes. Similarly, other researchers advocate the fact that negative emotions may generate positive results like proactivity (Aftab & Waheed, 2022; Sloan & Geldenhuys, 2021; Parker *et al*., 2010) and higher levels of productive & creative capacity (To *et al*., 2015; To *et al*., 2012). As the COR theory presents that, individuals use coping mechanisms to conserve energies for achieving future goals, based on this, we hypothesize that anger and fear spark PB among individuals.

H$_1$: Anger is positively related with proactive behaviors
H$_2$: Fear is positively related with proactive behaviors

Age and Proactive Behaviors

Human capacity to emotionally respond to negative workplace events depends not only on contextual variables but also on subjective factors of personality, one's needs, and objectives in life (Smith & Kirby, 2000). As suggested by lifetime theorists, age influences the impacts of these factors (Baltes, 1997). Various life span theories of emotions suggest that individual emotional competencies may improve or remain stable as a person age (Isaacowitz, & Charles, 1999). However, due to complex emotional experiences a person may get well versed in voluntarily

regulating emotions with the passage of time (Carstensen *et al*., 2000; Lawton *et al*., 1992) and engage in everyday problem-solving activities (Watson & Blanchard-Fields, 1998).

Emotional appraisal and shift not only involves change in tone of emotions from negative to positive but also active response behaviors to passive, well thought out actions and serenity (Ross & Mirowsky, 2008). SST suggests that with progressing age, individuals appraise situations with a focus on antecedents rather than response (Carstensen *et al*., 1999). So, emotional regulation and endurance of negative emotions may help achieve personal goals in life or vice versa (Labouvie-Vief, 2003). Despite aging, subjective reactive capacity to negative events remains unrelieved (Kunzmann & Grühn, 2005). People in old age become mature and have better emotional regulatory mechanism, allowing them to reappraise negative situations in a positive manner better than younger individuals (Riediger & Bellingtier, 2022; Charles & Carstensen, 2007). Based on this, we hypothesize that with the advent of age, employees become more proactive.

H$_3$: Older employees who face frequent feelings of anger are more proactive than younger employees in organization.
H$_4$: Older employees who face frequent feelings of fear are more proactive than younger employees in organization.

Grit and Proactive Behaviors

Grit is a positive adaptive trait encompassing perseverance and passion for one's strategic goals in life, through effective utilization of their competence and without getting distracted from short term goals and impediments (Houston *et al*., 2021, Duckworth *et al*., 2007). Career ambitions are an important personality factor that impact education and career advancements later in life (Jones *et al*., 2017). In a meta-analytic study conducted by Credé *et al*., (2017) it is suggested that grit is an intra-personal psychological strength factor, which is positively related with individual self-control, emotional stability, and self-efficacy along with many other subjective factors. Researcher contests that grit is based on two lower order constructs of consistency and perseverance. Gritty individuals do not take influence from negative workplace events, rather they focus on influencing their surroundings through perseverance and consistency (Jones *et al*., 2017). Another meta-analytic study conducted by Fuller and Marler (2009) contests that gritty people formulate goals and solve problems with perseverance to ensure achievement of desired goals in life.

A similar concept of Personal Growth Initiative (PGI) comprising self-focused intent to change, and development was presented by Robitschek (1998). People who demonstrated high levels of PGI were better able to cope with pressures of life (Blackie *et al*., 2015). Similarly, research conducted by Lucas *et al*., (2015) concluded that individuals with higher levels of grit don't give up easily and may willingly suffer financial losses in persistence to avoid failures in future. Olckers and Koekemoer (2021) also advocate this fact and suggest that strong feelings of grit are related to positive outcomes leading to career success and performance. They argue that grit highly correlates with shaping workplace behaviors. Similarly, Baruch (2004) argues that individual with higher levels of grit take responsibility of shaping their careers and modify their behaviors accordingly. However, research is still inconclusive as some researchers like Houston *et al*., (2021) contest that high levels of grit may lead to deleterious outcomes. So, more research is required to explore psychological mechanisms involved in how grit can help mitigate effects of negative emotions on workplace (Motro *et al*., 2021). Based on above discussion we hypothesize that grit moderates the relationship between negative emotions and PB among individuals.

H$_5$: Grit moderates the direct relationship of anger and proactive behaviors such that the relationship becomes stronger with higher levels of grit.

H$_6$: Grit moderates the direct relationship of fear and proactive behaviors such that the relationship becomes stronger with higher levels of grit.

Methods

This is an explanatory, cross-sectional, causal study, examining relationships with a positivist research philosophy. Deductive research approach is used based on which phenomenon is anticipated and hypotheses are developed, and theory is tested thereafter. The study is conducted in a non-contrived setting using survey method.

Sampling and Procedure

The data were collected from 668 including middle and lower level management employees including males and females, from manufacturing sector in Pakistan. The manufacturing sector in Pakistan contributes the most to the economy, accounting for 13% of GDP growth, according to the Economic Survey 2018–19. Large-scale manufacturing (LSM) and small-scale manufacturing (SSM) are the two subsectors that make up the manufacturing sector[1]. Purposive sampling method is used for selection of a homogenous sample. Questionnaire was administered personally, through email and mail. Non-respondents were contacted through three gentle reminders with a gap of one week each, after which they were not contacted. To ensure confidentiality of responses, empty envelopes were provided to respondents submitting responses through mail and personal administration. Response rate is 66.8%. Final sample consisted of 39.9% females and 60.1% males working at middle (43.4%) and lower-level management (56.6%). Majority of respondents were 36 years to 40 years of age.

Measures

Negative emotions of anger and fear were measured using scale developed by Watson *et al*., (1988). Sample items included "how often do you feel – Distressed". PB of employees were measured using scale developed by Seibert (1999). Items included "Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change and during the past few weeks, he/she attacked problems actively". Grit was measured using scale developed by Datu (2017) with sample items like "I am able to cope with the changing circumstances in life". 5-point Likert scale is used where 1 means *strongly disagree* and 5 means *strongly agree*.

Data Analysis

For hypothesized relationships in the proposed model this study has used structural equation modelling (SEM) (Hair *et al*., 2019; Sarstedt *et al*., 2019). Data analysis is performed using Smart PLS, keeping in view the preliminary conditions as suggested by Hair *et al*. (2019). Confirmatory Composite Analysis (CCA) is performed to assess reliability and validity of measurement model. For testing hypothesized relationships structural model assessment is performed.

Results

Confirmatory Composite Analysis (CCA)

Table 1 below shows indicator loadings for independent and dependent variables. Results shown in the table depict that all indicator loadings are well above threshold level of .5 (Hair *et al*., 2016).

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[1] http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_19/3-Manufacturing.pdf

The values of indicator loadings range from .537 to .936 for anger scale. For fear, indicator loading values range from .593 to .984. For PB values of indicator loadings range from .527 to .816.
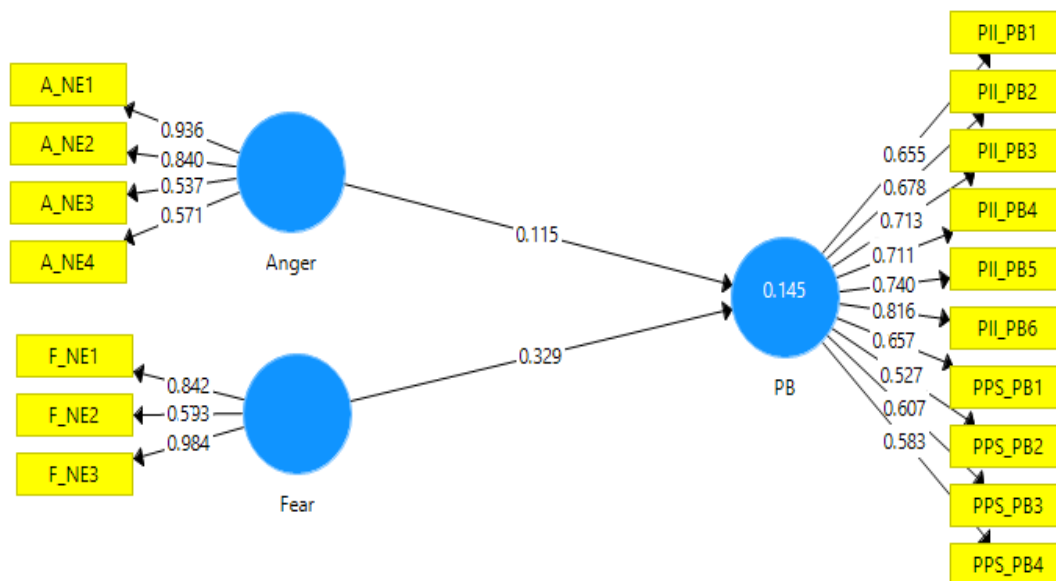
Table I

Indicator Loadings

Scales	Anger	Fear	PB
A_NE1	.936		
A_NE2	.840		
A_NE3	.537		
A_NE4	.571		
F_NE1		.842	
F_NE2		.593	
F_NE3		.984	
PB1			.655
PB2			.678
PB3			.713
PB4			.711
PB5			.740
PB6			.816
PB7			.657
PB8			.527
PB9			.607
PB10			.583

n=668, A_NE = Anger as negative emotion, F_NE= Fear as negative emotion, PB = Proactive Behaviors

Figure 2 below shows measurement model along with path coefficients and directional relationships.
Figure 2

Measurement model

To measure internal consistency of scales, Chronbach's alpha, rho_A and composite reliability is measured. Results in Table 2 below show that all measures are within acceptable ranges. Values of CA range from .724 to .838, for rho_A values range from .674 to .870. The value of CR ranges from .789 to .867, depicting that internal consistency of scales is established.

Table II
Internal Consistency Measures and Convergent Validity

Variables	CA	rho_A	CR	AVE
A_NE	.792	.779	.822	.749
F_NE	.724	.674	.789	.690
PB	.838	.870	.867	.713

n =668, A_NE = Anger as negative emotion, F_NE= Fear as negative emotion, PB = Proactive Behaviors

Average Value Extracted (AVE) values range from .690 to .749. Convergent validity of scales used is established as all values are well above threshold level of .5 (Hair *et al*., 2020). To establish discriminant validity Fornell Larcker and HTMT criterions are used. Table 3 below shows that all the diagonal values in Fornell Larcker Criterion are higher than the non-diagonal values. Moreover, all the values in HTMT are below the threshold level of .9. This determines the discriminant validity of the scales used (Henseler *et al*., 2015).

Table III
Discriminant Validity

Variables	Fornell Larcker Criterion			Hetro-Trait Mono-Trait Criterion		
	Anger	**Fear**	**PB**	**Anger**	**Fear**	**PB**
Anger	**.741**					
Fear	.322	**.625**			.600	
PB	.221	.366	**.642**		.244	.250

n =668, A_NE = Anger as negative emotion, F_NE= Fear as negative emotion, PB = Proactive Behaviors

Structural Model Assessment

For path analysis, structural model assessment is performed. Figure 3 below shows structural model. Bootstrap procedure with 5000 bootstrap samples is performed. No multicollinearity is found among variables as all VIF values are below 5.

Figure 3
Structural Model
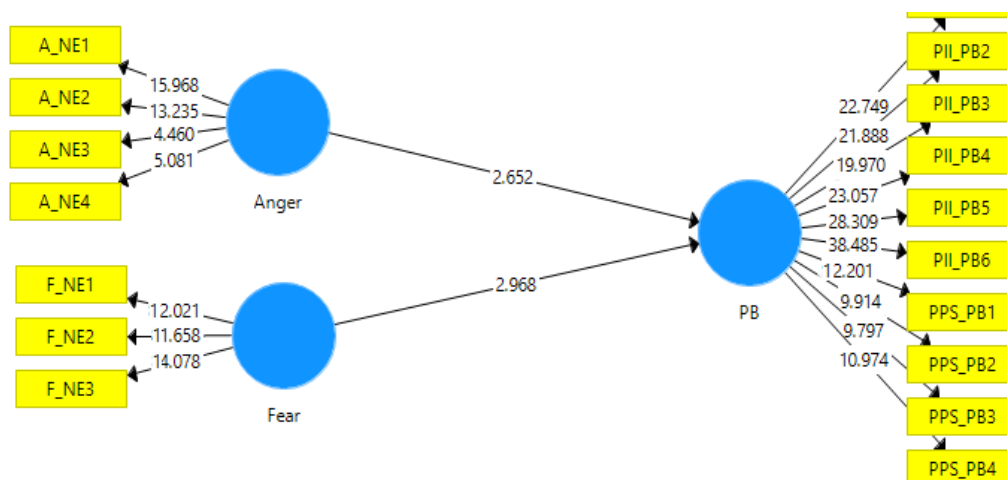
Results of structural path model are presented in Table 4 below. Direct relationship of anger with PB is significantly positive (β = .215, t = 2.652, p = .008). Similarly, direct relationship of fear and PB is significantly positive (β = .329, t = 2.968, p = .003). Bias corrected CI values show that hypothesized paths are stable as value does not contain zero in between. Results support hypothesized direct positive relationships of anger and fear with PB.

Table IV

Structural Model Path Analysis

Direct relationships	β	t	p	Bias Corrected CI		Decision (p<0.05)	Hypotheses	
				2.50%	97.50%		No.	Status
A_NE -> PB	.215	2.652	.008	.021	.184	Significant	1	Accepted
F_NE -> PB	.329	2.968	.003	.243	.412	Significant	2	Accepted

n =668, A_NE = Anger as negative emotion, F_NE= Fear as negative emotion, PB = Proactive Behaviors

Moderation

To assess moderation effects of grit on direct relationships of anger and fear with PB, bootstrapping with 5000 bootstrap samples is performed. Results in table 6 below a significant moderation impact of grit on direct relationship of anger and PB (β = .269, t = 4.041, p = .000). Similarly, moderation impact of grit on direct relationship of fear and PB is also significant, but comparatively weaker as compared to effect on direct path of A_NE*Grit -> PB (β = .165, t = 4.172, p = .022).

For A_NE*Grit -> PB, effect size f^2 is 0.061 which shows that a 1% change in grit may bring a 6.1% increase in proactive employee behaviors. Likewise, for F_NE*Grit -> PB, effect size f^2 is .043, meaning that a 1% change in grit will bring 4.3% change in employee proactivity. Bias corrected bootstrap values are also significant. So, results show that hypothesized moderation impacts of grit are significant.

Table V

Moderation Analysis

Indirect Relationships	β	T	f^2	p	Bias Corrected CI		Decision (p<0.05)	Hypotheses	
					2.50%	97.50%		No.	Status
A_NE*Grit -> PB	.269	4.041	.061	.000	.088	.249	Significant	5	Accepted
F_NE*Grit -> PB	.165	4.172	.043	.022	.032	.170	Significant	6	Accepted

n =668, A_NE = Anger as negative emotion, F_NE= Fear as negative emotion, PB = Proactive Behaviors

Blindfolding

To assess predictive ability of model, blindfolding procedure is performed (Geisser, 1974). Construct cross-validity redundancy is shown in Table 6 below. Value of Q² is .136, showing a medium level of model predictability for hypothesized relationships (Hair *et al*., 2020).

Table VI

Construct Cross-Validity Redundancy

Relationships	SSO	SSE	Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)
A_NE	2860	2860	
Anger*Grit	668	668	
F_NE	2145	2145	
Fear*Grit	668	668	
Grit	4290	4290	
PB	7150	6177.739	.136

n=668, A_NE = Anger as negative emotion, F_NE= Fear as negative emotion, PB = Proactive Behaviors

Role of Age in Predicting PB

To determine the role of age in predicting PB among organizational members Kruskal-Wallis test, a non-parametric test, is used. Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality showed that data is not normally distributed, so, ANOVA cannot be used in this case. Based on assumptions of this test there are no outliers in the data and homogeneity of variance is ensured. Results in Table 7 show age-based comparison of responses in predicting proactivity.

Table VII
Kruskal-Wallis Test for Age-Based Comparison of Proactivity

Scale / Sub-scale	20 – 25 $n = 45$	26 – 30 $n = 133$	31 – 35 $n = 238$	36 – 40 $n = 123$	41 & above $n = 176$	p - value
A_NA	487.20	421.00	404.56	354.75	312.26	.004
F_NA	457.94	407.03	372.81	342.02	240.34	.001
PB	**261.64**	**315.83**	**363.54**	**433.12**	**470.06**	**.000**

n = 668

Results reveal that there is statistically significant difference in responses based on age for variables of anger ($p = .004$), fear ($p = .001$), and PB ($p = .000$). So, for these variables, we reject null hypothesis of equal distributions. This means that age has a significant impact on emergence of negative emotions and their resultant use of PB. For anger, it can be observed that people of 20-25 years' experience more anger ($M = 487.20$) as compared to later groups. Whereas people of 41 years and above are more in control of anger ($M = 312.26$) as compared with earlier age groups of people. Similarly, for feelings of fear among different age groups, for people belonging to age group of 20-25 years feel more fearful, as they are new in professional life and may be afraid of losing their jobs at earlier stages of their career. Whereas people of 41 years and above feel less fearful as compared to earlier groups of people ($M = 240.34$), as they are more in control of their emotions and make careful choice of emotional reactions to organizational situations.

Consequently, the role of age in predicting proactivity in different phases of life is also evident from the results shown in Table 8 above. Results show that choice of behaving proactively increases with the increase in age of an individual ($p = .000$). For the people in the age group of 20-25 years are less proactive ($M = 261.64$), employees in age group of 26-30 years are more proactive as compared to previous age group ($M = 315.83$). Similarly, the consequent age groups

are more proactive as compared to the previous ones ($M = 363.54$, $M = 433.12$, and 470.06 respectively). High levels of proactivity is reported in most aged group of people considered in this study i.e., 40 years and above. These results conform with previous research that people get more in control of their emotional resources in older ages and know how to react to environmental triggers based on prospective benefits attached.

Discussion

Results show that anger and fear lead towards 'fight or flight' behaviors promoting proactivity among employees (hypotheses 1 & 2). As employees age they become selective in behavioral responses in case of felt anger and fear (hypotheses 3 & 4). Subjective levels of grit and passion for career development plays strong role in positive employee behavioral transformation in response to felt negative emotions (hypotheses 5 & 6). Hence, results support hypothesized relationships of this study.

Although emotions research has extensive literature available, still distinction between favourable, unfavourable, normal and abnormal emotions is vague. Subjective assessments of emotions and their responses makes it difficult to generalize findings of research in different professions, among different individuals and across different cultures. Employees with advent of age along with certain motivational drivers engage in varying behavioral modifications depending upon personal choice of specific motivational driver and phase of life one belongs to (Carstensen, 1992). As employees face continual environmental challenges to cope up with business demands, vulnerability to face anger and fear to lose becomes stronger. However, employee age plays an important role in selective behavioral modification and adaptation of PB (Vogt *et al*., 2021). Self-focused PB is an outcome of individual's career aspirations (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Seibert, 1999). Employees who choose proactivity over reactivity are valuable for organization in longer term scenarios, they will focus more on improving their performance and problem solving instead of wasting their emotional resources in reacting to triggers of anger and fear (Urbach & Fay, 2021). Studies like Lebel (2017) have proved that feelings of anger and fear incite proactivity and demanded researchers to look for motivational factors and reasons that provoke individuals to become proactive.

This research study proved that grit and age are important factors that provoke individuals to choose proactivity over reactivity. Individuals who are passionate about developing their careers become more selective in assessing prevailing negative workplace events and appraise them differently keeping in view their future longer-term goals in life. Similarly, age is another important factor that enables individuals to become proactive instead to being reactive. With passing years in life, employees appraise situations more realistically keeping in view their strategic life goals and understanding of the fact that certain setbacks in life cannot be reversed. So, instead of being reactive they proactively try to avoid those setbacks that are under their control, or they can modify future end results by acting proactively today. Employees who are in early career stages and do not have much experience, and for this they try to follow the lead and avoid proactivity. With the passage of time their experiences improve along with their passion to progress in careers. It is a common observation that an individual usually becomes stable in career after 40 years of age. Same can be observed in study results. Individuals in this age group have more emotional self-efficacy resources and are statistically more professionally ambitious. Individuals in expert career stages (41 yrs. and above) try to maintain their expert image and advance their careers, as, they focus on stable careers and choose those organizations where quality of work life is superior, facilitating, and supportive.

Theoretical Implications

Much has been contributed to emotions research and their resultant outcomes. Positive and negative emotions generate positive and negative behavioral reactions among individuals. Present research has already linked anger and fear with PB. However, this research study adds on to emotional process model presented by Lebel (2017) that employee's level of grit and age group to which they belong, are important drivers of such behavioral modifications. Present findings extend understanding of existing theories of motivation like, goal setting theory, by identifying factors that provoke proactivity. It also contributes to enhancing concept presented by Urbach and Fay (2021) which focuses on determining factors that contribute towards enhancing employee proactivity. As suggested by Carstensen (1992), proactivity is triggered by number of antecedents, this research explains the role of grit and age in enhancing employee PB. Similarly, this research study considers the call of research by Lebel (2017), where they suggest for identifying factors which play their role in persuading employees towards positive behavioral modifications because of negative workplace experiences. Finally, this research helps broaden concept of emotional processes and resultant behavioral modifications. As business scenarios transform, pressures to succeed increase, triggering stress and emotional reactions among individuals. These triggers need for improved behavioral reactions among individuals to cope up with stress and prevailing pressures. So, need to explore and identify factors which help this behavioral modification is inevitable. It is concluded that age and grit are important factors that help this process of logical appraisal of situations and respective behavioral reactions.

Practical Implications

This research study provides new insights for industries by highlighting importance of underlying emotional climate within organizations, and how employee career aspirations & age can play its vital role in organizational development through employee voluntary PB. Manufacturing sectors are mostly under siege to cope up with emerging trends in customer demands, so employers must take into consideration that individuals with higher career aspirations may help them cope up with surge of challenging demands. Similarly, the aged employees should be facilitated as their level of emotional stability and choice of PB by rational appraisal of situations makes them an asset in times of need. Organizations trying to focus on improving the organizations must focus on the underlying emotional climate. Employee emotions play a great role in influencing employee behaviors. So, organizations must focus on the underlying emotional climate and intervene psychodynamically to make efficient use of energy felt while an individual is angry or feeling fearful.

Moreover, the explained role of grit in enhancing proactivity will help organizations strategize about how they can facilitate and enhance career growth by linking training, development, reward, and compensation strategies with employees' individual goals. Similarly, selection procedures of organizations must focus on selecting those individuals who are passionate for career progression. Such employees will be suitable for early career positions. For leadership positions, employees who are middles aged with considerable experience must be preferred as these positions require more emotional stability and control for rational decision making.

Conclusion

The focus of current study was to analyze the role of age and grit in transforming negative emotions into proactive behaviors. The results of the study show that individuals become more emotionally intelligent and try to conserve their negative energies and utilize them in transforming their behaviors into a positive corrective action, keeping in view their futuristic goals. Similarly,

individuals who are passionate about career progression have a futuristic outlook about their careers so they try to manage their emotional instabilities and try to be proactive to avoid any negative outcome which may hinder their future progression. Organizations are highly turbulent and work environments are dependent on contexts (Aftab & Komal, 2019). So, organizations must focus on the underlying emotional climate of the organization in order to ensure sustainability of such individual behaviors favoring organizational progress.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite usefulness of current study there are certain limitations as well which must be taken into consideration in upcoming research. This study has focused on asymmetrical relationship of negative emotions of anger and fear with employee PB. Although proactivity is beneficial for employee as well as for organizations, but long-term PB may lead towards health issues. So, the impacts of long-term proactivity on health of employees should be studied. This study focused on manufacturing sector of Pakistan as it is a major contributor to the nation's economy. However, future studies may consider employee behaviors working in service sector and comparative studies can be performed to analyze differences in response behaviors among employees of different sectors. Impact of age on PB, might have a conservative view of factors influencing employee PB so, impact of other demographic factors like gender may also be taken into consideration. This study has used mono-method research design future studies may consider quantitative as well as qualitative studies to enhance validity of results. Moreover, cross-sectional nature of data collection may limit understanding of aging effects on employee PB. So, future studies may consider longitudinal studies for reporting such behaviors among individuals.

Keeping in view above discussion, future research may expand theoretical and practical knowledge in this regard, by focusing on underlying mechanisms and identifying factors that can play their role in enhancing employee proactivity. This study explained individual effects of employee emotional transformation, where future research may consider group level effects of such behaviors and vice versa, enhancing strength of model presented in current study.

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