

# Happiness and associated factors amongst pregnant women in the United Arab Emirates: The Mutaba'ah Study

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## Background

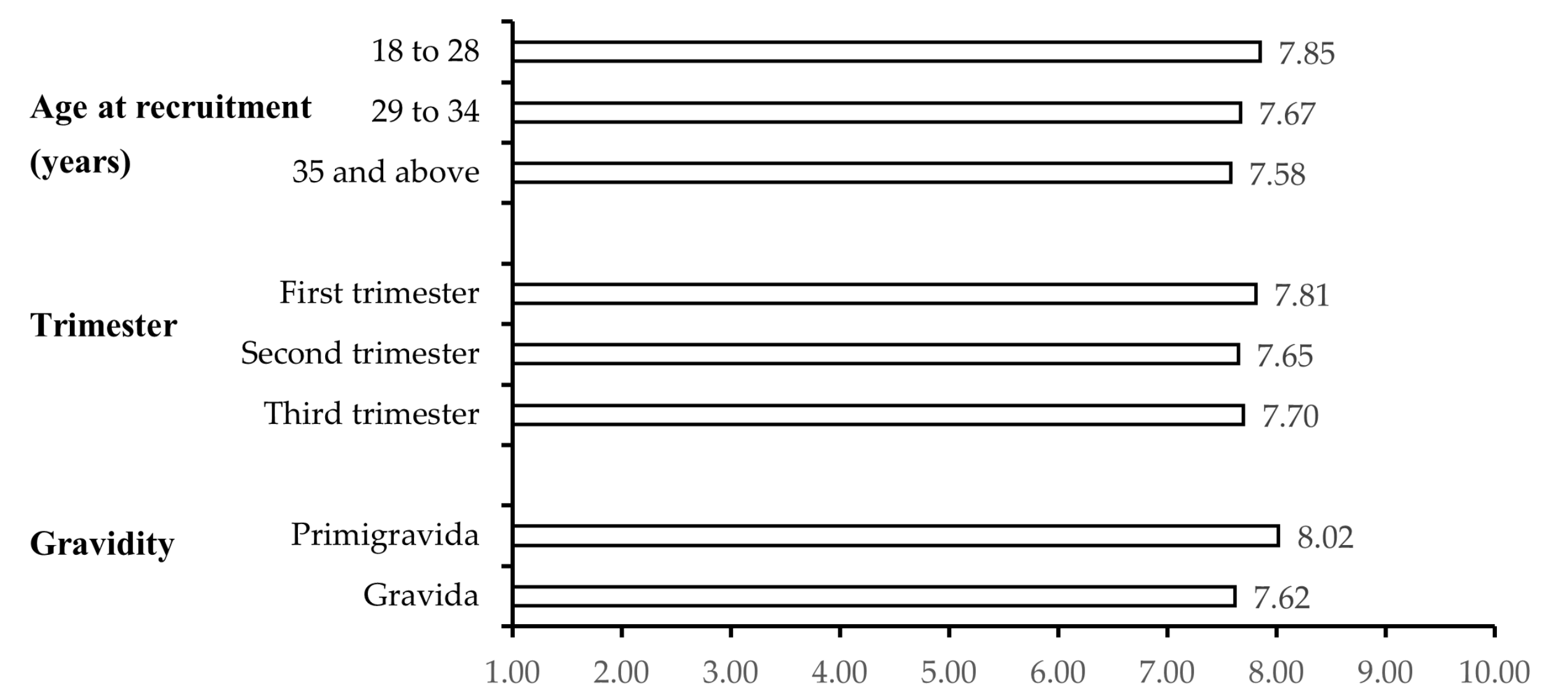
Happiness is a subjective sense of well-being, joy, or contentment that includes both positive affect and life satisfaction<sup>1</sup>. Prenatal happiness and life satisfaction research are often over-shadowed by other pregnancy and birth outcomes. There is limited extent scientific literature on the health and well-being of women during pregnancy in the UAE. This analysis investigated the level of, and factors associated with happiness amongst pregnant women in the United Arab Emirates.

## Method

This study reports the results from the baseline cross-sectional data from pregnant women participating in the Mutaba'ah study<sup>2</sup>. Data was collected via self-administered questionnaires about sociodemographic and pregnancy-related information during the antenatal visits between May 2017-July 2021. Happiness was assessed on a 10-point scale (1=very unhappy; 10=very happy). Regression models were used to evaluate the association between various factors and happiness.

## Results

Overall 9,350 pregnant women were included with a mean ( $\pm$ SD) age of  $31.0 \pm 6.0$  years. The majority were multiparous with mean parity  $2 \pm 2$ . The mean ( $\pm$  SD) happiness score was  $7.7 \pm 2.2$  and the median score was 8 (IQR: 6-10) for the included pregnant women. Majority (60.9%) of the women reported their happiness as  $\geq 8$  whilst more than a quarter (28.4%) perceived themselves to be "very happy" (maximum score of 10).

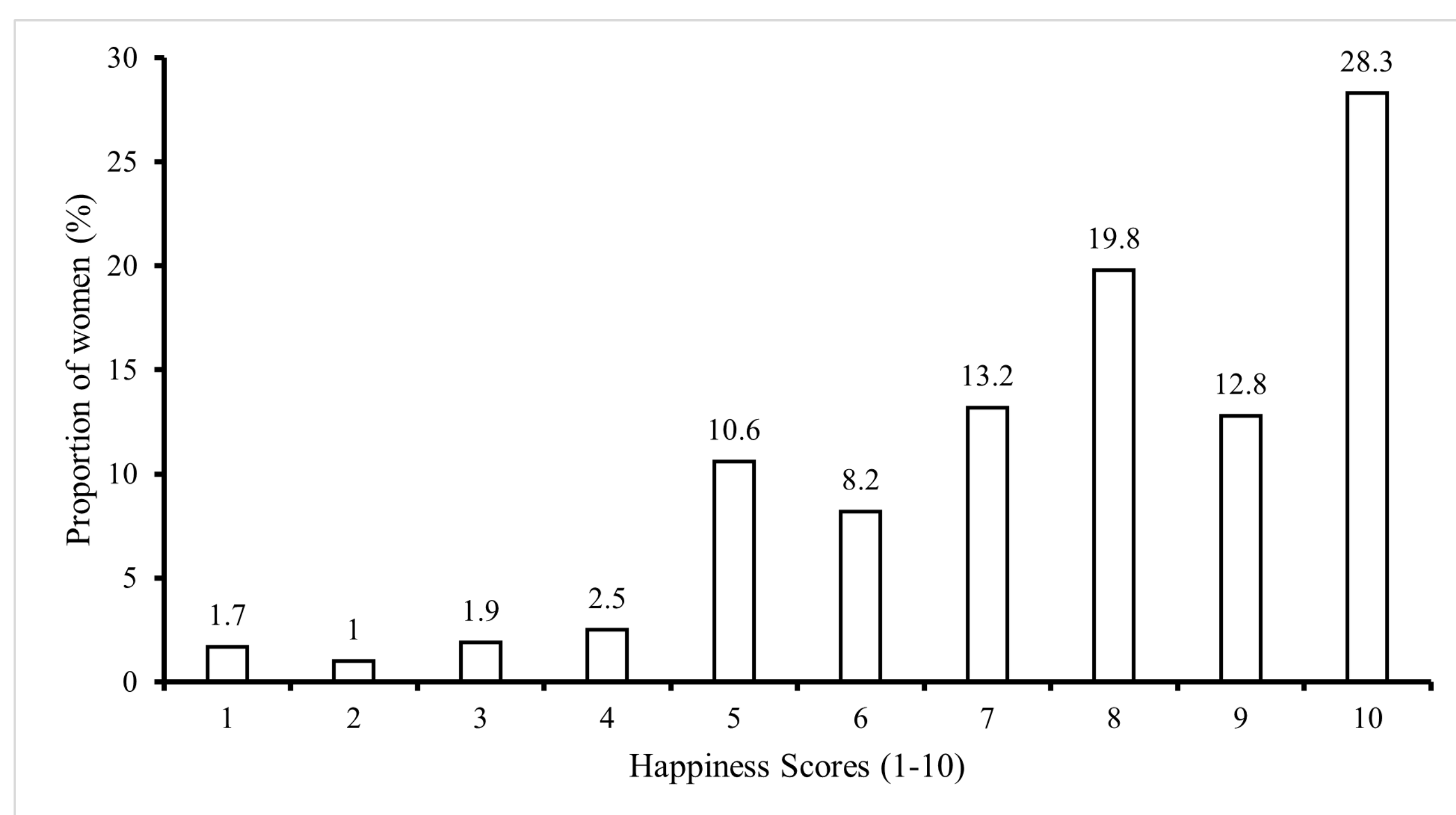


**Figure 2:** Distribution of median happiness scores by demographic groups amongst the study participants

**Table 1:** Association of sociodemographic and healthcare factors with happiness among 9350 participants

Characteristic	Crude Odds Ratio (95% CI)	Adjusted Odds Ratio (95% CI)
Education	1.14 (1.05-1.24%)	1.10 (1.00-1.20%)
Employment	0.95 (0.87-1.04%)	0.94 (0.85-1.03%)
Perceived Social support	2.19 (1.90-2.53%)	2.04 (1.77-2.37%)
Worry about birth	0.57 (0.52-0.62%)	0.56 (0.51-0.61%)
Primigravida	1.42 (1.28-1.58%)	1.43 (1.27-1.61%)
Planned pregnancy	1.39 (1.28-1.52%)	1.36 (1.24-1.48%)

\*Model adjusted for all covariates in addition to age and gravidity (imputed data for missing values),  $p$  value  $< 0.5$



**Figure 1:** Distribution of happiness scores amongst 9,350 pregnant women in Al Ain, UAE. The Mutaba'ah Study

Higher levels of social support, planned pregnancies and primi-gravidity were independently associated with higher odds of being happier; adjusted odds ratio (aOR (95% CI): 2.02 (1.71-2.38), 1.34 (1.22-1.47), and 1.41 (1.23-1.60)), respectively. Women anxious about childbirth had lower odds of being happier (aOR: 0.58 (0.52-0.64)), as shown in Table 1.

## Conclusions

- Self reported happiness rates were high among pregnant women in the UAE.
- Health services focusing on enhancing social support and promoting a positive mood about pregnancy and childbirth may ensure continued happiness during pregnancy and beyond among women in the UAE.

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