ACTIVE AGING

MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES TO CONTINUE WORKING AFTER RETIREMENT
Polat, Tuğba
Active Aging in Work
Motivating Employees to Continue working after Retirement
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Chapter 1 Introduction

Active Aging in Work
Motivating Employees to Continue working after Retirement

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door

Tugba Polat

geboren te Nijkerk
promotor: prof.dr. P.G.W. Jansen
copromotor: dr. P.M. Bal
Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction ........................................................................................................... 7
  1.2 Key issues of this thesis ..................................................................................................... 11
  1.3 Dissertation outline ......................................................................................................... 14
  1.4 References ..................................................................................................................... 15

Chapter 2: Sustainable Employment in the Healthcare Sector ........................................... 19
  Abstract ................................................................................................................................ 20
  2.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................... 21
  2.2. Theory .......................................................................................................................... 23
  2.3 Research question 1: Which HR practices do organizations provide for their employees and to what extent do employees use these practices? ............................. 24
  2.4. Research question 2: Which factors are related to the motivation to continue working? .................................................................................................................... 30
  2.5 Research question 3: How do employees want to continue working? ........................ 40
  2.6 Research question 4: Which topics are important in retirement decision-making? 43
  2.7 Conclusion and discussion ............................................................................................. 45
  2.8 References ..................................................................................................................... 49

Appendix .................................................................................................................................. 53

Chapter 3: How do development HR practices contribute to employees’ motivation to continue working beyond retirement age? ........................................................... 57
  Abstract ................................................................................................................................ 58
  3.1. Introduction .................................................................................................................... 59
  3.2 Theory and Hypotheses .................................................................................................. 61
  3.3 Method ............................................................................................................................ 64
  3.4 Results ............................................................................................................................. 67
  3.5 Discussion ....................................................................................................................... 77
  3.6 References ..................................................................................................................... 81

Chapter 4: The relationship between workload and weekly work engagement: The buffering effect of Age and Job resources ................................................................. 85
  Abstract ................................................................................................................................ 86
  4.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................... 87
  4.2 Theory and Hypotheses .................................................................................................. 89
  4.3 Method ............................................................................................................................ 93
  4.4 Results ............................................................................................................................. 96
  4.5 Discussion ....................................................................................................................... 102
Chapter 1

Introduction
Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Aging Population

In the past decennia the life expectancy in developed countries has been rising rapidly as a consequence of improvements in income, sanitation, nutrition, education and medicine amongst others (Eurostat, 2008; Oeppen & Vaupel, 2002). In addition to the effect of longevity, decreasing fertility rates have caused a trend of an aging population (Eurostat, 2007, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Moreover, the already skewed age distribution of the population associated with the baby boom generation (those people born between 1946 and 1964) who are now reaching old age is propelling this trend (Eurostat, 2008; Spillman & Lubitz, 2000).

These demographic developments have had severe affects on the workforce composition. The number of new employees entering the workforce have declined while, at the same time, the workers of the baby boom generation are reaching retirement age and are leaving the workforce. If these trends continue, a significant proportion of the present workforce will retire within the next decades and will not be replaced by the same amount of younger employees (Eurostat, 2007; U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). To some extent, the current economic recession is offsetting the effects of aging on the workforce causing layoffs and unemployment. When the crisis is over, the workforce will be relatively old (Wheaton & Crimmins, 2013; Zickar, 2012). The trend of the aging population not only results in shortages in the labor force and exerts pressures on the pension funds (Eurostat, 2008), the increase in older people also leads to an increasing demand for healthcare and, thus, for more healthcare workers.

Although the outflow of personnel as a consequence of the aging workforce is present in all sectors, the effects of aging differ between them as some sectors are known to have a higher average age than others (Zickar, 2012). In the Netherlands, the healthcare sector is the most strongly affected since it consists of a relatively grey workforce and is coping with a relative low inflow of younger personnel in comparison to other sectors (SCP, 2010; Zorginnovatieplatform, 2009). Furthermore, as the need for healthcare services increases with age, higher rates of healthcare spending and a need for personnel is predicted already (e.g. Spillman & Lubitz, 2000). Therefore, if the current trend of (early) retirement behavior continues, the eldercare sector will experience shortages in qualified personnel (CPB, 2005). Given that the workforce in this specific sector is already relatively old, an important challenge is to find strategies that will encourage older workers to remain engaged and active members of the workforce and postpone their retirement (Barnes-Farrel & Matthews, 2007). This leads to the question of how can we keep older workers active and engaged in the workforce to motivate them to continue working beyond retirement age. To answer this question I will first provide a background of the topic of retirement.

1.1.2 Retirement trends and continuing working

Although retirement is perceived as a fundamental individual right in Western societies, at the beginning of the twentieth century things were different. People did not live long lives, and they used to work until they died (Collins, 2003). With the initiation of pension systems, legislation around them has evolved in accordance with economic trends and demographic developments (Collins, 2003). In the Netherlands, in light of the youth unemployment in the first half of the last century, early retirement schemes were introduced to move older workers out of the workforce to make room for the younger generation (Van Ewijk & Slokker, 2008). A similar trend of early retirement schemes appeared in the US (Crampton, 1996). However, the
Chapter 1 Introduction

recent demographic of an aging population has required new reforms to reverse the trend of early-retirement. New legislation, such as making early-retirement fiscally unattractive and increasing the official retirement age, have been introduced to discourage people from leaving work prematurely (Zickar, 2012).

Scholarly research on retirement has highlighted the parallel economic and demographic trends. Prior research mainly focused on the question when to retire investigating early retirement (Beehr, 1986; Feldman, 1994). The focus more recently has shifted towards how to retire, particularly involving extending work lives through bridge employment (e.g. Wang, Olson, & Shultz, 2012; Wang & Shultz, 2010). The term bridge employment, in its broadest sense refers to ‘the pattern of work participation of older workers after they leave their full time career jobs and before they fully withdraw from the labor force’ (Cahill, Giandrea, & Quinn, 2012). Specifically, bridge employment implies a decreased level of work participation, either in terms of the amount of hours worked or the psychological commitment towards work or the employing organization (Feldman, 1994; Wang, et al., 2012). Researchers argue that bridge jobs can be beneficial in several ways: for employees who attach high value to their work role or their employer organization, bridge jobs allows work participation in later life that prevents them from abrupt interruption of their work role that would have been caused if they were to immediately retire (Kim & Feldman, 2000; Wang, et al., 2012). In addition, bridge employment gives financial security for those who do not have sufficient pension income (Ulrich & Brott, 2005). Moreover, on a societal level, encouraging bridge employment among retirees can solve labor shortages created by the aging population.

1.1.3 Understanding retirement behavior: theoretical perspectives

While retirement was viewed previously as a one-time event, contemporary literature characterizes retirement as a behavioral process through which workers decrease their psychological commitment towards work (Wang, 2012). As such, the process of retirement starts well before the act of moving out of the workforce. Further, it often does not imply full withdrawal from work right away. It rather involves some kind of employment participation (Feldman & Beehr, 2011). Moreover, while retirement ultimately means full labor force withdrawal, the timeframe towards this end and the type of work participation between start of the process and full withdrawal, varies for each person. Therefore, it is important to understand the characteristics embedded in the retirement process (Van Solinge & Henkens, 2008).

Existing theories to understand the retirement process suggest that an individual’s work-related experiences and individual characteristics are important predictors of retirement behavior. One commonly used theories, the continuity theory (Archoley, 1989) emphasizes that, in making adaptive choices, middle aged and older people try to maintain existing patterns. A common pattern of adaptation in retirement is to maintain some kind of work involvement (Quick & Moen, 1998). As such, continuity theorists argue that pre-retirement goals and activities impact retirement decision making and adaptation. Further, the image theory (Beach & Mitchell, 1987) supplements the continuity theory by suggesting that individuals maintain continuity by making decisions that are compatible with their existing goals, values and plans. If existing goals include working, or can be achieved by working, it is likely that an individual will continue working. However, if employment is an obstacle for achieving future goals, then it is likely that the individual will retire (Brougham & Walsh, 2005). In addition, role theory posits that individuals
define themselves with the roles they have in life (e.g. the role of mother, church member, or employee). The theory emphasizes the negative impact of role loss when a person exits the workforce (Ashforth, 2000). According to this theory, the extent to which a person invests in his role and has feelings of self-worth may be associated with his/her ability to carry out that role (Wang, Henkens, & Van Solinge, 2011). As such, people who invest highly in their work-roles will want to maintain existing patterns by carrying on their work-role (Ashforth, 2000). If they invest less in their work role, or can replace their work role with another role, the transition to retirement will be less stressful. All three theories suggest that an individual's relationship with work versus activities outside of work predict retirement behavior (Kim & Feldman, 2000; Shultz, Morton, & Weckerle, 1998).

Evidently, these relationships do not stand alone; an important predictor in this is individual age-related development. Life span theorists, in particular, argue that individuals’ daily functioning changes as a result of aging (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). To develop effective organizational strategies to retain older workers we need to understand the ‘older worker’. To do so, we need to grasp the process of aging and the changes accompanied in this process that are relevant to the psychological and physiological wellbeing at work. The next paragraph provides an overview of adult development theories and depicts what kinds of changes take place and how they affect work related behavior.

1.1.4. Aging

To manage an older workforce or more specifically to motivate employees to continue working beyond retirement age, it is important to ascertain what the concept aging effectively means. In explaining this, I distinguish between internally driven forces and externally driven forces. Internally driven forces can originate from the individual self, while external forces are driven by the environment. According to lifespan theorists, aging refers to ‘the changes individuals experience in their biological, psychological and social functioning as they get older’ (De Lange, et al., 2006). These can be seen as the internal forces, as they originate from the individual. Kanfer and Ackerman (2004) propose that the effects of aging across a lifespan can be organized around four themes: loss; growth; reorganization; and, exchange. Loss refers to the decline that individuals experience in their cognitive abilities associated with their fluid intelligence, such as learning new things (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). The second theme, growth, refers to the increase crystallized intellectual abilities representing educational or experiential knowledge (Cattell, 1987). These abilities are associated specifically with general knowledge, extent of vocabulary, and verbal comprehension (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). According to Kanfer and Ackerman (2004) losses in fluid intelligence can be compensated by increases in crystallized intellectual abilities. Moreover, when these changes are related to a job context, they may result in a shift in the individual’s job competences. An older individual may contribute more in a position that requires organizational experience. The third pattern described by the authors, reorganization, is directed at changes in motives for action. Carstensen’s (1995; 2003) socio-emotional selectivity theory (SST) provides an example of changes in motivation. The theory posits that, as people get older and perceive time increasingly as limited, their goals shift from being functionally oriented towards emotionally meaningful goals. While younger individuals want to invest in their future and, therefore, seek social interaction primarily for gaining resources, older individuals invest their cognitive and social resources in gaining effective
Chapter 1 Introduction

rewards (i.e. emotional satisfaction) (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). The shift in motivation towards emotional goals promotes emotion regulation (control over the emotions that an individual experiences and expresses) for modulating the emotion process (Carstensen & Mikels, 2005).

The final theme, exchange, refers to the age-related changes in the primacy of motives across a lifespan (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). The strength of certain traits change over a lifespan; individuals become less neurotic, less extrovert, and less open to new experiences, but become more conscientious and agreeable compared to when they were younger (Warr, 2001). Furthermore, generativity motives, emotional regulation and the importance of protecting the self-image increase with age (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004).

The changes described above are primarily internally driven and originate from the individual. Alternatively, they are external forces driven by the environment. So, as an individual gets older their perception of others changes. In an organizational context, older workers are often seen by their managers as less productive and resistant to change and new technology (Duncan, 2003). Research demonstrates that age-discrimination is a common phenomenon in organizations (Brooke & Taylor, 2005) and has increased since the start of the 2008 economic recession (Luo, 2009). Older workers have become less involved in development activities resulting in obsolescence of their knowledge and abilities over time (Hedge & Albright, 2013; Maurer & Rafuse, 2001; Taylor & Walker, 1998) and a lower likelihood of sustained motivation to work (Kooij et al., 2008). Moreover, a study by Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009) found that offering training and development to older workers can be related to organizational support which, in turn, is related to the intention to remain with one’s employer. While the internal forces described earlier affect the external forces and how the organization perceives the individual, external forces also include factors that do not originate from the individual, such as age stereotypes.

In short, existing studies show that employees’ work related experiences shape their retirement decisions. This suggests that organizations should manage their older workforce so they will be more willing to continue working. To do so effectively, it is necessary to understand the aging process and the changes that emerge when employees get older. This thesis will investigate how organizations can increase employees’ motivation to continue working. Employees’ retirement decisions will be studied from an Human Resource Management (HRM) perspective (Wang & Shultz, 2010) and by employing a lifespan development perspective lens. In so doing this thesis is built up around three key issues as described below.

1.2 Key issues of this thesis

Key issue 1: HR practices contributing to the motivation to continue working

As noted earlier, retirement has been on the research agenda for many years (Hedge & Albright, 2013). Initial studies investigated early retirement, while current studies mainly focus on retaining older workers in the work force through bridge employment (Wang & Shultz, 2010). As such, there are many studies published investigating work participation at older age (Wang & Shultz, 2010). However, many studies have focused only on a narrow range of factors when examining organizational factors. Studies often investigated which work-related attitudes or psychological states were related to employees’ willingness to continue working (e.g. Gobeski &
Chapter 1 Introduction

Beehr, 2009; Luchak, Pohler & Gellati, 2008). However, work-related attitudes and psychological states are inextricably linked to an organization’s HR efforts (e.g. Guest, 2002; Paauwe & Richardson, 1997). Moreover, HR inducements are organizations’ prime communications in managing their workforce (e.g. Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). Hence, to motivate older employees toward continued employment, relevant HR inducements should be investigated. In doing this, it is crucial to study lifespan development theories to understand how individuals develop and, thus, which biological and psychological changes take place. In addition, it is important to understand how their environment changes and, thus, which perceptual changes take place. From there on it is possible to understand what the strengths and weaknesses of older individuals are and provide HR inducements accordingly.

Chapter 2 is based on the project ‘Sustainable employment in the health sector’ (SEHS) which this dissertation is a part of. Nine health care organizations were investigated with regard to issues related to sustainable employment. The chapter gives an overview of these findings. The chapter also explores broadly to identify other relevant issues to explore further in subsequent chapters. The chapter builds on four central questions:

1) Which HR practices do organizations provide for their employees and to what extent do employees use these practices?
2) Which factors are related to the motivation to continue working?
3) How do employees want to continue working?
4) Which subjects do employees consider to be important in their retirement decision-making?

Chapter 3 discusses how development-related HR practices are important in motivating older workers to continue working. Recent studies have found that employee development is key in keeping older workers active and engaged in the work force (e.g. Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008) and that opportunities for growth activities are associated with continued workforce participation (Beehr, Glazer, Nielson & Farmer, 2000). Yet, despite the importance of employee development at older age, studies have demonstrated that organizations often invest less in older workers in terms of development (Maurer & Rafause, 2001). This is either because of their stereotypic views that older workers are reluctant to seek out development opportunities, or because of economic reasons related to the return on investment tied to the years remaining in the workforce (Hedge & Albright, 2013).

Considering the suggested importance of development opportunities and the lack of the availability of these opportunities in reality for older workers, it is important to have a better understanding what the actual contribution of development oriented HR opportunities is on the motivation to remain in the workforce. It is suggested that providing HR activities related to development would increase the willingness to continue working. However, as suggested by many HR theorists, this relationship is not direct. To understand the relationship the underlying mechanisms should be investigated. To evaluate the effect of these development HR practices we need more insight about the extent and which mechanisms development HR practices contribute to work participation at older age.

Chapter 4 investigates the relations of core task characteristics on older and younger workers’ work engagement. In so doing, I will investigate what the effect of work design on different age groups is. This is important because, due to the aging population, people have to work longer, resulting in an increase of older employees in the workforce. The changing age distribution of the workforce calls for more knowledge about the suitability of work designs for
different age groups. Work design research advocates that task characteristics are important predictors of employee wellbeing (Hackman & Oldam, 1976) and that a fit between the person and the job tasks can predict employee wellbeing (Spokane, Meir, Catalano, 2000). Despite pressing changes in the workforce in terms of age differences, there is still little knowledge on how age differences affect the relationship between job characteristics and employee wellbeing. Research suggests that high stress and high workload are associated with retiring at an earlier stage (Wang & Shultz, 2013) and that having challenging tasks is related to the motivation to remain in the workforce (Von Bonsdorff & Ilmarinen, 2012). Since the number of older workers participating in the workforce is increasing there is need for knowledge about how different age groups react on job tasks and how employee wellbeing can be generated through creating a fit between job characteristics and individuals in different age groups.

**Key issue 2: Organizational climate and the motivation to continue working**

This key issue is partly related to the first one: as explained the relationship between HR practices and the motivation to continue working (employee behavior) is not presumed to be direct. Instead, it is mediated by the organizational climate, which is the employees’ interpretation of the organization’s HR practices. Depending on the organizational climate, employees have a positive or a negative relationship with the organization (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008) have demonstrated already that an organizational climate that signals development is positively related to employee commitment and, subsequently, to prolonged employment. The organizational climate is an interpretation of the organization’s HR inducements and displays the organization’s expectations towards its employees. Establishing an organizational climate that supports and encourages continuing working, therefore, can be essential in motivating older workers to continue working and, also, can be related to how employees want to continue working in terms of their preferred work profile (see also key issue 3 below). In Chapter 3 I will therefore investigate how organizational climate contributes to the motivation to continue working and its role in transforming HR practices into attitudes and behavior. In Chapter 5 I will study how different types of climates are related to individuals’ preferred work profile after retirement.

**Key issue 3: preferred work profiles**

In assessing how to retain older workers in the work force, we often think about how they could be motivated to continue working and not how they want to continue working given different types of work profiles. Contemporary studies have categorized bridge employment based on participation (i.e. career bridge employment versus non-career bridge employment) (e.g. Davis, 2003; Gobeski & Beehr, 2008) or based on organizational domain (i.e. same organization or different organization) (Zhan, Wang & Yao, 2013). However, work participation can take various forms: self-employment, part-time work and seasonal work (Rau & Adams, 2011). While continuing working after retirement is widely advocated and encouraged, there is little knowledge on what the work-profile of the retired individual would look like. I want to investigate what older workers’ preferred employment profiles are when considering various options in work arrangements and work designs. Hence, in Chapter 5, I will investigate how
employees want to continue working after their retirement. I will research also which organizational and individual factors the preferred work profiles are related to.

1.3 Dissertation outline

The second chapter is based on the Sustainable Employment in the Healthcare project and provides an overview of findings of studies in nine healthcare organizations. The aim of these studies was twofold: first, it was to provide advice to the participating organizations and the government on the issue of continuing working. Second, it was the first step in exploring which issues were most pressing and most relevant whilst studying the work motivation of older employees from an academic perspective.

The third chapter will address the first key issue and investigate how development HR practices can contribute to employees’ motivation to take on bridge employment. In doing so, it takes an integrative view by looking at how this relationship is mediated by organizational climate and psychological states (organizational commitment and work engagement). The subsequent two chapters will each focus on one aspect of the integrative model provided in the third chapter.

Chapter 4 focuses on how work characteristics affect work engagement for older and younger workers highlighting the key psychological states from the previous chapter that was positively related to the motivation to take on bridge employment. I chose to focus on work engagement as it is an active psychological state that influenced the job characteristics. Furthermore, the state of work engagement is influenced highly by work characteristics (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Understanding the mechanisms that influence work engagement for different age groups can give organizations the means to effectively shape work characteristics to promote engagement. Moreover, it is likely that engagement will lead to higher motivation to continue working. Therefore, this is imperative for organizations who want to retain older workers beyond their retirement age.

Chapter 5 investigates continued working by looking at how employees want to do this. Based on the literature around non-standard work arrangements, I investigated which dimensions after retirement work profiles can be defined. Subsequently, I created the work after retirement profiles empirically and tested how these work profiles were related to various work and non-work factors. The choice of these two aspects reflects the dearth of knowledge about them.

Chapter 6 provides a discussion and my findings giving answers to each of the key issues presented earlier. The chapter concludes with how these findings are relevant to theory and practice and presents a future research agenda.
Chapter 1 Introduction

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Chapter 1 Introduction


Chapter 2

Sustainable Employment in the Healthcare Sector
Abstract

This chapter is based on the project ‘Sustainable Employment in the Healthcare Sector’. As part of this project, research was conducted at nine organizations into topics related to sustainable employment. The study explored a broad approach to identify relevant issues to be explored further in subsequent chapters. This chapter gives an overview of the findings. The chapter is built around four central research questions:

1. Which HR practices do organizations provide for their employees and to what extent do employees use these practices?
2. Which factors are related to the motivation to continue working?
3. How do employees want to continue working?
4. Which subjects do employees consider to be important in their retirement decision-making?

The findings demonstrate that the overall usage of HR practices is minimal when compared with the perception of the availability of practices directed at accommodation and development. The study demonstrated that work engagement, satisfaction, age and personal reasons for work are important predictors of the motivation to continue working. It demonstrates also that, in assessing how employees want to continue working, the most preferred changes involve reduced work participation, maintaining current work context and gaining flexibility in planning. Finally, the important subjects in deciding whether to retire or decision-making which employees reported were personal health and enjoyment of work.
2.1 Introduction

As described in the first chapter, demographic developments demonstrate that the population of the Netherlands is aging. Due to lower maternity rates and increased longevity the proportion of older people is increasing in comparison to younger people (Eurofound, 2011; Eurostat, 2008; Oeppen & Vaupel, 2002). The effects of the aging population will also be reflected in the workforce. First, the average age of working individuals is increasing resulting in an older pool of employees and an increasing number of employees transferring out of the workforce due to retirement. Second, the number of younger individuals entering the workforce is declining (European Commission, 2010). These events will result in labor shortages in the long run. Yet, the consequences of the aging workforce differ across sectors. In particular, the effects are more profound in the healthcare sector (Erken, Koot, & Kuijpers, 2010; European Commission, 2011).

The sector is generally perceived as less popular than other sectors due to low pay and difficult working conditions, which make it hard to attract new and younger workers. Especially, in eldercare these problems are prevalent (Zorginnovatieplatform, 2009). Due to the increased longevity, particularly of those belonging to the baby-boom generation (those born between 1946 and 1964), the demand for eldercare is increasing (Spillman & Lubitz, 2000). In addition, the average age of employees in eldercare is the highest compared to other sectors (Eurofound, 2011; Zorginnovatieplatform, 2009). As a result of the developments depicted above, in the future the Netherlands is expected to have severe labor shortages, particularly in the eldercare branch of the health-care sector (CPB, 2005).

The Dutch government is already taking measures to anticipate to the aging problem by increasing the official retirement age from 65 to 67 and also making it financially unattractive to retire via early retirement schemes (CPB, 2009). Stichting Senior Werkt (Foundation for Older Workers, referred to as FOW in the remainder of this chapter) initiated the project Sustainable Employment in the Healthcare Sector (SEHS) in 2008. The project, which is financially supported by the Dutch government, amongst others, was initiated to investigate sustainable employment in nine healthcare (mainly eldercare) organizations (coded as organizations A- I).

For this project FOW collaborated with the VU University Amsterdam to conduct research and deliver advice for the participating organizations about how to retain older workers. The goal of the project was two-fold; first, to deliver practical advice for organizations based on scientifically validated research, second, to advance the scientific understanding of the retirement phenomena.

Each organization that participated in the project received an individual advisory report, and at the end of the project an overall report was published (Van der Hoeven, et al., 2011) and presented to stakeholders at a conference (Stichting Senior Werkt, 2012). At the same time, the project was part of the current doctoral study. By doing this, the researcher who was involved in the project had to work closely with practitioners in the field.

Participating in this project gave the opportunity to investigate work motivation of older employees, and specifically the earlier presented key issues, in a sector with the highest urgency. The data collected during the project are used throughout this dissertation in different ways. Specifically, in Chapter 3, the data collected in organizations B and C are used, the results of Chapter 4 are based on data collected in organization I, and the results of Chapter 5 are based on data collected in organizations E, F and G. This chapter provides an outline of the theoretical background of the project and an overview of overall findings of the project.
The current chapter starts with an overview of the developments in the healthcare industry which concludes with four relevant theoretical research questions. Subsequently, a theory section gives a general theoretical background to the study. Four subdivisions follow where each research question is discussed separately. Each section gives a further description of the theoretical foundations for each research question followed by the results. The chapter ends a discussion.

2.1.1 Context of the healthcare industry

We have mentioned already that the healthcare sector in the near future will have to cope with shortages in qualified personnel. According to Erken and colleagues (2010) the expected annual increase of the demand for healthcare personnel is expected to grow from 1.6 percent to 2.1 percent. By 2030 somewhere between 540,000 and 750,000 more employees will be needed compared with the situation in 2007. Simultaneously, the expected labor supply in 2030 will be 120,000 individuals less when compared with the labor supply in 2007. Increased longevity means the demand for healthcare personnel is increasing, yet the supply is decreasing reflecting the inability to attract new, young personnel (Eurofound, 2011; Stone & Wiener, 2001). As a result, the sector has a relative old labor force with many people approaching retirement age and little inflow of young qualified personnel.

These developments mean healthcare organizations and especially eldercare organizations are faced with the challenge to retain their older employees. The organizations included in the SEHS project were interested in how they could motivate their older employees to remain beyond retirement age. An HRM perspective was taken to answer this question as an organization’s main tool for managing their employees is its HR activities (Delaney & Huselid, 1996).

Chapter 1 described how an organization’s HR inducements are key communicators of what features the organization expects from its employees and which are substantial in managing employee attitudes and behaviors. Thus, HR inducements are important strategic tools that can be deployed to extend employees’ working lives beyond retirement. As such, mapping out the perceptions of the availability and the use of HR practices gives an impression of how employees’ perceive the organizations strategy towards managing its aging workforce. Given the dearth research that investigates the availability and usage of HR practices among older workers in the context of continuing working, it is important to fill this knowledge gap. Also, to understand how employees can be motivated to continue working, it is important to identify factors that are related to employees’ willingness to extend their working lives and which subjects are important in their retirement decision-making. In addition, there is very little knowledge about older workers’ preference as to how work arrangements should be designed.

Consequently, the following four questions were formulated for the research:

1. Which HR practices do organizations provide for their employees and to what extent do employees use these practices?
2. Which factors are related to the motivation to continue working?
3. How do employees want to continue working?
4. Which subjects do employees consider to be important in their retirement decision-making?
The theoretical importance of these issues is described in the final section of Chapter 1. The first, second and fourth research questions are investigated in a more detailed manner in different empirical studies in the following chapters of this dissertation.

2.2. Theory

Existing research on retirement behavior demonstrates that there are two main categories of factors related to employee’s decision to retire or continue working: work-related factors and individual factors (Beehr, 1986; Wang & Shultz, 2010). In conducting this study, a research model was built focusing on these two factors. In the research model, work-related factors are based on a Human Resource Management (HRM) perspective on work motivation. As such, the research model guiding this study is framed within the so called HRM-activities and HRM-outcomes model (Paauwe & Richardson, 1997). See Figure 2.1 for a graphical display of the research model.

![Figure 2.1: HRM activities and outcomes framework (adapted from: Paauwe & Richardson, 1997)](image)

In the model, the HRM activities are the inducements of the organization, offered to employees, that affect their retirement motivation (Paauwe & Richardson, 1997). These could include practices which are more standardized in nature, but also include possibilities for idiosyncratic deals in the work arrangement (Rousseau, Ho & Greenberg, 2006). These inducements lead to HRM outcomes, including the organizational climate and work attitudes, which eventually influence the motivation to continue working. Both HRM activities, as well as HRM outcomes, are influenced by environmental factors or contingencies. These include personal factors; both work-related personal factors (e.g.: reasons for work, ability to cope with changes), as well as non-work related personal factors (e.g.: age). The difference between work-related personal factors and HRM activities (which are also work-related), lies in the extent to which the organization is able to influence them. While HRM activities include organizational efforts that affect the work-related decisions, work-related personal factors are not directly manageable by the organization, but still are work-related and influence work-related decisions. Finally, firm performance is also part of the mode. However, the outcome variable of this study is the motivation to continue working, which is a HRM outcome. Therefore, the last part of the
model is out of the research scope. Yet, it can be assumed that, as suggested in the model, the ability to retain experienced older workers active and engaged in the organization will result in a strong workforce and, eventually, better firm performance (Paauwe & Richardson, 1997).

Managing Human Resources towards continued employment

The effects of HR inducements on work outcomes have been explained through two major theories. Firstly, signaling theory (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000) states that, organizations communicate their expectations to their employees through HR activities.

Secondly, social exchange theory explains that (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), when the messages or expectations communicated through HR initiatives are perceived positively, this will make employees feel valued by the organization. The social exchange theory also suggests that, since reciprocity is an important characteristic of social relationships, individuals who feel they are valued and respected are likely to reciprocate with emotional engagement in exchange (Blau, 1964). Thus, the provision of HR inducements will both affect employees’ attitudes and behaviors (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

The relationship between positive work attitudes and the motivation to continue working can be explained through two theories, continuity theory (Atchley, 1989) and work-role attachment theory (Carter & Cook, 1995). The continuity theory (Atchley, 1989) explains that as people experience gains and losses while aging, they try to retain existing structures and patterns that they are familiar and comfortable with to cope with the physical and mental changes that they are less in control of (Atchley, 1989). When the valued existing structured and patterns are work-related and, thus, employees have a good relationship with the organization, they will be more likely to want to continue working.

The work-role attachment theory (Carter & Cook, 1995) presents a similar line of reasoning stating that certain socially prescribed and personally relevant work-roles are important for self-identity. Leaving the workforce leads to role loss. The influence of this role loss on the individual depends on the self-rated importance of the work-role (Carter & Cook, 1995). Accordingly, for individuals who have the work-role as high value will find work-role loss stressful and undesirable. Therefore, these individuals prefer to continue working, instead of retiring. Hence, through human resource management, organizations can keep their employees active and engaged in the workforce at older age. Therefore, it is important to know which HR practices are in place in organizations. The section below answers this question for those organizations that participated in this study.

2.3 Research question 1: Which HR practices do organizations provide for their employees and to what extent do employees use these practices?

As explained earlier, HR practices signal to employees what is expected from them and have a message function. The process of employees perceiving these messages and interpreting them creates an organizational climate and shapes employee characteristics on the collective level (Paauwe & Richardson, 1997). Thus, investigating an organization’s HR practices gives us an understanding of what the organization’s strategy is towards its employees. Accordingly, the use and availability of different types of HR practices will be investigated to provide an answer to the first research question.
2.3 Research context and method

The SEHS project included studies in nine healthcare organizations. Seven of them were eldercare organizations. Of these five organizations also provided medical care. Two organizations were providers of mental healthcare. Both types of organizations had a relatively old work force and were interested in ways to motivate their older employees to extend their working lives. Table 2.1 below provides an overview of the organizational and employee characteristics of the organizations under study. Each organization is investigated separately. A multi-level approach was not chosen because the number of organizations in level two would be too small (nine organizations). In addition, while there is overlap in the constructs and subjects investigated in the different organizations, they are not identical. Therefore, a multi-level approach was not applicable. The main reason for the variations in the separate studies is that a tailor-made research design was chosen for each organization. Hence, while the research model looks the same for each organization, the specific variables measured differ across organizations.

The data were collected via questionnaires. For five organizations the questionnaires were incorporated in the biannual employee satisfaction survey (organizations B, C, D and H). For the other four organizations the questionnaires were spread as a separate survey. In eight organizations the data were collected via a single measurement while, in one organization (I), a weekly diary study was conducted for six weeks.

For this dissertation, only employees over 40 years old and over were included in the analyses. In organization H, only employees 50 years and older were included in the survey and analyses. The participating organizations varied in size. The total number of respondents participating in the project was 2,305. The number of participants per organization is shown in the first column of Table 2.1. All respondents were approached via their organizations and supervisors to participate in the research. The respondents were mostly female; except for organization H, which has a more even gender distribution. In seven organizations a large part of the respondents had high school degree or intermediate vocational training as their highest completed education level. The mental healthcare organizations (A & I) and organization H deviated from this; here there were a large proportion of employees with a university degree.

Table 2.1 gives an overview of different descriptive characteristics of the respondents per organization including: age; gender; education; tenure; and, contract type. To test whether the differences among the organizations regarding these characteristics were significant one-way Anova tests with post-hoc Bonferroni tests were conducted. The results demonstrated that there were significant differences regarding age between the organizations \( (F(8, 2296) = 22.43, p < .001) \). Organization H had a higher mean age compared to the rest of the organizations due to the fact that the respondents included here were 50 years and older. Secondly, there were also differences in the gender compositions between organizations \( (F(8, 2291) = 36.67, p < .001) \), the Bonferroni post-hoc test demonstrated that organizations A and H had more men in the sample compared to the other organizations. The large number of men in these samples is related to the fact that organizations A and H are not eldercare organizations - where the larger part of the employees is often women- but special needs care organizations. Thirdly, with respect to education, the one-way Anova test showed also significant differences between organizations \( (F(8, 2280) = 33.55, p < .001) \). The post-hoc test demonstrated that respondents of organizations A and H had a significantly higher level of education due to the fact that disability care requires higher educated personnel. Fourthly, the organizations also differed significantly from each other with respect to tenure \( (F(8, 2283) = 29.96, p < .001) \). The post-hoc test
demonstrated that the mean tenure of organizations $A$ and $H$ was higher compared with the other organizations. Finally, differences in contract types were tested by cross-tabulation. The results demonstrated that employees in organization $B$ and $C$ had contracts with more working hours per week. Employees in organizations $A$ and $I$ had contracts with less working hours per week compared with the mean of all the organizations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization (sample size)</th>
<th>Core business</th>
<th>Total number of employees in the population</th>
<th>Mean age respondents</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Mean tenure</th>
<th>Contract type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (N = 736)</td>
<td>Mental care</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>50.04 years (range = 40-64; SD = 5.51)</td>
<td>M = 28.6%</td>
<td>Primary education=2.2% High school degree=22.9% Intermediate vocational training=37.4% University=37.5%</td>
<td>18.16 years (range = 1-47; SD = 5.51)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w = 53.3% 15-30 hours p/w = 46.6% ≥ 29 hours p/w = 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (N = 268)</td>
<td>Eldercare, including medical care</td>
<td>1215 employees</td>
<td>49.31 years (range = 40-63; SD = 5.76)</td>
<td>M = 10%</td>
<td>Primary education=1.6% High school degree=48.6% Intermediate vocational training= 34% University= 6.8%</td>
<td>10.66 years (range = 0-34; SD = 8.04)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w = 18% 15-30 hours p/w = 50% ≥ 29 hours p/w = 32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (N = 293)</td>
<td>Eldercare, including medical care</td>
<td>1040 employees</td>
<td>49.62 years (range = 40-63; SD = 5.43)</td>
<td>M = 12%</td>
<td>Primary education= 7.5% High school degree=41.12% Intermediate vocational training= 36.5% University= 6.8%</td>
<td>11.73 years (range = 0-42; SD = 9.37)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w = 20.5% 15-30 hours p/w = 52.7% ≥ 29 hours p/w = 26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (N = 140)</td>
<td>Eldercare, including medical care</td>
<td>388 employees</td>
<td>50.80 years (range = 40-66; SD= 6.19)</td>
<td>M = 7.9 %</td>
<td>Primary education = 8% High school degree=44.9% Intermediate vocational training= 40.6% University= 6.5%</td>
<td>12.88 years (range = 0-38; SD = 9.29)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w = 45.9% 15-30 hours p/w = 54.1% ≥ 29 hours p/w = -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E (N = 148)</td>
<td>Eldercare</td>
<td>375 employees</td>
<td>50.68 years (range = 40-68; SD= 6.32)</td>
<td>M= -</td>
<td>Primary education = 9% High school degree = 42% Intermediate vocational training= 39.3% University= 9.7%</td>
<td>12.61 years (range = 0-37; SD = 9.16)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w = 30.4% 15-30 hours p/w = 69.6% ≥ 29 hours p/w = -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Subtype</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>Mean Age (Range, SD)</td>
<td>Gender Distribution</td>
<td>Education Distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (N = 258)</td>
<td>Eldercare, including medical care</td>
<td>427 employees</td>
<td>52.05 years (range = 40-65, SD = 5.63)</td>
<td>M = 10.1% F = 89.9%</td>
<td>Primary education = 5.8% High school degree = 45.3% Intermediate vocational training = 34.6% University = 14.3%</td>
<td>14.10 years (range = 0-4, SD = 9.86)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w = 50% 15-30 hours p/w = 50% ≥ 29 hours p/w = -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G (N = 153)</td>
<td>Eldercare</td>
<td>730 employees</td>
<td>51.41 years (range = 40-64, SD = 5.76)</td>
<td>M = 11.8% F = 88.2%</td>
<td>Primary education = 4.7% High school degree = 34.2% Intermediate vocational training = 45.6% University = 15.5%</td>
<td>12.06 years (range = 0-34, SD = 9.17)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w = 42.4% 15-30 hours p/w = 57.6% ≥ 29 hours p/w = -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H (N = 241)</td>
<td>Eldercare, including medical care</td>
<td>2018 employees</td>
<td>54.63 years (range = 50-62, SD = 3.46)</td>
<td>M = 46.7% F = 53.3%</td>
<td>Primary education = .4% High school degree = 13.4% Intermediate vocational training = 17% University = 69.2%</td>
<td>18.27 years (range = 0-41, SD = 11.08)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w = 75.7% 15-30 hours p/w = 24.3% ≥ 29 hours p/w = -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I (N = 68)</td>
<td>Mental care</td>
<td>1470 employees</td>
<td>51.19 years (range = 40-63, SD = 5.62)</td>
<td>M = 4.8% F = 95.2%</td>
<td>Primary education =- High school degree = 32.3% Intermediate vocational training = 39.7% University = 28%</td>
<td>10.40 years (range = 0-31, SD = 7.51)</td>
<td>≤ 14 hours p/w 15-30 hours p/w = 63.5% ≥ 29 hours p/w = -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.3 Instruments

As noted earlier, the measured concepts vary across the separate organizations. HR practices were only measured in organizations A, B, C and D.

The HR practices measured in this study were based on a study by Kooij (2010) and distinguished three bundles of practices. The first bundle consists of general practices; these are practices that are commonly offered in organizations, such as ‘the possibility to work from home’. The second bundle consists of accommodative practices; these practices enable adequate functioning especially for older workers when they encounter decreasing abilities to cope with demanding working conditions. An example practice is the ‘exemption of irregular hours or working overtime’. The third bundle consists of development practices, these practices are directed at employee development. An example practice is ‘support with planning future development’.

In organization A, respondents were asked whether the practices were available in the organization and whether they used the practices. In the rest of the organizations where HR practices were measured, respondents were asked to which extent the practices were available on a five-point (1 = not at all available, 5 = very available), and whether they used the practice.

2.3.4. Results: Which HR practices do organizations provide for their employees and to what extent do employees use these practices?

To answer the first research question, the extent to which employees reported that HR practices were available in the organization and whether they used those practices were investigated. The availability and use of HR practices were measured in four organizations. Four sets of practices were investigated in the study: general practices; accommodative practices; and, development-oriented practices. The results of the analyses are in the appendix (see page 53). The data demonstrate that while employees indicate that practices are available, the usage of practices is remarkably low. The figures show that especially the use of HR practices aimed at allowing task modification is relatively low. The usage of practices that are in place to make tasks less demanding (accommodative practices), for example, the HR practice “The possibility to move to a less demanding job via demotion” is also very low (organization A: 2.3%; organization B: 0.9%; organization C: 4%; organization D: 4%). Further, practices that are in place to extending job tasks (development practices), for example, the HR practice “The possibility to start a new career within the organization”, is used very little (organization A: 4.4%; organization B: 4.3%; organization C: 5.1%; organization D: 5.4%). This is remarkable since the perception of availability is much higher. Furthermore, the usage of development practices, such as “the possibility to permanently develop within the job”, is higher for organization A, with respondents that have a higher completed education level (organization A: 35.5%; organization B: 15.3%; organization C: 16.2%; organization D: 16%). This is also the case for the HR practice “the possibility to take training or courses on a regular basis” (organization A: 58.2%; organization B: 27.9%; organization C: 27.8%; organization D: 29%).

The results regarding the usage and the perception of the availability of HR practices demonstrate that the usage of the practices is remarkably low, while the perception of the availability is relatively higher. The use of practices in the accommodative and development
bundles are low, even though the reported availability is high. This means that the practices are perceived and, thus, are likely to fulfill their signaling function. Therefore, it can be expected that the practices generate a specific climate. Yet, the practices do not fulfill their practical function. Thus, employees do not avail themselves of the practices. Hence, while the organization offers opportunities to modify work-related demands, employees do not act on them.

The next chapter further investigates the signaling function of HR practices. In doing so, I will investigate how and through which mechanisms development HR practices are related to the motivation to continue working. I will specifically test the mediating role of organizational contract (psychological contract and organizational climate) and affective states (organizational commitment and work engagement) in the relationship between HR practices and the motivation to continue working. The second research question will further investigate to what extent organizational climate and work task characteristics are related to the motivation to continue working.

2.4. Research question 2: Which factors are related to the motivation to continue working?

2.4.1 Theory

I investigated how a variety of job-related factors and individual factors were related to the intention to continue working to answer the second research question. The theoretical model (Figure 2.1) displays how the motivation to continue working is affected by a combination of HR activities and HR outcomes comprising work-related factors. These are influenced also by contingent factors. This study focuses on person-related contingent factors, i.e. individual factors. I will give a detailed description of each of the components included in this study below.

HRM activities

The first type of HRM activity under study is the possibility to negotiate for idiosyncratic deals. Idiosyncratic deals (i-deals) are personalized employment agreements. These are non-standard in nature and between the employee and the employer in regard to terms that are beneficial for both parties (Rousseau et al., 2006). As such, I-deals are individual level HR activities that help employees shape their work arrangement according to their individual needs. I-deals are valued and known to signal to employees that they are appreciated by the organization (Rousseau et al., 2006). In the context of an aging workforce, research demonstrates, for example, that older employees increasingly value flexibility in their work schedules (Arrowsmith & McGoldrick, 1997; Rau & Adams, 2005) which can be accomplished by i-deals. Therefore, I expected that the extent to which an organization provided the possibility for negotiation on these types of personalized work arrangements would have increased the motivation to continue working.

The second type of HR inducement investigated is the employee’s evaluation of their contractual arrangement and, thus, contract replicability. Above, this explained how the availability of HR activities, collective or individual ones, shaped the perception of the quality of the work arrangement (Ng & Feldman, 2008). Yet, the perception of the work arrangement was not only shaped by how matters are arranged within the employee’s own organization, but also by how employees increasingly compare their contract with what is available outside the
organization (Ng & Feldman, 2008). In light of this, Ng and Feldman (2008) introduced the term contract replicability and argued that when employees perceive their contract non-replicable, i.e. that they cannot get a better deal elsewhere, they will have higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Considering the surge of job mobility, contract replicability has become an increasingly important concept (Ng & Feldman, 2008). Since contract replicability is an indicator of organizational commitment and job satisfaction and the cognizance that the organization values the employee, it is expected to result in a positive evaluation of the organization.

The third HR inducement studied was related to the job content or job characteristics which can be regarded as HR activities also. According to job characteristics theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) properties of a job can directly affect employee wellbeing and attitudes. The theory states that the availability of core dimensions of a job such as: autonomy, feedback, development opportunities and (a moderate level of) workload have a positive effect on employee wellbeing because they can lead to positive psychological experiences at work (Kahn, 1990; LePine, Podsakoff & LePine, 2005). These core dimensions lead to employee wellbeing because they are either/or:

1. Functional in achieving work goals;
2. Reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs;

In this study the perception of the availability of these core dimensions were expected to generate positive work attitudes and, therefore, increase the motivation to continue working.

I have described above the three organizational HR inducements included in this study: availability of i-deals; contract replicability; and, core job characteristics. The expectation was that these HRM inducements would signal to employees that they are valued by the organization and, through the sense of reciprocity, employees would want to show their appreciation by evaluating the organization positively (HRM outcomes).

**HRM outcomes**

**The organizational contract**

I described above several HR activities this study focused on to investigate how employees can be motivated to continue working. The main rationale is that, when employees have the perception that their organization is being good to them, by offering HR practices, i-deals and offering a non-replicable contract, they evaluate the organization positively and want to reciprocate by being a good employee (Blau, 1964). The research model illustrates that HRM activities do not result directly in employee behavior. Instead, HRM activities lead to broader HRM outcomes, such as the individual’s evaluation of the organization climate and the psychological contract. Studies demonstrate that a positive organizational climate and a positive evaluation of the psychological contract are related to affective states or work attitudes that constitute a good relationship between the individual and the organization and/or work (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008; Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski & Bravo 2007).

HRM theorists explain that the organizational climate emerges from employees’ interpretation of the organization’s HRM activities as these activities are used to make sense of, and define the psychological meaning of the work situation (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). The
organizational climate is a shared perception of what a organization is like in terms of practices, policies, procedures, routines and of what is important and which behaviors are expected and rewarded (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Therefore, an organization’s HR system, or the set of HR practices adopted, should ideally be driven by the organization’s strategic goals (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Guzzo & Noonan, 1994). For example, when the organization’s HR system consists of inducements that promote employee development, employees are likely to regard the organizational climate as development oriented. As such, if an organization wants to retain their older workers they should have an organizational climate that promotes this.

While organizational climate is shared, the organizational climate emerges from individual perceptions of the psychological climate (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Therefore, in the project I investigated the employees’ perceptions of two types of organizational climates: a development climate; and, an accommodative climate for older workers. An organizational development climate is an organizational climate in which older workers are encouraged to develop themselves and are provided with development opportunities. An accommodative climate is a climate in which the organization encourages its older workers to take a step down, work less or do less demanding jobs and in doing so, prepare themselves for retirement.

While the organizational climate signifies a shared perception of the organizational contract, on the individual level HRM activities shape psychological contract. The psychological contract is defined as “the individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of the exchange agreement between individuals and their organization” (Rousseau, 1995 p. 9). The individual psychological climate, described above, cues the psychological contract. Thus, similar to the organizational climate, the psychological contract is shaped by explicit and implicit messages sent by the organization to its employees (Rousseau, 1995). Employees are not constantly actively evaluating the organization’s HR practices. In their meta-analysis Zhao, and colleagues (2007) have demonstrated that the state of the evaluation of the psychological contract is related to a variety of important organizational outcomes. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and justice theory (Greenberg, 1990) argue that employees compare what they give to the organization to what they receive from it, and when they perceive discrepancy, they adjust their input to achieve balance in the relationship (Zhao et al., 2007). When the employer fails to fulfill its promises or obligations and when the contract is breached, employees respond by a negative affective reaction and a change in attitudes and behaviors (Zhao et al., 2007). In other words, in case of contract breach, employees evaluate the organization negatively. This results in negative feelings towards the organization and retracts negative behaviors. Perceptions of contract fulfillment, on the other hand, affect behaviors positively. I investigated whether the perception of psychological contract fulfillment and the perception of the organizational climate increased employees’ motivation to continue working beyond retirement age.

Affective states

Existing research on retirement behavior have consistently found that positive job attitudes are related to employees’ continued participation in work at older age (Adams, 1999; Adams & Beehr, 1998; Adams et al., 2002). In his definition of retirement, Feldman (1990) states that retirement involves reduced psychological commitment to work. In accordance with the continuity theory (Atchley, 1989) and the work-role attachment theory (Carter & Cook, 1995) it is a well-accepted view in retirement literature that the individual’s relationship with the organization is a predictor of retirement behavior (Wang & Shultz, 2010). Conversely, as shown
in several empirical studies, when employees do not value relationships that are associated with work, they will be more likely to retire early (Gobeski & Beehr, 2009; Shultz, Morton & Weckerle, 1998). In this chapter, three indicators of the individual’s relationship work are investigated: organizational commitment; work engagement; and, job satisfaction in respect of the motivation to continue working.

**Contingencies: Personal factors**

I discussed a variety of organizational factors above that are associated with the motivation to continue working. These factors reflect organizations’ methods to manage employees’ retirement decisions. Conversely, personal factors are not in the control of the organization and comprise of individual characteristics. These individual characteristics are relevant to retirement decision making because they affect the motivation or ability to work. Personal factors that were included in this study are work-related personal factors, as well as non-work-related personal factors.

Job-related individual features that are related to the ability to work are the employee’s perception of his or her employability (Van der Heijden, Schalk & Van Veldhoven, 2008), and the use of individual’s coping strategies at work (Baltes, Staudinger, & Lindenberger, 1999). According to Van der Heijde (2005) employability is important to keep employees effectively active in the workforce.

Related to this, the usage of coping strategies at work enabled older workers to remain employable (Baltes et al. 1999). Specifically, lifespan theorists argued that ageing individuals respond to losses in physical and cognitive functioning by developing coping strategies (Baltes et al. 1999; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). Baltes and colleagues (1999) argued that individuals minimize their losses by investing less in goals directed at growth, and more in goals involving maintenance and regulation of losses. According to Baltes and colleagues (1999), individuals did that by selecting feasible goals, optimizing the means to achieve those goals and compensating for (age-related) losses. Individuals using selection, optimization and compensation strategies, therefore, will age successfully and this may affect their motivation to continue working.

The job-related individual features that are related to the motivation to work were employees’ reasons to work. Mor-Barak (1995) argued that the reason for individuals to engage in work goes beyond monetary motives. Based on human needs theories (Alderfer, 1969; Erikson, 1964), Mor-Barak proposed and empirically tested the idea of four main factors that gave reason to why older adults engage in employment. The first reason for work was social reasons. This is similar to Alderfer’s (1969) relatedness needs. Social reasons to work referred to the need to interact with others and to be held in a positive regard by others (Dendenger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005). Secondly, personal reasons for work parallels with Alderfer’s (1969) growth needs. Individuals that attach importance to personal reasons, engage in employment because it gives them self-esteem, self-efficacy, personal satisfaction and sense of pride. Thirdly, financial reasons for work refer to the monetary rewards that work provides. Alderfer’s (1969) needs theory referred to this as the existence needs, referring to the material and physiological desires that a person must meet. The fourth reason that Mor-Barak (1995) distinguishes is generativity. The need for generativity (i.e. the need to teach and share knowledge with the younger generation) is based on Erikson’s (1964) human development theory. Erikson (1964) explained that, in later stages of life, humans acquire the need to teach and pass on their knowledge about what they have mastered and accomplished with younger generations. Based on Mor-Barak’s
(1995) research, Dendinger, Adams and Jacobson (2005) investigated how these reasons for work were related to retirement attitudes, job satisfaction and occupational self-efficacy of employment in later life and retirement. The authors found that generativity was a reliable predictor of job satisfaction and attitudes towards retirement, whereas social reasons were only a predictor of attitudes toward retirement. In this chapter I investigate how these different reasons for work are related to the motivation to continue working.

Finally, studies on individual’s retirement behavior consistently demonstrated that individuals with poor health and individuals that are older are more likely to retire (early) (Barnes-Farrell, 2003; Kim & Feldman, 1998; 2000). As such, health and age are taken into consideration as control variables.

2.4.2. Research context and method

The research context for research question two is the same as that for research question one. Table 2.1 gives an overview of the sample characteristics of each organization.

The variables in the research model were measured with existing, validated scales. Table 2.2 gives an overview, of which scales were used, example items from the scale and the reliabilities of the scales. Variables with reliabilities under .65 were not used in further analyses. Age was measured by asking respondents what their birthdates were, and health was measured by asking how healthy respondents perceived themselves in comparison to their peers.

The relationships were tested through regression analysis using SPSS in which all factors were fitted in one model. For each predictor a weighted average beta was calculated, including also the level of significance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Reliabilities</th>
<th>Original article</th>
<th>Example item</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological contract fulfillment</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>Robinson &amp; Wolfe (2000)</td>
<td>I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions (item recoded)</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employability</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>Janssens, Sels &amp; Van den Brande (2003)</td>
<td>It will be difficult for me to find new employment when leaving this organization</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for work: Generativity</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>Mor-Barak (1995)</td>
<td>For me, paid work gives me a chance to teach and train others</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for work: Social</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>Mor-Barak (1995)</td>
<td>For me, paid work keeps me from feeling alone</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for work: Personal</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>Mor-Barak (1995)</td>
<td>For me, paid work helps me feel worthwhile</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for work: Financial</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>Mor-Barak (1995)</td>
<td>For me, paid work is my major source of income</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping strategy: Selection</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>Abraham &amp; Hansson (1995)</td>
<td>I concentrate all my energy on a few things.</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping strategy: Optimization</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>Abraham &amp; Hansson (1995)</td>
<td>When something matters to me, I devote myself fully and completely to it.</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping strategy: Compensation</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>Abraham &amp; Hansson (1995)</td>
<td>When things don't go as well as they used to, I keep trying other ways of doing it until I can achieve the same result I used to.</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomodative climate for older workers</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>Bal, de Jong, Jansen &amp; Bakker (2012)</td>
<td>In this organization older workers are encouraged to carry out less demanding tasks</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development climate for older workers</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>Bal, de Jong, Jansen &amp; Bakker (2012)</td>
<td>In our organization, older workers are developed and are encouraged to learn new things</td>
<td>1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct</td>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>Scale Name</td>
<td>Ref.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiosyncratic deals negotiation</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rousseau, Hornung &amp; Kim (2009)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract replicability</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ng &amp; Feldman (2008)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
<td>Karasek (1979)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td></td>
<td>Karasek (1979)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Colleague support</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td></td>
<td>Van Veldhoven &amp; Meijman (1994)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor support and feedback</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Graen &amp; Uhl-Bien (1991)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Organizational commitment</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td>Allen &amp; Meyer (1990)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department commitment</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scale adapted: Allen &amp; Meyer (1990)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
<td>Van der Sluis (2000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to continue working</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td></td>
<td>Armstrong-Stassen &amp; Schlosser (2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Items:**
- I have been able to negotiate with my supervisor to create an employment arrangement that suits me personally
- This organization promises me a level of pay that other organizations are unlikely to provide
- I always have enough time to perform my tasks (item recoded)
- Last week, I was able to decide myself how to execute my work
- Last week, my colleagues helped me with my tasks
- Last week, I received sufficient information about the quality of my performance
- I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it
- I enjoy discussing my department with people outside it
- My work inspires me
- To what extent are you satisfied with your job?
- If I were completely free to choose, I would prefer to continue working after retirement age

**Rating Scale:**
1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree
2.4.3 Results: Which factors are related to the motivation to continue working?

The results of the analyses are displayed in Table 2.3. The results are separately arranged by organization, and the last four columns display the mean weighted average beta, the standard error, the Z value and the p value, for the overall effects per variable. The results of the weighted average betas demonstrate that only age ($p < .05$), personal reasons for work ($p < .00$), work engagement ($p < .05$) and satisfaction ($p < .05$) are significant predictors of the motivation to continue working.

The results by organization demonstrate that the HRM activities, I-deals and contract replicability (measured in three organizations) and job characteristics (measured in one organization) are not (directly) significantly related to the motivation to continue working.

In this study the following HRM outcomes were included: development climate; accommodative climate; and, psychological contract fulfillment. The research model included two types of climate: accommodative climate and development climate towards older workers. An organizational climate that is accommodative encourages older workers to take it slow and step down, while a development climate encourages them to develop themselves and continue their work participation. Both types of climate were measured in all organizations. The results demonstrate that the effect of accommodative climate is ambiguous. In one organization the effect was negative as theoretically expected (organization $A$: $\beta = -.20$, $p < .01$), while in the other it was positive (organization $D$: $\beta = .40$, $p < .01$). Although the latter is counter-intuitive, it may be that older workers interpret an accommodative climate as pleasant because it allows them to continue working in a way that they can keep up with, thus by taking it slow. Further, development climate was positively related to the motivation to continue working in two organizations (organization $A$: $\beta = .14$, $p < .05$; organization $I$: $\beta = .26$, $p < .05$). Thus, in these organizations, encouraging and supporting employees in their future development is positively related to employee’s motivation to continue working. In the other organizations, organizational climate did not have an effect.

Furthermore, psychological contract fulfillment was measured in eight organizations and in two organizations it was negatively related to the motivation to continue working (organization $A$: $\beta = -.10$, $p < .05$; organization $C$: $\beta = -.18$, $p < .05$). Thus, the more employees perceive that the employer has fulfilled its promises; the less employees are motivated to continue working. The effect found here is also counter-intuitive. In the other organizations, psychological contract fulfillment was not significantly related to the motivation to continue working.

The affective states included in this study were positive job attitudes (satisfaction) and employees’ evaluation of work (work engagement) and organization (organizational commitment). First, organizational commitment was measured in all organizations and in three of the nine organizations organizational commitment displayed a positive relationship with the motivation to continue working (organization $A$: $\beta = .14$, $p < .00$; organization $E$: $\beta = .26$, $p < .05$; organization $F$: $\beta = .22$, $p < .01$), in other six organizations there was no significant relationship. Department commitment was measured in one organization and did not display a positive relationship. Work engagement was measured in six organizations and in two of them displayed a positive relationship with the motivation to continue working (organization $B$: $\beta = .14$, $p < .05$; organization $H$: $\beta = .22$, $p < .01$), in other four organizations there was no
significant relationship. Satisfaction was measured in three organizations and in one case it displayed a positive relationship with the motivation to continue working (organization C: $\beta = .21, p < .05$), in the other two organizations satisfaction was not significantly related to the motivation to continue working. In six of the organizations at least one of the psychological states displayed a positive relationship with the motivation to continue working. This suggests that employees who have a positive evaluation of their work or organization have a higher motivation to continue working.

The job-related individual factors that were included in this study were: employability; coping strategies; and, meanings of work. The analyses demonstrated that employability (measured in four organizations) was not significantly related to the motivation to continue working. Furthermore, the use of the selection, optimization and compensation (SOC) strategies were measured in two organizations; in one of the organizations the use of the optimization strategy was positively related to the motivation to continue working (organization H: $\beta = .24, p < .01$). Thus, employees who optimize means to increase their task performance have a higher motivation to continue working. The four meanings of work developed by Mor-Barak (1995) was measured in one organization. Of the four measured scales, work as a financial reason was not reliable and, thus, was not included in further analyses. Of the other three meanings of work, generativity was measured in three organizations. Only in one organization was the effect significant (organization A: $\beta = -.09, p < .05$). Work as a personal meaning was measured in one organization and was positively related to the motivation to continue working (organization A: $\beta = .21, p < .05$). Work as a social meaning was not found significant. Thus, employees had a higher motivation to continue working if their work gave them the ability to pass on knowledge to future generations and also when work gave them personal satisfaction and pride.

The individual factors age and health demonstrated significant effects. In two of the nine organizations age had a positive significant effect on the motivation to continue working (organization D: $\beta = .36, p < .01$; organization H: $\beta = .22, p < .01$). Health was measured in four organizations and in one of them it had a positive effect on the motivation to continue working (organization A: $\beta = .10, p < .05$).

The results demonstrate that HRM activities as well as contract related HRM outcomes (climate and psychological contract) do not have a direct effect on the motivation to continue working. This is as expected, since the effect of these variables is mediated by affective states. The results of this study further confirm existing research (e.g. Gobeski & Beehr, 2009; Wang & Shultz, 2010) and theories (i.e. continuity theory and work-role attachment theory) that a positive relationship with work increases the motivation to continue working (Atchley, 1989; Carter & Cook, 1995). Chapter 4 of this dissertation will look more closely into the question of how work engagement (which appeared to be an important predictor of the motivation to continue working) is generated by job characteristics and what the role of age is.
Table 2.3: Predictors of the motivation to continue working per organization based on regression analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>SE(beta)</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>p One-sided</th>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>-.15</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.47</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contract replicability</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
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<td>.37</td>
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<td>Workload</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.05</td>
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<td>.04</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
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<td>.12</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.10</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.40*</td>
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<td>.06</td>
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<td>-.04</td>
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<td>-.18*</td>
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<td>-.06</td>
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<td>.06</td>
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</tr>
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<td>.14**</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.19</td>
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<td>.06</td>
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<td>.05</td>
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</tr>
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<td>.11</td>
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<td>.07</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01
2.5 Research question 3: How do employees want to continue working?

2.5.1 Theory

To answer the third research question of this chapter, namely, “how do employees want to continue working?” I have investigated employees’ preferences regarding employment preferences after retirement. Wang and Shultz (2010), in their review of retirement literature indicate that retirement research often focuses on a single, one-dimensional, outcome, such as full-time retirement or bridge employment. As such, contemporary research has lacked in covering the variety of options available or conceivable in work participation at older age. Based on literature about non-standard work arrangements and labor law (Kalleberg, 2000; Feldman, 1990; Diebels, 2004), I have identified six dimensions of the work that forms the work arrangement. The dimensions include: frequency; distribution; format; duration; content and duration. I argue that for each dimension there are several options possible in bridge employment. For frequency I distinguish the options: working an unchanged amount of time; working less hours; working more hours; or, total withdrawal. For the second dimension, work distribution, I distinguish three options: working throughout the whole year; working seasonally; working on an on-call basis; or, working or working occasionally. The third dimension, format, has three options: working via the same organization; working via an agency; or, self-employment. The fourth dimension, duration, has two options: working via a permanent contract; or, working via a temporary contract. For the fifth dimension, job content, the options are: doing the same tasks; doing more complex tasks; doing less demanding tasks; or, doing different tasks, but with the same complexity (horizontal change). Finally, the sixth dimension, the context of the job, has three dimensions, these are: working for the same organization and same department; working for the same organization and different department; and, working for another organization.

The options represent the characteristics of the job arrangement that can be changed when moving into a different work-profile. Investigating how employees rate their preferences for each option gives a better understanding of how employees want to continue working after their retirement. In this chapter I provide an overview of how employees score each option within the six dimensions. In Chapter 5 I elaborate to form four “work after retirement” profiles. In addition, I also consider how the retirement work profiles are related to a variety of individual and organizational factors.

2.5.2 Research context and method

The research context for research question three is the same as that for research question one. Table 2.1 gives an overview of the sample characteristics of each study. The questions for work after retirement profiles were measured in organizations D to I. The profiles were measured through existing questions (Polat, Bal & Jansen, 2012). Respondents were asked to which extent they wanted to work in a certain manner after retirement. The respondents could answer the questions on a five-point Likert scale (1= not at all, 5= very much). The profiles were analyzed through calculating a mean score for each profile characteristic, using SPSS.
2.5.3 Results: How do employees want to continue working?

The results per organization are presented in Table 2.4 below. The main conclusion is that employees score highest on items that included working less. This is both in terms of amount of hours (work less, complete withdrawal), as well as task-related (less demanding job) and distribution related (work seasonally or occasionally). Employees scored low on working year around or working more hours a week. Furthermore, employees also scored high on work options that implied least change in work context. Employees scored high on working at the same organization and low on working in another organization or working via an agency. Another item employees scored high on was having freedom in planning when to work.

In conclusion, the results suggest that employees want to decrease their work demands and want flexibility in planning their working hours. Further, employees do not want to change their work context and are most motivated to remain in their current organization. Briefly, the most preferred work after retirement profile is one including doing less work in the same job, at the same place, in the same organization, with more autonomy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work at the same organization and the same department</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work at the same organization but another department</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in another organization</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work via an agency</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be self-employed</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work via a permanent contract</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work via a temporary contract</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work year around</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work seasonally (for example only during winter)</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work occasionally</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on an on-call basis</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work less hours per week</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue doing the same job</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a more complex job</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a less demanding job</td>
<td>3.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change my job description</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do a more interesting job</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan my work and working hours</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily withdrawal from work</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely withdrawal from work</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Standard deviations are reported between the brackets.
2.6 Research question 4: Which topics are important in retirement decision-making?

To answer the final research question of this chapter, “which topics do employees consider to be important in their retirement decision-making?” the prominence of several topics in retirement decision-making are investigated. Eleven topics were investigated including: societal obligations; financial reasons; leisure time; social contacts; expectations of the employer; health; enjoyment of work; expectations of partner; physical demands; social pressure; and, domestic reasons. The topics were selected based on retirement literature and are discussed in greater detail in theoretical foundations of research question two.

2.6.1 Research context and method

The context for research question four is the same as for research question one. Table 2.1 gives an overview of the sample characteristics of each study. The questions were measured in all organizations. Based on retirement research, ten factors were selected, and respondents were asked to which extent each factor was important for their retirement decision. The respondents could answer the questions on a five point Likert scale (1 = not at all, 5 = very much). The mean scores for each factor were calculated using SPSS.

2.6.2 Results: Which subjects do employees consider to be important in their retirement decision-making?

The final issue investigated was which subjects are important in employees’ decisions to retire or continue working. The results per organization can be found in Table 2.5 below. These point out that the subjects most important are personal health and enjoyment of work. The subjects least important are external factors, such as social pressure, expectation of the employer and societal obligation. This suggests that employees’ retirement decision making will be most driven by personal reasons instead of external factors.
### Table 2.5: Mean scores and standard deviations for subjects important in retirement decision-making (range= 1-5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Societal obligation</td>
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<td>3.01</td>
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**Note.** Standard deviations are reported between brackets.
2.7 Conclusion and discussion

This chapter gives an overview of the findings of the research project into sustainable employment in the health sector which was conducted in nine healthcare organizations in the Netherlands. The aim of studies was twofold: first, to provide advice to the participating organizations, as well as the government, on the issue of continuing working. Second, it was an initial step to explore which issues were most pressing and most relevant in studying the work motivation of older employees from an academic perspective.

This chapter pertains to the second aim and covers issues and factors that have been mostly overlooked in existing research. As such, the study was explorative in the sense that the researcher was open to which issues would prevail to be relevant and interesting yet, at the same time, the study was strictly guided by the theoretical frameworks (see theory section) and the key issues provided in Chapter 1.

In the project, the main concern was to research:

1. Which HR practices are available in the organizations;
2. Which factors are related to the motivation to continue working;
3. How employees want to work after retirement; and
4. Which subjects are important in retirement decision-making.

I summarize below the main findings and discuss how the findings relate to existing studies.

The results for the first research question demonstrated that, while the perceived availability of HR practices was high, the usage was relatively low. The practices involving employee accommodation and development were especially low. As such, these practices probably fulfill their signaling function, but not their practical function.

The results for the factors motivating continued working demonstrated that employees who have positive evaluations of their work and organization (work engagement and job satisfaction) have a higher motivation to continue working. This finding is in line with existing research that has consistently found that work attitudes are related to retirement attitudes and workplace norms to retirement decision (e.g. Adams & Beehr, 1998; Con, Jackofsky & Slocum, 1993; Huuhtanen & Piispa, 1992; Shultz, Taylor & Morrison, 2003; Wang, Zhan, Liu & Shultz, 2008).

Organizations can generate these positive affective states amongst others by: meeting the expectations of employees (fulfilling the psychological contract); creating a positive organizational climate; providing terms of employment which are idiosyncratic and non-replicable; and, a job that allows employees to pass on knowledge (generativity). These findings are largely in line with existing retirement research. Bal (2008), for instance, argued that the fulfillment of the psychological contract could be an important factor in retaining older workers in the workforce. Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008) and Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009) found that a supportive organizational climate was related to the retention of older workers. A study by Bal, De Jong, Jansen and Bakker (2012) found that i-deals were related to employees’ motivation to continue working. A study by Dendinger, Adams and Jacobson (2005) demonstrated that generativity at work was negatively related to retirement attitudes. There is no study to our knowledge that has investigated the effects of contract replicability on retirement decision-making. However, Ng and Feldman (2008) found that the perception that the
psychological contract cannot be replicated elsewhere was a predictor of organizational commitment. It would be interesting for future research to investigate how contract replicability is related to different types of employment after retirement (i.e. in the same organization versus elsewhere).

The results of preferences for work characteristics relating to bridge employment showed that employees scored high on after retirement work conditions that indicated task change. While the use of practices that imply task modification is not high currently, this is likely to change in the future. This conforms to the human developmental theories, both from an abilities perspective and from a needs perspective. As explained earlier, individuals’ abilities change when they get older, their physical and cognitive abilities decrease while their knowledge and experiences increase (Baltes et al, 1990). Also, the need for individuals’ to pass on knowledge increases as they get older (Erikson, 1964). Thus, since abilities and needs change in older age, it is desirable that job tasks should evolve accordingly.

The results also demonstrated that employees are least motivated to work in another organizational context. This could be explained by the socio-emotional selectivity theory, a lifespan theory of social motivation (Carstensen, 1995). This theory proposed an age-related increase in selected social relationships as a compensatory strategy for coping with age-related physical and cognitive losses. Specifically, the theory posits that when individuals get older they increasingly experience time as being limited. Because of this, they alter their priorities from instrumental goals to emotionally meaningful goals, such as social relationships (Lang & Carstensen, 2002). This could manifest itself in higher organizational commitment, among others.

Finally, factors that are important in employees’ retirement related decision-making are also investigated to answer the fourth research question. The results gathered from all the organizations were consistent and showed that physical health and the enjoyment of work were the most important factors in employees’ decision to retire. This is in line with existing studies that have found that poor health often leads to labor force withdrawal among older workers (e.g. Bound, Stinebrickner & Waidman, 2010) and in early retirement decision (Van den Berg, Elders & Burdorf, 2010). It is, therefore, essential that employers keep their employees in good health and they can start taking measures to do so in an early stage. The second factor, enjoyment of work, is related to the evaluation of work and the psychological states related to work (e.g. commitment, work engagement etc.). As noted earlier, when employees evaluate their work positively, they are likely to continue their work participation (e.g. Adams & Beehr, 1998; Con, Jackofsky & Slocum, 1993; Huhtanen & Piispa, 1992; Shultz, Taylor & Morrison, 2003; Wang, Zhan, Liu & Shultz, 2008). Employers can also encourage employees to use HR practices that can help making their work more enjoyable.

Several relevant issues have arisen from this chapter and will be investigated in detail later. First, this chapter does not investigate how HR practices are related to the motivation to continue working. Chapter 3 will research how and through which mechanisms HR practices are related to the motivation to continue working. In doing so, the focus will be specifically on development HR practices, since these practices communicate to employees that the organization invests in its employees.

Second, later in Chapter 4, the concept of engagement will be more closely investigated. The results in this chapter have demonstrated that work engagement is an important predictor of
the motivation to continue working. Yet, work engagement a psychological state that is often not included in research to predicting retirement behavior. While this chapter demonstrates empirically that it is a relevant predictor, conceptually it is also very relevant, since work engagement is a very activating type of psychological state (in comparison to, for instance, work satisfaction). It is also a concept that goes beyond the organization (in contrast to organizational commitment). Hence, Chapter 4 will investigate how work characteristics affect work engagement and how these effects are different for older and younger workers.

In Chapter 5 I research older workers’ preferences regarding their work profile in more detail. I will construct work after retirement profiles and investigate how they are related to different work and non-work factors.

Finally, an important topic that hitherto has not received sufficient attention is how employees want to continue working. In this chapter I have touched upon this issue by presenting several work-related options to employees and asking them their preferences. In Chapter 5 I will elaborate this and form four “work after retirement” profiles. In addition, I investigate how the work profiles are related to a variety of individual and organizational factors.
2.8 References


Chapter 2 Sustainable Employment


### Appendix

**Appendix A: Availability and use of HR practices, organization A**

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### Chapter 2 Sustainable Employment

#### Availability and use of HR practices, organization B

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<td>23. Diverse and varying job tasks</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Challenging work</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 3

How do development HR practices contribute to employees’ motivation to continue working beyond retirement age?
Abstract

This study tests a conceptual model of the influence of Human Resource (HR) practices perceived as development-oriented on employee’s motivation to continue working beyond retirement age. It was anticipated that the perception of development-oriented HR practices being available would increase older employees’ intentions to continue working, and that this relationship would be mediated by perceptions of the organizational climate, psychological contract fulfillment, organizational commitment, and work engagement. Hypotheses were tested using two samples of employees working in eldercare organizations. The results of this study demonstrate that organizations can encourage their employees to continue working through development HR practices that create an organizational climate that is conducive to positive work attitudes.
3.1. Introduction

The populations in developed countries are aging due to both increasing life expectancy and decreasing birthrates (European Commission, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Consequences of these changes are manifest in the composition of the workforce. The number of people above retirement age will increase strongly in future decades while the number of young people available to enter the workforce will decrease. This pattern is reinforced by the large number of baby boomers (those people born between 1946 and 1964) that are approaching retirement age. The demographic developments outlined above put pressure on the labor market and, if nothing changes, developed countries will face severe labor shortages in the near future. It is therefore important that governments and organizations anticipate and react to the upcoming labor shortages. Governments are already taking measures such as increasing the retirement age (European Commission, 2011). However, for these efforts to be successful, more insight is needed into which factors can contribute to employee’s motivation and intention to continue to work beyond the present official retirement age, and what the role of the organization can be in this.

The existing literature concerning retirement has primarily focused on the opposite of continuing working beyond retirement age, that is people’s motivation in retiring early (i.e., before the official retirement age; e.g. Feldman, 1994). Nevertheless, due to the demographic changes described above, in recent decades the focus of scientific research has shifted towards extending the workforce participation of older workers (e.g. Gobeski & Beehr, 2009; Rau & Adams, 2005). Wang and Shultz (2010), in their review of the retirement literature, outlined the four groups of factors that appear to impact on retirement processes. Firstly, there are factors related to individual attributes, such as good health or a poor financial situation, that have been identified in several studies as being positively related to workforce participation (Wang, Zhan, Lui, & Shultz, 2008; Weckerle & Shultz, 1999). Secondly, Wang and Shultz (2010) state that job and organizational related factors impact on the retirement process. Several studies have found, for example, that organizational commitment and organizational support are positively related to the decision to prolong work participation (Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009; Gobeski & Beehr, 2009). Thirdly, family factors, such as family support, have been found to impact on the decision when to retire (Shultz, Morton, & Weckerle, 1998). Finally, socioeconomic factors such as government policies and programs are also important in retirement decision-making (Wang & Shultz, 2010). For organizations that would like to increase its employees’ motivation to continue working, directly influencing individual, family, and socioeconomic factors is difficult at best, and therefore the current study primarily focuses on job- and organization-related factors.

Hence, the question to which an answer is sought in this study is what role can an organization have in retaining older workers? This has a strategic nature as it concerns one of the key resources of an organization - its human resources (Elias & Scarbrough, 2004) In other words, efforts to retain older workers will have to be part of the organizational (HR) strategy to cope with future labor shortages (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Previous studies have investigated the relationship between work attitudes, such as satisfaction or organizational commitment, and the motivation of older workers to participate in paid work (e.g. Gobeski & Beehr, 2009). In so doing, they have failed to fully predict work motivation in older age because attitudes such as organizational commitment and work engagement are influenced by, and therefore inextricable from, the employer organization and its HR system (Guest, 2002).
In particular, it has been shown that HR practices that involve employee development can contribute to the retention of older workers (Bal, de Jong, Jansen, & Bakker, 2012). Offering development HR practices signals the organization’s commitment towards its employees and creates perceptions of organizational support and of a positive organizational climate. As a result, through the norm of reciprocity, employees are more inclined to form similar positive attitudes towards their employer (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). Given this understanding, development HR practices have been studied in the context of turnover intentions (Benson, 2006; Meyer & Smith, 2000). Moreover, it has been argued that today, with organizations facing global competition, employees have to deal with a demand for continuously changing job qualifications, and hence development becomes increasingly important for a long and successful career. Yet, in reality, older workers are often treated less favorably when it comes to development opportunities (Maurer & Rafuse, 2001). Not only does this reduce their employability (Maurer & Rafuse, 2001; Van der Heijden, Schalk, & van Veldhoven, 2008), it also affects their commitment towards their employer (Meyer & Smith, 2000); and both aspects reduce their motivation to continue working.

In this chapter, we focus on how development HR practices influence older employees’ attitudes and their motivation to continue working. Studies by Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008) and by Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009) have already demonstrated that organizations’ efforts to develop employees contribute, through organizational commitment and perceived organizational support, to employees’ intentions to remain with the organization. In line with these studies, we believe that it is particularly development HR practices that will contribute to a psychological development climate for older workers, and that this will induce positive work attitudes and ultimately increase the motivation to continue working. Hence, in this study, we investigate the role of development HR practices in creating positive work attitudes, and ultimately how these affect the intention to prolong working. In so doing, we study older employees’ retirement decisions from an HRM perspective (Wang & Shultz, 2010).

In line with the general theorizing in HRM (Guest, 1987; Paauwe, 2009; Wright & McMahan, 1992), the independent variables selected for inclusion in the model to be tested are HRM activities, and more specifically development HR practices. In the model, these are related to the so-called HRM outcomes covering the psychological development climate for older workers, psychological contract fulfillment, organizational commitment, and work engagement. In addition, an organizational outcome variable (motivation to continue working after retirement age) is likewise included. Further, to ensure a comprehensive overview, we control for individual attributes and family factors. Figure 3.1 shows the conceptual model as used in the current study.
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices

Figure 3.1: Research Model

The main contribution of this study is that it adopts an integrative approach in researching older employees’ motivation to continue working beyond normal retirement age. In so doing, we investigate how development HR practices can contribute to a psychological development climate that induces feelings of commitment and engagement in older workers, and how this subsequently contributes to a motivation to continue working. As such, it complements existing studies that have looked at which work attitudes are related to workforce participation in older age.

Secondly, this study contributes to previous research by investigating the role of HR practices in increasing employees’ motivation to continue working through generating a positive work climate and psychological contract fulfillment since both are related to favorable employee perceptions of their organization. This is imperative since official retirement ages are increasing or even being abandoned throughout Europe (European Commision, 2011). Consequently, it is no longer sufficient to focus only on older workers’ intentions to remain in the company, but to extend this to intentions to remain beyond their anticipated retirement age.

3.2 Theory and Hypotheses

Many factors (individual, job and organizational, family, and socioeconomic) may influence an employee’s decision to retire (Wang & Shultz, 2010), but an employer’s power to influence many of these factors is very limited. This study therefore focuses on how organizations can influence employees’ retirement decisions. Here, the HRM literature advocates that HR practices are key communicators for the organization and impact on organizational outcomes (Guest & Conway, 2002; Paauwe, 2009). Empirical studies by, for example, Bal et al. (2012) and Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008) have demonstrated that organizations can influence retirement intentions through their HR practices. Below, we discuss the mechanisms
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices

through which HR practices can impact on an employee’s motivation to continue working rather than retire.

3.2.1 The role of Human Resource (HR) practices

HR practices can contribute to the motivation to continue working in two ways. Firstly, they can enable and therefore support employees to continue working by shaping their skills (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Several studies have found that organizations tend to invest significantly less in their older workers than in younger members of the workforce (Blundell, Dearden, Meghir, & Sianesi, 1999; Maurer & Rafuse, 2001; Taylor & Walker, 1998). By so doing, organizations single-handedly make their older employees effectively redundant (Taylor & Walker, 1998). Conversely, if organizations do invest in development HR practices for their older workers, they provide the older workers with means that enable them to continue working longer and, in so doing, also increase their motivation to continue working (Bal, et al., 2012).

Secondly, HR practices shape employees’ attitudes, such that making HR practices available to employees increases their work motivation and commitment (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Several studies have demonstrated that work motivation and commitment are positively related to workforce participation in older age (Gobeski & Beehr, 2009; Shultz, et al., 1998). The relationship between HR practices and such employee attitudes has theoretically been explained by signaling theory (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000) and by social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Signaling theory argues that HR practices create an organizational climate that collectively shapes employee characteristics on the organizational level. On the individual level, HR practices signal what is expected from employees by shaping the psychological climate and the individual psychological contract (Ostrov & Bowen, 2000). In the context of extending working lives, offering HR practices that involve development especially represent organizational support as they show the organization’s willingness to invest in its human capital and its commitment to its older employees (Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Despite this, studies continue to show that organizations invest far less in older workers. This negatively affects older employees’ commitment, work involvement, self-worth, and perception of the organizational climate, as well as their employability (Frazis et al., 2000; Maurer & Rafuse, 2001; Taylor & Walker, 1998).

Overall, we therefore argue that offering HR development practices creates a climate that is positively perceived by its older employees as development-oriented. Based on this, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Availability of development HR practices is positively related to psychological development climate for older workers.

Secondly, in a similar vein, the social exchange theory argues that, when organizations provide development HR practices, they give employees the feeling that they are important and are valued by the organization by showing the organizations’ commitment towards employees and by creating a positive organizational climate (Blau, 1964). Here, a development organizational climate creates a sense of reciprocity, which is fundamental to the social exchange relationship. This sense of reciprocity leads employees to be more inclined to develop commitment towards the organization and thus to work harder in pursuit of organizational goals.
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices

(Blau, 1964; Eisenberger, et al., 1986). Studies that examine the relationship between positive work attitudes, such as organizational commitment, and work outcomes have consistently found that organizational commitment is negatively related to turnover intention (Allen, et al., 2003; Meyer & Smith, 2000), and positively related to intention to remain (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008) and to the intention to work in older age (Gobeski & Beehr, 2009). We thus expect that when older employees experience a development climate that includes older workers, based on their perceptions of the development HR practices offered by the organization, their feelings of organizational commitment will be boosted.

Similarly, organizational climate has also been found to be positively related to work engagement. The job-demands and resources model (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007) suggests that an organization’s climate can serve as a job resource that leads to work engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Thus, on the organizational level, a development-oriented psychological climate leads to organizational commitment through employees’ sense of reciprocity and, on the job level, it is a resource that fosters work engagement. Particularly in the context of continuing to work, a psychological climate in which older workers’ development is encouraged and supported will foster positive work attitudes.

Given the above, the following hypotheses is formulated:

Hypothesis 2a: A positive psychological developmental climate is positively related to older workers’ organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2b: A positive psychological development climate is positively related to older workers’ work engagement.

On the individual level, the organization’s HR practices shape an employee’s psychological contract with the employer (Guest & Conway, 2002; Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). A psychological contract is defined by Rousseau (1995, p.9) as “individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of exchange agreement between individuals and their organization”. Psychological contracts are shaped through the explicit and implicit messages sent by the organization to its employees, whether these are intentional or unintentional (Rousseau, 1995). The messages that are relevant for employee development are primarily communicated through the organization’s HR practices (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). Hence, the more that older employees perceive development practices to be available for them within their organization, the more these older employees will not perceive that the organization is discriminating against them based on age, and this will positively enhance the state of their psychological contract (Taylor & Walker, 1998). Thus the third hypothesis becomes:

Hypothesis 3: Older employees’ perceptions of development HR practices are positively related to their perception of psychological contract fulfillment.

Many studies have found that individuals who experience fulfillment of their psychological contract display positive work attitudes, such as high organizational commitment and work engagement (Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007). Therefore, we would expect a perception that the psychological contract is being fulfilled would lead to positive work attitudes such as organizational commitment and work engagement. As a result, the following hypothesis can be formulated:
Hypothesis 4: Psychological contract fulfillment is positively related to older workers’ (a) organizational commitment and (b) work engagement.

3.2.2 Positive work attitudes and the motivation to work beyond retirement age

Employees’ relationships with their organizations have often been investigated in terms of their effect on retirement behavior. Typically, studies have shown that employees with positive work-related attitudes, such as organizational commitment and work engagement, participate longer in the workforce (Adams, Prescher, Beehr, & Lepisto, 2002; Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008; Gobeski & Beehr, 2009; Luchak, Pohler, & Gellatly, 2008; Taylor & Shore, 1995).

One way that this relationship can be explained is through the work-role attachment theory of Carter and Cook (1995), that argue that work-roles emerge from valued experiences in work such as the psychological climate and the state of the psychological contract. Variations in adjusting to change (such as those resulting from retirement) can be understood by examining transitions in critical role activities (Carter & Cook, 1995). As such, if work roles are important for an individual, leaving those roles is likely to create dissatisfaction (Shultz, et al., 1998). Hence, individuals with high levels of organizational commitment, or a strong identification with the organization, are more likely to continue working (Kim & Feldman, 2000). Similarly, individuals that have high levels of work engagement, or a strong identification with their work role, will also have a stronger intention to continue working. The fifth and the sixth hypotheses are therefore formulated as follows:

Hypothesis 5: Organizational commitment is positively related to older workers’ intention to work beyond retirement age.

Hypothesis 6: Work engagement is positively related to older workers’ intention to work beyond retirement age.

3.3 Method

3.3.1 Samples and Procedure

The study was conducted in 2009 in the Netherlands. At that time, the topic of postponing retirement was receiving considerable public attention as the government had disclosed plans to increase the pension age.

Data for this study were collected from two eldercare organizations. According to the Dutch bureau of statistics, the mean actual retirement age in the health sector at the time the data was collected was 62.1 (CBS, 2012). The data from the first care organization (Sample 1) were used to build the model, and the second set (Sample 2) was employed to validate the model. Employees were approached through their supervisors to complete a questionnaire. Answers could be provided as a hard copy or digitally.

Sample 1 was made up of employees of an eldercare institution that provides medical care. The study formed part of a larger research project and, for the purposes of this chapter, only respondents that were aged 40 and over were included in the analyses. The overall response rate was 49%, and of these 55.7% matched our age criterion (giving a sample size for our purposes of \( N = 313 \)).
The average age of the respondents in our sample was 59.78 years (SD = 5.63, age range: 40–63 years). The vast majority of the respondents in this study were female (91.7%), and the average tenure was 11.19 years (SD = 8.45). Of the respondents, 85.4% were married or were in a registered partnership (of whom 50% also had children living at home), 5.2% were single parents, 7.8% were single without children, and 1.6% placed themselves in none of these categories. In terms of education, 10.1% put primary education as their highest completed education level; 38% high school degree; 38.8% intermediate vocational training; and 13.1% university.

Sample 2 consisted of employees of an adult day care institution that provides non-medical care. The overall response rate was 50%. As with the first sample, only respondents aged over 40 (64.8% of all respondents) were included in our analyses, giving a sample N = 352.

Again, the vast majority of the respondents in the sample were female (87.7%). The mean age of the respondents was 50.04 years (SD = 5.26, age range: 40–63 years), the respondents had a mean tenure of 11.96 years (SD = 9.52). Of the respondents, 87.4% were married or had a registered partnership (of whom 48.5% also had children living at home), 6% were single parents, 4.9% were single and childless, and 1.7% had other living circumstances. In education terms, 7.1% had completed no more than primary education; 39.8% high school degree; 36% intermediate vocational training; and 17.1% university.

3.3.2 Measures

Existing validated scales were used to measure the constructs. Unless otherwise stated, the questions sought responses on a five-point scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree).

Independent variables.

Availability of developmental HR practices was measured by asking respondents about the extent to which four selected developmental HR practices were available within their organization. The HR practices selected were based on a study by Kooij (2010) and covered career planning, on-the-job development, promotion, and regular training. Respondents were asked the extent to which these HR practices were available in their organization. The reliability of the scale was .87 using the first sample and .86 with the second.

Psychological development climate for older workers was measured with six items, again developed by Kooij (2010). The scale was based on previous research on supportive climates (Tracey & Tews, 2005; Dikkers et al., 2004). Items assess the encouragement offered by organizations to older workers to use their skills and knowledge, and to develop further. In effect, the variable measures the psychological development climate since it measures individual perceptions of the development climate. In the analyses, these items were used in a disaggregated manner.

Three of the items were focused on the organization: “In our organization, older workers are developed and are encouraged to learn new things”, “Our organization uses the existing experience, knowledge, and capacities of older workers”, and, “In our organization, older workers are encouraged to maintain and polish their skills”. The other three were focused on one’s immediate supervisor: “My supervisor encourages older workers to develop and to learn new things”, “My supervisor uses the existing experience, knowledge, and capacities of older workers”, and “My supervisor encourages older workers to maintain and polish their skills”. The reliability of the six-item scale was .90 using the first sample and .86 with the second.
Psychological contract fulfillment was measured using the five-item psychological contract breach scale developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000). The items assess the extent to which employees felt that their organization had met its promises. The items were re-coded to measure fulfillment, an example statement being: “I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions”. The reliability of the scale was .86 using the first sample and .84 with the second.

Organizational commitment was measured by the eight-item affective organizational commitment scale of Allen and Meyer (1990); a sample statement being: “I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it”. The reliability of the scale was .89 using the first sample and .85 with the second.

Work engagement was measured using six items taken from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). From the original scale, three items measuring vigor and three items measuring dedication were selected. Respondents were asked to respond on a seven-point scale ranging from ‘never’ to ‘daily’. An example item for vigor is: “My work inspires me”; and an example item of dedication is: “I am proud of the work that I do”. The reliability of the scale was .93 using the first sample and .90 with the second.

Dependent variable

Intention to continue working was measured using the three-item scale by Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008), supplemented with an additional item. While the original scale measured ‘intention to remain’, for this study the scale was adapted to measure the intention to continuing working after the official retirement age (65 years) or beyond the pre-retirement age (62 years), without specifying whether this would be in the same organization or elsewhere. Prior to the questions, there was a short explanatory paragraph outlining that prolonging one’s working life was of topical interest in politics, and for unions and organizations, and that the following questions were related to this. An example item is: “If I were completely free to choose, I would prefer to continue working after retirement age”. The reliability of the scale was .96 using the first sample and .97 with the second.

Control variables

In the analyses, we controlled for age, gender, subjective health, the importance of finances in retirement decisions, and the importance of the expectations of a partner in the retirement decision since earlier studies had found that these variables were related to retirement decisions (Kooij, de Lange, Jansen, & Dikkers, 2008; Luchak, et al., 2008; Talaga & Beehr, 1995; Wang, et al., 2008). Age and gender were measured by asking respondents directly for their year of birth and their gender (1 = male, 2= female). Subjective health was measured by asking respondents how healthy they considered themselves in comparison with people of similar age (1 = much healthier, 5 = much less healthy). Financial importance was measured by directly asking respondents how important financial considerations were in their decision to retire or continue working (1 = very unimportant, 5 = very important). The expectation of a partner was measured by directly asking respondents how important the expectations of their partner were in their decision to retire or to continue working (1 = very unimportant, 5 = very important).
3.4 Results

To assess the factor structure of the six multi-item scales for each of the two samples, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using LISREL 8.72 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2005). Several fit indices were considered including the LISREL root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA), the non-normed fit index (NNFI), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) and the comparative fit index (CFI). The CFA results indicated a good fit for both samples using the 6-factor model (availability of development HR practices, development climate, psychological contract fulfillment, organizational commitment, work engagement, and the intention to continue working). The fit indices for the first sample were as follows: $\chi^2 = 480.18; df = 365; p < .001; \text{RMSEA} = .032; \text{NNFI} = .99; \text{GFI} = .99; \text{CFI} = .91$. For the second sample, the fit indices were: $\chi^2 = 557.64; df = 365; p < .001; \text{RMSEA} = .039; \text{NNFI} = .98; \text{GFI} = .90; \text{CFI} = .98$. The standardized coefficients of the factor loadings were significant and above .52 for the first sample and above .53 for the second. Further, the model fit was significantly better than that of alternative models. In addition, we tested for common method variance by adding a common method factor to the CFA (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) and the results did not suggest common method invariance (see Table 3.1). As the CFA results indicated a good fit, we moved on to our main analyses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$df$</th>
<th>$\Delta$</th>
<th>$df$</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>NNFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td></td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.91</td>
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<td>Baseline</td>
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<td>1142.32</td>
<td></td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.92</td>
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<td>3902.62</td>
<td></td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.69</td>
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<td>7-factor</td>
<td>6422.3</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>162.05</td>
<td></td>
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<td>.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sample2</td>
<td>(N=352)</td>
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<td>.98</td>
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Note: **p < .001; RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; NNFI= Non-Normed Fit Index; GFI= Goodness of Fit Index; CFI= Comparative Fit Index.

1: 6-factor model: development HR practices, psychological development climate for older workers, psychological contract fulfillment, organizational commitment, work engagement, intention to continue working.
2: 5a-factor model: development HR practices, psychological development climate for older workers, psychological contract fulfillment, positive work-attitudes (organizational commitment, work engagement), intention to continue working.
3: 5b-factor model: development HR practices, psychological contract (psychological development climate for older workers, psychological contract fulfillment), organizational commitment, work engagement, intention to continue working.
4: 1-factor model: All items loading onto one factor.
5: 7-factor model: development HR practices, psychological development climate for older workers, psychological contract fulfillment, organizational commitment, work engagement, intention to continue working, with all items loading onto one common method factor.

3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, and the correlations among the variables being studied are presented in Table 3.2. The results using the first sample demonstrate that psychological
development climate \((r = .14, p < .05)\), organizational commitment \((r = .30, p < .01)\), and work engagement \((r = .22, p < .01)\) correlate significantly with the intention to continue working. Furthermore, the gender \((r = -.17, p < .01)\) and expectations of partner \((r = -.12, p < .05)\) control variables also display significant positive correlations with intention to continue working.

The results using the second sample demonstrate that organizational commitment \((r = .15, p < .01)\) and work engagement \((r = .16, p < .01)\) display significant correlations with the intention to continue working. Here, only the control variables covering subjective health \((r = .15, p < .01)\) and expectations of partner \((r = -.13, p < .05)\) displayed significant correlations with the intention to continue working.
Table 3.2: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of the variables in the two samples

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Sample 1 (N=313)</th>
<th>Sample 2 (N=352)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>M</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Subjective health</td>
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<td>4. Financial importance</td>
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<td>5. Expectations partner</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01. Gender: 1 = male; 2 = female. The correlations of Sample 1 are displayed below the diagonal (i.e. in the bottom left part of the table. Correlations of Sample 2 are displayed above the diagonal (top right).
3.4.2 Hypotheses Testing: Sample 1

The hypothesized model was tested through a path analysis, again using LISREL 8.72 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2005). The analysis was based on a covariance matrix and used maximum likelihood estimation. Disaggregated models were used with items as indicators of the latent variables (not shown in the model for purposes of clarity). To test the hypothesized model, the significances of the paths were assessed; and to test the extent to which the model fitted the data, the RMSEA, NNFI, GFI, and the CFI were assessed in a similar way to the CFA above. Further, the fit of the hypothesized model was compared to that of alternative models.

The RMSEA of the hypothesized model was below .05, indicating a very good fit (Steiger, 1990). The other fit indices also had values indicative of a good fit: the NNFI, the GFI, and the CFI were all above .90 (Kelloway, 1998). The squared multiple correlations for the structural equations demonstrated that 14% of the variance in intention to continue working was explained by the variables in the model. Table 3.3 provides a summary of the fit indices for the hypothesized model and alternatives. The results displayed in the table show that the hypothesized model has the best fit.

The maximum likelihood standardized parameter estimates for the hypothesized model with age interactions are displayed in Figure 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample 1</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Δχ²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>NNFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1 hypothesized model</td>
<td>726.14</td>
<td>512</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>751.62</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model 3</td>
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<td>504</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 4</td>
<td>719.65</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>18.37</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 5</td>
<td>744.51</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>644.63</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model 6</td>
<td>109.35</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>616.79</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample 2</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Δχ²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>NNFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1 hypothesized model</td>
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<td>512</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>812.47</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
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<td>.97</td>
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<td>691.69</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Model 2 has a path between perceived development HR practices and psychological development climate plus paths between psychological development climate and both organizational commitment and work engagement.
Model 3 has a path between perceived development HR practices and psychological contract fulfillment plus paths between psychological contract fulfillment and both organizational commitment and work engagement.
Model 4 has a path between perceived development HR practices and psychological development climate plus paths between psychological development climate and both organizational commitment and work engagement. It has additional paths between organizational commitment and intention to continue working and between work engagement and intention to continue working.
Model 5 has a path between perceived development HR practices and psychological contract fulfillment plus paths between psychological contract fulfillment and both organizational commitment and work engagement. It has
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices

additional paths between organizational commitment and intention to continue working and between work engagement and intention to continue working.

Model 6 tests the hypothesized model with, using Sample 1, an additional path where age moderates the relationship between perceived development HR practices and psychological development climate. With Sample 2 this model tests the hypothesized model plus an additional path where age moderates the relationship between psychological contract fulfillment and organizational commitment.
Figure 3.2: Hypothesized Model Sample 1 (for clarity purposes, paths from indicators to the latent variables are omitted).
The results of the study indicate positive and significant relationships between development HR practices and development climate ($\beta = .55, p < .01$), and thus support Hypothesis 1. The results demonstrate that the perceived availability of development HR practices is positively related to the psychological development climate for older workers. Furthermore, Hypothesis 2 is also supported by the results of the analysis displaying a positive relationship between psychological development climate for older workers and both organizational commitment ($\beta = .17, p < .01$) and work engagement ($\beta = .27, p < .01$). In addition, the results also support Hypothesis 3 by demonstrating a significant relationship between the perceived availability of HR practices and psychological contract fulfillment ($\beta = .40, p < .01$). The relationships between psychological contract fulfillment and both organizational commitment ($\beta = .39, p < .01$) and work engagement were also significant ($\beta = .29, p < .01$), thus supporting Hypothesis 4. Further, the results demonstrate that both organizational commitment ($\beta = .22, p < .01$) and work engagement ($\beta = .17, p < .01$) were positively related to the intention to continue working, thus supporting Hypotheses 5 and 6.

Most of the control variables tested in this model also displayed significant relationships with our dependent variable. The gender ($\beta = -.16, p < .01$) and expectations of partner ($\beta = -.12, p < .01$) variables were both significantly related to the intention to continue working. However, age ($\beta = .06, p < .08$), subjective health ($\beta = .04, p < .52$), and financial importance ($\beta = .06, p < .25$) were not significantly related to the intention to continue working.

3.4.3 Hypothesis Testing: Sample 2

To cross-validate the model, the model and the hypotheses were retested using a second sample. In line with the first study, the fit indices of the hypothesized model also indicated a good fit in the second study ($\chi^2 = 810.47; df = 512; p < .001; RMSEA = .041; NNFI = .97; GFI = .88; CFI = .97$). The squared multiple correlations of the structural equations demonstrated that the model explained 9% of the variance in the intention to continue working variable. The model’s maximum likelihood standardized parameter estimates for the second study are shown in Figure 3.3.
Figure 3.3: Hypothesized Model Sample 2 (for clarity purposes, paths from indicators to the latent variables are omitted).
The results indicate a significant positive relationship between the perceived availability of development HR practices and the psychological development climate for older workers ($\beta = .54$, $p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 is supported as the results show a positive relationship between the psychological development climate for older workers and both organizational commitment ($\beta = .32$, $p < .01$) and work engagement ($\beta = .28$, $p < .01$). Further, the results support Hypothesis 3 in demonstrating a significant relationship between perceived availability of HR practices and psychological contract fulfillment ($\beta = .43$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 4 was also supported through the significant relationship between psychological contract fulfillment and both organizational commitment ($\beta = .32$, $p < .01$) and work engagement ($\beta = .28$, $p < .01$). Again, as in Study 1, the results indicate a significant positive relationship between work engagement ($\beta = .15$ $p < .01$) and intention to continue working, supporting Hypothesis 6. However, this time, the path between organizational commitment and intention to continue working was not significant ($\beta = .08$, $p < .15$), so Hypothesis 5 fails to receive further support.

Further, the subjective health ($\beta = .15$, $p < .01$), and expectations of partner ($\beta = -.10$, $p < .01$) control variables were significantly related to the intention to continue working, whereas age ($\beta = .03$ $p < 52$), gender ($\beta = .05$, $p < .66$), and financial importance ($\beta = .18$, $p < .13$) were not.

3.4.4 Post-hoc analyses

Given that this study is about older workers, one would expect age to be an important variable. To test whether the relationships studied differed with age additional analyses were conducted. For each path in the model, we tested whether age moderated the relationship between the linked variables. The analyses were conducted according to the method described by Mathieu, Tannenbaum, and Salas (1992). The results demonstrated that, in the first sample, the path between perceived development HR practices and the psychological development climate for older workers was moderated by age ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$). This suggests that the older the employee, the more that perceived development HR practices are related to the psychological development climate for older workers. Figure 3.4 provides a graphical representation of the moderating effect. Further, with the second sample, the results indicate that the path between psychological contract fulfillment and organizational commitment is moderated by age ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$). This suggests that the relationship between psychological contract fulfillment and organizational commitment is stronger for older workers. Figure 3.5 provides a graphical illustration of this moderating effect.
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices

Figure 3.4: Interaction between perceived development HR practices and age in relation to psychological development climate (study 1)

Figure 3.5: Interaction between psychological contract fulfillment and age in relation to organizational commitment (study 2)
3.5 Discussion

The current study has investigated how development HR practices can contribute to boosting employees’ intentions to continue working beyond retirement age, and which factors mediate this relationship. The results demonstrate that offering development HR practices to older workers does contribute to their intention to continue working because their perception of the availability of these practices colors their perceptions of the organizational climate and the individual contract, both of which are related to work attitudes. In line with findings in other studies (e.g., Gobeski & Beehr, 2009), the results demonstrate that employees’ attitudes towards work and specific jobs are related to their willingness to continue working. However, in the second sample, the relationship between organizational commitment and intention to continue working was not significant. In addition, the explained variance in intention to continue working was relatively low (9%) using Sample 2 data. As noted in the introduction, there are many factors that influence decision-making over retirement (Wang & Shultz, 2010). For instance, Kooij, de Lange, Jansen, Kanfer, and Dikkers (2011), in their study on aging and work motivation, found that it is important for older workers that their work is intrinsically motivating.

The results of our analyses with both samples indicate that the perceived availability of development HR practices is significantly related to a belief that the organization is providing a climate in which older employees can develop themselves and also that the psychological contract is being fulfilled. In Sample 1, the relationship between the availability of development HR practices and the psychological development climate was moderated by age, such that the older an employee, the stronger perceived HR practices are related to climate. Further, in both samples, both the psychological development climate and psychological contract fulfillment were positively related to both organizational commitment and work engagement. In Sample 2, this relationship was moderated by age, such that the older the employee the stronger the relationship between psychological contract fulfillment and organizational commitment.

Both signaling theory (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger, et al., 1986) argue that HR practices create an organizational climate on the collective level and a psychological contract on the individual level that shape employees’ attitudes (i.e. their organizational commitment and work engagement). The results of both analyses suggest that perceiving an availability of development HR practices signals the organization’s willingness to invest in its human capital. This creates a psychological development climate and is interpreted as fulfilling the psychological contract. A perception of organizational willingness to invest in its employees, and hence its commitment towards them, creates a sense of reciprocity and boosts employees’ commitment towards the organization. This study has found that organizational commitment and work engagement, generated by the perception of development HR practices being available, specifically contribute to an intention to continue working beyond retirement age.

The main contribution of the current paper is that this study takes on an integrative approach based on HRM theories to predict an employee’s intention to continue working beyond normal retirement age (Paauwe, 2009). In so doing, it has investigated how development HR practices can contribute to the motivation to continue working by creating an organizational climate and influencing the state of the psychological contract that affect employees’ attitudes and ultimately their motivation to continue working. Although existing studies often relate retirement...
behavior to work attitudes (e.g. Adams, et al., 2002; Gobeski & Beehr, 2009), they tend to ignore the fact that these work attitudes are formed and influenced by the organization’s HR efforts.

In addition, earlier studies have not investigated the quality of the psychological contract in relation to retirement-related decisions. While some earlier studies have taken the psychological climate into consideration (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008), the psychological contract is generally neglected. Research by Bal, de Lange, Jansen, and van der Velde (2008) has already shown that older employees react differently than their younger colleagues to breaches of the psychological contract. In their meta-analysis, the researchers demonstrated that older employees have a weaker reaction to psychological contract breach than younger workers. Despite the relatively older sample compared with this earlier research, our study still demonstrates that a positive psychological contract increases organizational commitment and, through that, also the intention to continue working.

By addressing the role of development HR practices, this study provides a framework for organizations on how to encourage continuing working beyond retirement age. While, in practice, older workers are often treated less favorably when it comes to development opportunities (Maurer & Rafuse, 2001), this study has demonstrated that offering employees development HR practices can encourage them to continue working.

3.5.1 Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that it is based on cross-sectional data, and thus the causality in the relationships found cannot be determined. However, general HRM models (e.g. Paauwe 2009) indicate that HR practices are more likely to be a precedent, than a result of the intention to continue working. A related limitation is that the data are from a single source. A useful direction for future research would therefore be to collect longitudinal data from multiple sources.

The second limitation is related to the design of the study: studying more organizations would have allowed a multilevel design. A valuable direction for future research would thus be to expand the study to include multiple organizations, which would also make it possible to aggregate workers’ perceptions of organizational climate on an organizational level.

The third limitation is related to a characteristic of the research sample; that it was overwhelmingly female. Although this limits the generalizability of the results, it could be seen as an advantage. Demographic research demonstrates that women retire earlier than men (Eurostat, 2007) and academic research has found that there are gender differences in retirement behavior. For instance, research by Talaga and Beehr (1995) showed that a person’s financial situation is an important factor in the retirement decision of men. From this perspective, men are often ‘compelled’ by their financial situation to continue working. Therefore, having a large female sample may be seen as an advantage since financial considerations often play less of a role in their retirement decision-making. Therefore, identifying the motivation of women to continue working may also expose factors that apply to men but that have been dwarfed by financial issues in previous studies. Nevertheless, further research, with a more even distribution of men and women, is required to clarify this.

The fourth limitation is concerned with the skewed distribution of respondents’ education level (intermediate vocational training on average), the type of job (physically
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices

demanding), and the specific sector (adult day care). The fact that the study was conducted among a very specific group of respondents is a limitation and it is important to repeat this study in a group of respondents who are more evenly distributed in terms of educational level and types of jobs. However, this limitation is also to an extent a strength of this study because it is particularly with employees of limited education (and therefore often low income) and with physically demanding jobs that continuing to work beyond retirement age appears to be problematic (e.g. Lund, Iversen, & Poulsen, 2001; Pleau, 2010).

The fifth limitation is related to the variables studied. In the study, the intention to continue working beyond retirement age was measured, not actually working after retirement age. Further, in our measurement of this variable, we did not make a distinction between continuing to work in the same organization as against in another organization. A direction for future research would be to measure actual post-retirement age behavior and be more specific as to what is meant by continuing to work. Furthermore, in this study, we hypothesize that the perceived availability of development HR practices was related to the state of the psychological contract and, as such, we assumed that development HR practices are part of the psychological contract. However, given the ambiguous results, this is not necessarily the case, and this could explain the differences in the effects found between the two samples.

The final limitation identified concerns the low proportion of the variance in the intention to continue working explained by the model (14% and 9% in the two samples). This means that employees’ intentions to continue working are also determined by factors outside of the tested model (Wang & Shultz, 2010). Other studies have, for instance, demonstrated that the family situation, such as the number of children and other dependents, is also important (Talaga & Beehr, 1995). However, the focus of this study was on how organizations could motivate employees to continue working, and more specifically whether providing them with development HR practices would help. Future research could also include other types of HR practices to see if these also influence retirement-related decisions. For instance, in her study on age-related HR bundles, Kooij (2010) found that HR practices directed at maintenance, utilization, and accommodation were related to older workers’ motivation to continue working. Further, as noted earlier, it is important for older workers that work is intrinsically motivating (Kooij et al., 2011) and so future research could usefully address which characteristics of a job make it motivating for older workers.

3.5.2 Conclusions

The main conclusion of this research is that development HR practices are related to employees’ motivation to continue working beyond normal retirement age. Organizations that provide their employees with development HR practices are communicating that they want to invest in their employees, and this receives a positive response. The results of this study demonstrate that this relationship is mediated by organizational climate, perceptions of the psychological contract, and work attitudes. However, the limited strength of the effects found indicate that there are other, maybe more important, factors, such as personal issues, involved in retirement decisions (Wang & Shultz, 2010). Nevertheless, this study demonstrates that the HR system plays a valuable part in increasing employees’ motivation to continue working. Based on these findings, it can be suggested that organizations seeking to encourage working beyond
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices

retirement age include practices in their HR systems that motivate and enable older workers to continue working, including development-oriented HR practices such as providing training. In the organizations that were studied, training programs were being offered on topics such as lifting, first aid, coping with patient aggression, mentoring/supervising, and management skills. These types of training can help older workers cope with job demands.
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices

3.6 References


Chapter 3 Development HR Practices


82
Chapter 3 Development HR Practices


Chapter 4

The relationship between workload and weekly work engagement: The buffering effect of Age and Job resources
Abstract

The upcoming labor shortage in the eldercare sector will increase the workload for its employees. The sector is known for its high average age, which will rise even further in the upcoming years. This chapter investigates how organizations can keep workers engaged in the context of high workload, and how job resources can facilitate this. In doing so, we distinguish between younger and older workers. The results demonstrate that there is an inverted U-shaped relationship between workload and work engagement and that this relationship is steeper for younger workers. Further, the job resources autonomy and development opportunities buffer the relationship between workload and work engagement, for younger workers. For older workers these resources do not buffer the relationship between workload and work engagement.
4.1 Introduction

Across many developed countries, the age composition of the population is changing (European Commission, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Populations are becoming older due to increased longevity and decreasing birthrates (Eurofound, 2011; Oeppen & Vaupel, 2002). These changes are also reflected in the workforce. The workforce is becoming older as the number of new entrants is declining and older employees are being encouraged to remain in the workforce.

Although aging is a general tendency in many developed countries, affecting all sectors, macro-economic research demonstrates that in particular the eldercare sector has a relative aged labor pool and has considerable difficulties in attracting and retaining younger employees (Eurofound, 2011; Stone & Wiener, 2001). The current trend of the aging population will affect the eldercare sector in two ways: first, in the coming years a substantial proportion of the current labor pool will reach retirement eligible age and will move out of the workforce. Second, the relative increase of older people will further surge the need for eldercare. As a result of the low labor supply, the workload will increase for those working in the sector making their jobs more physically demanding (Stone & Wiener, 2001). In addition, the economic crisis has resulted in retrenchment in sectors that are highly dependent on government funding and has increased the pressure on eldercare (Eurofound, 2011).

As a consequence of these developments, in the past years the Dutch government as well as governments of other European countries have been looking for ways to keep older employees in the workforce (European Commission, 2010). In addition, an increasing number of academic research has been devoted to the question of how employees can be motivated to continue working (Wang & Shultz, 2010). These studies have found that experiences at work, both negative (e.g. dissatisfaction) as positive (work engagement) are the most powerful and stable predictors of employees’ intention to retire or continue working (Von Bonsdorff, Huhtanen, Tuomi & Seitsamo, 2010). While this body of literature is expanding, there is still little known about how to keep employees active and engaged in their work prior to their retirement. In this study we propose that extending working lives beyond retirement age is not an issue that should be dealt with until employees are close to retiring age eligible age. Instead, it is something that should be dealt with earlier so that employees can be kept active and engaged throughout their working lives and so can be guided towards continuing working.

This chapter focuses particularly on the effects of workload on work engagement. The study is conducted in the eldercare sector among nurses, as labor shortages and the pressure for organizations to increase efficiency will impact the workload of employees in this sector profoundly. Especially, in the context of high demanding jobs, it is relevant to examine how organizations can keep their employees engaged.

The study specifically investigates how (1) various work characteristics affect work engagement and (2) how this differs between age groups. To study the effects of job characteristics on work engagement, two theoretical perspectives are used, namely, the traditionally used job enrichment and work involvement literature (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Hackman & Oldham, 1976) and the less commonly used job stress literature (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992).

In line with job enrichment and involvement research (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) and the job demands and resources literature (Demerouti et al., 2001) this study explains that job
demands affect employee wellbeing. In these streams of literature, workload is perceived as a challenging type of work demand, and is known to have a positive effect on employee wellbeing (Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010). Crawford and colleagues (2010) explain that this is because they promote mastery, personal growth or future gains. However, based on research on the effect of work stress on employee wellbeing (e.g. Kahn & Byosiere, 1992; Lepine, Podsakoff & Lepine, 2005), this study argues that the effect of workload on employee wellbeing can be both positive and negative. According to Collins (2008) work stress is a response to inappropriate levels work pressure and is a product of work demands and the capability to cope with demands. Kahn and Byosiere (1992) argue that the lack of work stress or excessive levels of work stress are negatively related to employee wellbeing, because the former can lead to boredom while the latter can lead to an unmanageable situation. In a similar token, this study argues that the relationship is inverted u-shaped, such that workload is positively related to work engagement until an optimal level, when workload exceeds that level, and thus the individual’s capabilities to meet the demands, the relationship becomes negative.

Further, in line with research on work stress (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992) the study demonstrates that job and individual characteristics may buffer the impact of job demands on employee wellbeing. First the role of age within this relationship is investigated. Although scholars such as Kahn and Byosiere (1992) and Hobfoll (2002) have hinted towards this notion of individual differences, existing studies have not taken age-related differences into account (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker, Demerouti, de Boer, & Schaufeli, 2003; Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005; Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007). Taking age-related individual differences into account is crucial because changes in the age composition of the labor force requires further investigation of how the shifts in age composition will affect the relevance of existing ideas about this relationship. Age-related differences are specifically expected, because older workers who age successfully, develop individual coping mechanisms as a response to the (physical and cognitive) losses they encounter while aging (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). Older workers have therefore more resilience and experience (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004), which makes them more capable to cope with workload. Conversely, younger workers have not had the time to develop these coping capabilities. Hence, we expect that employee age will buffer the relationship between workload and work engagement. Therefore, this study asserts that older workers are less prone to the negative effects of workload compared to younger workers.

Moreover, this chapter argues and demonstrates that the buffering effect of job resources on the relationship between workload and work engagement plays out differently for older and younger workers. In particular, since younger workers cannot rely on experience, they are more dependent on job resources to regulate the negative effects of demanding work conditions. This study involves a weekly investigation of the process, as workload and the access and provision of job resources can vary on a daily basis (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Butler, Grzywacz, Bass, & Linney, 2005). By asking respondents about their weekly experiences, respondents are able to answer more precisely by reflecting on a specific week. In addition, through a weekly approach, individuals do not have to recall past experience, which decreases the possibility of errors in recall (Turner, Wheaton, & Lloyd, 1995).

As such, this study makes multiple contributions to existing research. First, the study demonstrates that the effect between workload and work engagement is inverted u-shaped (hypothesis 1). Second, it is demonstrated that this relationship varies between older and younger
workers (hypothesis 2). Third, in line with existing knowledge about the effect of job resources on work engagement the study confirms that job resources increase work engagement (hypothesis 3). Finally, the study demonstrates that the buffering effect of job resources in the relationship between workload and work engagement differs for older and younger workers (hypothesis 4).

**4.2 Theory and Hypotheses**

**4.2.1 Workload and Work Engagement**

Engagement refers to a state of personal investment in the work role, such that the person is willing to allocate personal resources to perform well at work and is experiencing emotional connection to its work (Kahn, 1990). Accordingly, engagement can only be generated if the work allows the person to express and employ him or herself in the work role (Kahn, 1990). Moreover, the state of engagement is characterized by involvement, energy and efficacy at work (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008). Engagement is important in the workplace, since it is related to job performance, turnover, and absenteeism (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Employees who are engaged are investing in their work-role (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992) and therefore are more likely to stay active in the workforce (Von Bonsdorff et al., 2010). Furthermore, engaged workers experience positive emotions at work, experience better psychological and physical wellbeing and display better in-role and extra-role performance (Bakker, et al., 2003; Bakker, et al., 2005; Bakker, et al., 2008). Research shows that high demanding working conditions, such as excessive workload will result in burnout and turnover and a decline in work engagement and performance (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli, Bakker, & van Rhenen, 2009). The latter becomes a very urgent problem considering that in the health sector, poor performance means poor quality of patient care and possibly higher mortality rates (Aiken, Clarke, Sloane, Sochalski, & Silber, 2002).
Based on the job characteristics theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), Kahn (1990) proposed that psychological experiences at work drive employees’ attitudes and behavior and create conditions in which people personally engage or disengage in work. As such, job characteristics are predictors of employee engagement since they enhance or undermine people’s motivation and sense of meaning at work (Kahn, 1990). In the work stress literature and more recently also in the work engagement literature, workload is perceived as a job characteristic that is positively related to employee wellbeing (Crawford et al., 2010; Lepine et al., 2005). Although workload is perceived as a job demand, it is generally perceived by employees as a challenge rather than a hindrance, and therefore promotes personal growth or future gain (Crawford et al., 2010). More specifically, in their study on work stress, Lepine, and colleagues (2005) argue that stress has a positive effect on wellbeing through motivation but a negative effect through strain. Yet, because the negative effects of strain is less prevalent in the short run, the authors argue that challenging demands are positively related to employee wellbeing (Lepine et al., 2005).

Nonetheless, when the demands exceed the individual’s capabilities for meeting them, there is overload (Karasek, 1979). Warr (1990) argues in the Vitamin Model that there are non-linear relationships between job characteristics and employee wellbeing. Based on an analogy of the fact that vitamins are required for the human body, up to and not beyond a certain level. When this level is exceeded, vitamin intake can be harmful. In the same token, the person-environment (P-E) fit literature (Edwards, Caplan, & Harrison, 1998) argues that the outcome of workload on engagement depends on the individual’s preferred, or manageable level of workload and the actual level of workload. Levels of workload deviating from the preferred level will negatively affect weekly work engagement. This is because energy depletes eventually when completing a demanding task successfully, while strain and exertion do not. Thus, a moderate level of workload may have a positive effect on weekly work engagement, yet when weekly workload exceeds this level, the positive effect decreases and negative effects start to prevail. Given the former, the first hypothesis is formulated as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There is an inverted-U shaped relationship between weekly workload and weekly work engagement.

4.2.2 Aging and workload

Literature on job stress argues that individuals with personal resources are better in dealing with high demanding working conditions than those without (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992). Thus there are individual differences in coping with demanding situations, and this particular study focuses on age-related individual differences. This study argues that older individuals are better capable to deal with workload in comparison to their younger counterparts.

Resource theorists argue that human development entails gaining and losing resources at every life-stage (Baltes, 1987). Specifically, the process of aging results in changes in people’s resource reservoirs related to their biological, psychological and social functioning (De Lange, Taris, Jansen, Smulder, Houtman, & Kompier, 2006; Hobfoll, 2002). Successful development depends on the ability to manage the continuous changes in the level of resources across lifespan, through maximizing gains and minimizing losses (Baltes, Staudinger, & Lindenberger, 1999). While managing resources is important throughout the whole life span, at later age it becomes more crucial because older individuals experience more losses than gains. Therefore, at older age
individuals increasingly encounter difficulties with acquiring new resources, and the ability to successfully manage existing resources accumulated over time becomes more important. Specifically, individuals experience declines in intellectual and physical functioning as a result of the aging process, while they encounter gains in knowledge and experience (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). In correspondence to that, individuals develop functional and emotional regulation mechanisms for coping with physical and emotional losses caused by the changes, which can serve as resources on the job (Baltes, et al., 1999; Carstensen, Fung, & Charles, 2003; Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995).

For example, the lifespan theory of Selection Optimization with Compensation (SOC; Baltes, et al., 1999) explains that due to declining physical and intellectual abilities, people allocate fewer resources to goals that are directed to growth, and instead invest in goals directed at maintenance and regulation for losses. According to this theory, successful aging, thus minimizing losses and maximizing gains, is obtained by selecting achievable outcomes, optimizing means or resources to reach those outcomes and compensating for losses of outcome relevant means (Baltes, et al., 1999). As such, when individuals become older, they develop functional regulation strategies. Conversely, younger workers have not experienced decline (yet), and have therefore not been required to develop coping strategies to successfully perform their job.

In addition, older individuals also develop regulation strategies on an emotional level. According to the Socio-Emotional Selectivity Theory (SST; Carstensen, 1995; Carstensen, et al., 2003) older individuals increasingly perceive time as limited and therefore focus on short-term goals, such as regulating their emotions. Conversely, younger people perceive time as unlimited and focus on long-term goals, such as acquiring new information. According to the SST, the perceived limitation of time leads to a motivational shift from instrumental goals to emotionally meaningful goals. The increased attention to emotionally meaningful goals leads to greater complexity of emotional experience and better regulation of experienced emotions (Carstensen, 1995; Carstensen, et al., 2003). Therefore, older individuals display less severe reactions to negative events. In support of this in the workplace, Bal, De Lange, Jansen and Van der Velde (2008) have demonstrated that older workers react less strongly on psychological contract breach compared to younger workers.

In sum, when people get older they develop both functional regulation capabilities (Baltes, et al., 1999) and emotional regulation capabilities (Carstensen, 1995; Carstensen, et al., 2003; Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995; Heckhausen, Wrosch, & Schulz, 2010) which can serve as resources while completing job tasks. As such, older people had the time to develop distinctive resources that support them in coping with excessive workload. Conversely, younger workers have not yet developed these functional and emotional capabilities, and are thus more susceptible for high workload. In sum, we expect that age moderates the curvilinear relationship between weekly workload and weekly work engagement, such that, younger employees’ work engagement will be affected more strongly by workload than that of older workers. Therefore, the curvilinear effect will be steep for younger workers, while being flat for older workers. Given the above, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 2: The inverted U-shaped effect of weekly workload on weekly work engagement is steeper for younger workers in comparison to older workers.**
4.2.3 The Role of Job Resources

Job resources are work characteristics that are centrally valued in their own right (Hobfoll, 2002) because they foster employees’ growth, learning and development (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), or are valued because they act as a means to obtain centrally valued ends (Hobfoll, 2002). As such, resources can be extrinsically motivating in that they are instrumental in obtaining work goals or are intrinsically motivating because they fulfill basic human needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985). According to the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), a work context in which these resources are available, supports psychological autonomy, competence and relatedness and enhances employee well-being and intrinsic motivation at work. Similarly, the job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), argues that the availability of core dimensions of work such as autonomy, development opportunities and feedback will lead to positive personal and work outcomes. Studies by Bakker and Bal (2010) and Bakker, Demerouti, Taris, Schaufeli and Schreurs (2003) among others, have empirically tested this model and found support for the positive effect of core job dimensions on work engagement. Therefore hypothesis 3 is as follows:

**Hypothesis 3:** Employees experiencing higher levels of weekly (1) autonomy, (2) development opportunities and (3) feedback at work will be more engaged than employees experiencing lower levels of weekly development opportunities, autonomy and feedback at work.

In addition, job resources can be extrinsically motivating because resources can reduce the tendency of organizational properties to generate specific stressors, alter the perceptions and cognitions caused by such stressors, moderate the responses that follow the appraisal process, or reduce the health-damaging consequences of such responses (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992, p. 622). Hobfoll (2002) explains that gaining resources becomes particularly salient in the context of resource loss, for instance caused by high job demands. Thus, especially when job demands are high, gaining resources are valued as they can be functional in coping with the demanding situation (Hobfoll, 2002).

This study specifically looks at the relationship between workload and engagement in physically demanding jobs in the eldercare sector. The most commonly accepted job resources buffering the effect of workload identified in the literature are professional autonomy, development opportunities, and feedback (Bakker, et al., 2005; Kahn & Byosiere, 1992; Karasek, 1979; Steers & Mowday, 1977).

Karasek (1979) argued that when employees experience high job demands, such as a high workload, job autonomy can reduce the negative impact of those demands because it provides employees the opportunity to organize their task in a way that they are most likely to successfully complete them. As such, job autonomy is functional in dealing with high workload (Bakker, et al., 2007; Karasek, 1979). Professional development opportunities and feedback at work help employees to acquire skills that enable them to better cope with workload (Karasek, 1979). In this study, development opportunities do not imply training opportunities; instead they refer to daily informal developmental opportunities at the job during a specific week. An example could be employees acquiring skills enabling them to perform tasks more efficiently. In a similar vein, receiving feedback about performance gives employees knowledge of their performance and in doing so, enables them to improve their work output and cope with high workload more
efficiently (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Hence, it is expected that autonomy, development opportunities and feedback will buffer the curvilinear effect of workload on work engagement. Hence, hypothesis 4 is as follows:

**Hypothesis 4a:** Weekly (1) autonomy, (2) development opportunities and (3) feedback buffer the relationship between weekly workload and weekly work engagement.

As explained earlier, there are differences in how individuals from different age groups use their resource pools (Baltes, et al., 1999; Carstensen, 1995; Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995; Hobfoll, 2002). Respectively, the P-E fit literature argues that when there is a misfit in capabilities and demands, this will negatively affect people. Therefore, people will display efforts to resolve P-E misfit (Edwards & Van Harrison, 1993). These efforts may be directed at changing the environment (i.e. environment mastery) or changing the person (i.e. adaptation) (Edwards & Van Harrison, 1993). Thus, when employees experience excessive workload they can apply coping strategies to resolve the unpleasant situation.

The lifespan theory of control (Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995; Heckhausen, et al., 2010) argues that older individuals, due to their losses, are less capable to influence the environment by action and have more resilience to, and experience in changing themselves. Hence, in case of misfit, change efforts come from themselves instead of the environment. Younger individuals on the other hand, primarily use their efforts to change the environment, by gaining new resources because they are better able to do so, and because they are less capable in managing existing resources such as older individuals can. As a consequence, in dealing with excessive workload, older workers will employ their personal resources, thus their functional and emotional coping strategies that they have developed. Instead, younger workers have not developed internal coping mechanisms and therefore their efforts to resolve misfit will involve coping strategies that are directed at changing the environment (Edwards, et al., 1998; Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995). The success of these efforts will consequently depend on externally provided job resources. Therefore we expect that job resources will have a stronger buffering effect for younger workers than for older workers.

**Hypothesis 4b:** Weekly (1) autonomy, (2) development opportunities and (3) feedback buffer will have a stronger buffering effect on the relationship between weekly workload and weekly work engagement for younger workers than for older workers

### 4.3 Method

#### 4.3.1 Sample and Procedure

Data were collected in an eldercare organization providing medical care through a weekly diary study of six weeks. A group of four hundred employees were selected based on an equal distribution of age and gender in the sample and approached via mail with a request to participate in a weekly diary study. Hundred twenty employees agreed to participate in the study and the response rate per week was: 73% in week one; 60% in week two; 89% in week 3; 73% in week 4; 72% in week 5; 67% in week 6. The data collected were used to write an advisory report for the organization regarding continuing working. The respondents were divided in two groups; those
who were 50 years or younger (sample size = 44 respondents) and those who were older than 50 (sample size = 37 respondents) The mean average age of the younger employees was 40.17 years ($SD = 8.71$; age range: 17-50 years) and the mean average organizational tenure was 7.77 years ($SD = 7.50$; tenure range: 0-28 years). For the older group the mean average age was 55.60 years ($SD = 3.24$; age range: 51-63 years) and the mean average organizational tenure was 11.05 years ($SD = 7.95$; tenure range: 0-31 years). The vast majority of the respondents in this study were female, for the young group this was 94.3%; for the older group this was 95.5%. Of the younger group, 75% were married or were in a registered partnership (of whom 58.3% had also children at home), 14.6% were single without children, 8.3% were single and had children living at home and 2.1% were living at home. For the older group the percentages were as follows: 82.5% were married or were in a registered partnership (of whom 75.0% had also children at home), 15% were single without children, and 2.5% were single and had children living at home. In terms of education, of the younger employees, 2.1% put primary education as their highest completed education level; 27.1% had a high school degree; 43.7% had an intermediate vocational training degree and 27.1% of the respondents had a university degree. For the older employees these percentages were: 32.5% had a high school degree; 37.5% had an intermediate vocational training degree and 30% of the respondents had a university degree.

The data were collected through a weekly diary study. Respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire every last day of their workweek, mostly Friday, while looking back on the past week. A weekly design has the advantage that it accounts for weekly fluctuations in the measured variables since workload and the provision of and access to job resources can vary on a weekly basis. The questionnaires could be filled online, the organization provided access to computers on site and there was also the possibility to fill out the questionnaire from home.

4.3.2 Measures

Due to the space constraints that are inherent to diary studies, data were collected via adapted short versions of existing scales. Items were selected based on highest factor loadings in previous research (e.g., Bakker & Bal., 2010). Furthermore, all items were adapted to measure weekly events. All scales were assessed via five-point Likert scales (1 = rarely to 5 = always).

Independent variables and moderating variables

Workload was based on the Dutch version (Furda, 1995) of Karasek’s (1985) Job Content instrument. From the scale, three items were selected that referred physical demands, time pressure and quantity of the work. An example item is: “The past week my work was physically demanding”. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale in our study was .82.

Autonomy at work was assessed by three items of the Dutch version (Furda, 1995) of Karasek’s (1985) Job Content instrument. The items measured the degree to which employees had discretion in deciding how to perform their work and in which order. An example item is: “Last week, I decided myself how I execute my work”. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale in our study was .93.

Development opportunities was measured by three items selected from the scale developed by Bakker et al. (2003). The scale measures the extent to which work offers employees to develop themselves and learn new things. An example item is: “Last week, my work offered
me the opportunity to learn new things”]. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale in our study was .90.

**Feedback** was measured by two items selected from the Dutch version (Furda, 1995) of Karasek’s (1985) Job Content instrument. The items measured the degree to which employees receive feedback about performance from their supervisor. An example item is: “Last week, I received sufficient information about the quality of my performance”. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale in our study was .80.

**Age** was measured by asking respondents for their year of birth.

**Dependent variable**

**Work engagement** was measured through six items of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). From the original scale, three items measuring vigor and three items measuring dedication were selected. Respondents could give their answer on a five-point Likert scale ranging from never to daily. An example item for vigor is: “The past week, at my work I felt bursting with energy”; and an example item for dedication is: “Last week, I was proud of the work that I do”. The reliability of the scale is: .91.

### 4.3.3 Analyses

Because of the nested structure of our data, with measurements nested within weeks and weeks nested within participants, the observations are not stochastically independent. To account for these dependencies, multilevel regression analysis was used to analyze the data. In particular, the nesting within individuals was accounted for by estimating a series of two-level models with the first level being the measurements and the second level being the participants. Serial dependencies (i.e., the dependencies due to the days) in the data were accounted for by including an autoregressive autocorrelation into the models. All level 1 predictors were grand-mean centered before entering them into the models (West & Aiken, 1991).

To compare younger to older workers the respondents were divided in two groups. In line with Kooij, de Lange, Jansen, and Dikkers (2008), employees younger than 50 years were grouped as younger workers and coded as 0 in the results, and employees who were 51 years and older were grouped as older workers and were coded as 1 in the data.

The models were tested with Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2012) using the following steps: To test the quadratic relationship between workload and work engagement, a random intercept model with engagement (eng) as the dependent variable, and workload (WL) and the squared effect of workload (WL²) as the predictors was estimated. The temporal dependencies in the data was controlled for by modeling a first order autoregressive error structure. This model is shown in Equation 1.

\[
\text{eng}_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 WL_{ij} + \beta_2 WL^2_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij}
\]

(1)

To test the second hypothesis, the next step tested whether age moderated the linear and quadratic effect of workload on engagement. To this end, the model in Equation 1 was expanded by adding the main effect of age and the interactions between age and the linear and quadratic components of workload (see Equation 2). To ascertain the direction of the interaction effect, the
moderation effect was plotted for low (i.e., mean - 1SD) and high (i.e., mean + 1SD) values of the moderator.

\[ \text{eng}_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{WL}_{ij} + \beta_2 \text{WL}_{ij}^2 + \beta_3 \text{age}_j + \beta_4 \text{WL}_{ij}\text{age}_j + \beta_5 \text{WL}_{ij}^2\text{age}_j + \epsilon_{ij} \]  \hspace{1cm} (2)

To test for the buffering effects of age and job resources on the curvilinear relationship between weekly workload and weekly engagement (hypothesis 3 and 4), the previous model was expanded by including the main effect as well as all possible interactions with the job resources (see Equation 3).

\[ \text{eng}_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{WL}_{ij} + \beta_2 \text{WL}_{ij}^2 + \beta_3 \text{age}_j + \beta_4 \text{jobresource} + \beta_5 \text{WL}_{ij}\text{age}_j + \beta_6 \text{WL}_{ij}^2\text{age}_j + \beta_7 \text{jobresource}\text{age}_j + \beta_8 \text{WL}_{ij}\text{jobresource}\text{age}_j + \beta_9 \text{jobresource}\text{age}_j + \beta_{10} \text{WL}_{ij}\text{jobresource}\text{age}_j + \epsilon_{ij} \]  \hspace{1cm} (3)

Each job resource is tested (and discussed in the results section) separately in accordance to the order they are described in the theory section and mentioned in hypothesis 3 and 4: (1) autonomy, (2) development opportunities and (3) feedback.

### 4.4 Results

In a first step, the zero-order correlations engagement, workload, the squared component of workload, age, autonomy, development opportunities, and feedback was computed. As can be seen from Table 4.1, engagement was related to both the linear and quadratic component of workload. Moreover, it was also related to autonomy, development opportunities and feedback. Age showed no direct relationship with engagement \((r = -0.03, p = n.s.)\), but it was negatively related to the quadratic component of workload \((r = -0.10, p < .05)\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Workload</th>
<th>Workload²</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload²</td>
<td>-.10*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.10*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>-.28**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second, the first hypothesis tested whether there was a quadratic relationship between engagement and workload. In line with the correlational results, the results in Table 4.2 show that both the linear \((\beta_1 = .11; p < .01)\) and the quadratic \((\beta_2 = -.20; p < .001)\) component of workload were significantly related to engagement, supporting the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2 was tested whether age moderated the relationship between workload and work engagement, the results of this analysis are shown in Table 4.2. They show that age only moderates the quadratic component of workload \((\gamma = .15, p < .01)\), supporting hypothesis two.
Chapter 4 Workload and work engagement

As can be seen in Figure 4.2, the relationship between engagement and workload is almost flat for people older than 50, whereas it has an inverse U-shape for people younger than 50.

Table 4.2: The moderating effect of age on the quadratic relationship between workload and work engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL²</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL × age</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL² × age</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subsequently the direct effect of job resources on work engagement (hypothesis 3) and the buffering effect of job resources on the curvilinear effect of workload and work engagement (hypothesis 4) were tested. The section below will discuss the results of hypotheses 3 and 4 per resource consecutively.

Concerning the first resource, autonomy, the analysis reveals that autonomy is positively related to engagement ($\gamma = .23$, $p < .001$), supporting hypothesis 3.1. Moreover, the interaction between the squared effect of workload and autonomy ($\gamma = .05$, $p < .05$) as well as the three-way interaction between the squared effect of workload, autonomy, and age ($\gamma = -.09$, $p < .05$) are statistically significant, supporting hypothesis 4a.1 and 4b.1. To better grasp these interactions, they are plotted in Figure 4.3, and the results are displayed in Table 4.3. As can be seen from Figure 4.3, an increase in the perceived level of autonomy relates to a higher level of engagement. Moreover, the quadratic effect of workload on engagement is buffered by autonomy with the
effect of workload on engagement being stronger under high autonomy than under low autonomy. Finally, the three-level interaction between the squared effect of workload, autonomy, and age can be described as follows: When autonomy is low, the engagement of older employees is not affected by workload. Instead, the engagement of younger employees is curvilinearly related to workload (i.e., engagement is optimal when the workload is moderate). In contrast, when autonomy is high, autonomy increases as a function of workload for the young employees while a curvilinear relationship is observed for older employees.

In sum, the results demonstrate that autonomy has a direct effect on work engagement, that autonomy moderates the curvilinear relationship between workload and engagement (two-way interaction), and that age buffers the mediating effect between of autonomy on the relationship between workload and work engagement (three-way interaction). Given these findings regarding the job resource autonomy, hypothesis 3 and 4 are supported.

| Table 4.3: The moderating effect of autonomy and age on the quadratic relationship between workload and engagement |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Intercept                                        | 3.26            | .10            | <.001 |
| WL                                               | .08             | .04            | .075  |
| WL ²                                             | -.14            | .03            | <.001 |
| Age                                              | -.08            | .15            | .569  |
| Autonomy                                         | .23             | .06            | <.001 |
| WL × age                                         | -.06            | .07            | .405  |
| WL ² × age                                       | .08             | .06            | .168  |
| WL × autonomy                                    | .03             | .03            | .349  |
| WL ² × autonomy                                  | .05             | .02            | .043  |
| Autonomy × age                                   | .08             | .09            | .380  |
| WL × autonomy × age                              | -.02            | .05            | .696  |
| WL ² × autonomy × age                            | -.09            | .04            | .020  |
Subsequently, the main effect of development opportunities on engagement (hypothesis 3.2), and the buffering effects of age and development opportunities on the curvilinear relationship between workload and engagement (hypotheses 4a.2 and 4b.2) were tested. The results are similar to those for autonomy (see Table 4.4). Specifically, the main effect of development opportunities, \( \gamma = .29, p = < .05 \), the interaction between the squared effect of workload and development opportunities \( \gamma = .10, p < .005 \) as well as the three-way interaction between the squared effect of workload, development opportunities, and age \( \gamma = -.13, p < .05 \) are statistically significant. To better grasp these complex interactions, they are plotted in Figure 4.4. As can be seen from this figure, the main effect of development opportunities manifests itself through higher levels of engagement when people perceive more development opportunities, supporting hypothesis 3.2. In addition, a buffering effect of development opportunities on the influence of (the quadratic effect of) workload on work engagement (i.e., the interaction between the squared effect of workload and development opportunities) can be observed, supporting hypothesis 4a.2. From Figure 4.4 it is clear that under low development opportunities the effect of workload on engagement is stronger than under high development opportunities. Finally, the interaction between the quadratic effect of workload and development opportunities is also affected by the age of the employee, supporting hypothesis 4b.2 (i.e., the three-level interaction). When development opportunities are low, the engagement of older employees decreases slightly as a function of an increase in workload, whereas the engagement of younger employees shows a curvilinear relationship with workload (i.e., engagement is highest with moderate levels of workload). In contrast, when the development opportunities are high, workload does not seem to matter for the engagement of young employees whereas older employees are maximally engaged when the workload is medium.
Chapter 4 Workload and work engagement

In sum, the results demonstrate that the job resource development opportunities has a direct positive effect on engagement, that job resources moderate the inverted u-shaped relationship between workload and work engagement and that age buffers this mediating effect.

Table 4.4: The moderating effect of development opportunities and age on the quadratic relationship between workload and engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
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<td>&lt;.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>WL</td>
<td>-.02</td>
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<td>.657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL $^2$</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL $\times$ age</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL $^2$ $\times$ age</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL $\times$ development</td>
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<td>.05</td>
<td>.386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL $^2$ $\times$ development</td>
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<td>.005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development $\times$ age</td>
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<td>.493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL $\times$ development $\times$ age</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL $^2$ $\times$ development $\times$ age</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.4: The relationship between workload and engagement as a function of age and development opportunities
Finally, the direct effect of feedback on engagement (hypothesis 3.3), and the buffering effect of age and feedback on the curvilinear relationship between workload and engagement (hypotheses 4a.3 and 4b.3) were tested. The quadratic effect of workload on engagement ($\gamma = - .12, p < .001$), as well as the main effect of feedback on engagement ($\gamma = .24, p < .001$) were significant, supporting hypotheses 1 and 3.3. In contrast to the results for development opportunities and autonomy, no significant two-way interaction between the quadratic effect of workload and feedback on engagement was found, rejecting hypothesis 4a.3. Instead, feedback buffered the linear component of workload on engagement ($\gamma = -.13, p < .001$) (see Table 4.5). Further, the three-level interaction between workload, feedback, and age was also not significant ($\gamma = -.03, p = ns$) (see Table 4.5), rejecting hypothesis 4b.3.

As can be seen in Figure 4.5, there is a larger increase in engagement as a function of workload when feedback is low than when feedback is high. In other words, when feedback is low, engagement depends more on workload than when feedback is high.

In sum, the results regarding the job resource feedback demonstrate that there is a direct positive effect of feedback on engagement and that feedback buffers the linear relationship between workload and work engagement (two-way interaction), but age did not moderate the buffering effect of feedback on the relationship between workload on engagement. As such, only hypothesis 3.3 was accepted.

### Table 4.5: The moderating effect of feedback and age on the quadratic relationship between workload and engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
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<td>.09</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL²</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>.14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL × age</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL² × age</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL × feedback</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL² × feedback</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback × age</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL × feedback × age</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WL² × feedback × age</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.557</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4 Workload and work engagement

Figure 4.5: The relationship between workload and engagement as a function of age and feedback.

4.5 Discussion

The goal of the current study was to investigate how the relationship between workload, work engagement and job resources differed for older and younger workers. The study was conducted in the adult-care industry where the average employee age is high and will further increase in the near future (European Commission, 2011). In the context of increasing numbers of older workers in the workforce, the relationship between workload and work engagement for different age group was investigated. In line with job stress literature (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992) and the person-environment fit literature (Edwards & Van Harrison, 1993), an inverted u-shaped relationship between workload and work engagement was found. Specifically, workload had a positive effect on work engagement until it reached an optimal level and from there, workload affected work engagement negatively. This finding challenges the suggestion that workload is negatively linearly related to work engagement, as advocated by the job demands and resources model (e.g. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Regarding the age related differences: the results demonstrated that older workers are better in coping with demanding work conditions than younger workers via their internal resources. The latter is in line with the lifespan theory’s notion that older individuals develop regulation strategies to cope with losses that they experience as a result of the aging process (Baltes, Reese, & Lipsitt, 1980; Carstensen, 1995).
Furthermore, the age-related differences in the buffering effect of job resources in the relationship between workload and work engagement were investigated. The results demonstrated that younger workers were more dependent on externally provided job resources for successful coping with workload. This is in line with the perception of the lifespan theory of control on the usage of control mechanisms (Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995). The results demonstrated that the success of the buffering process of job resources varies among age groups, and thus employee age is an important factor to consider when designing jobs. In particular, the study shows that younger workers need more job resources to successfully complete their job tasks while older individuals do not.

In sum, this study has found that the relationship between workload and work engagement is inverted u-shaped and that age has a buffering effect on this relationship, such that the relationship is steeper for younger workers than for older workers. Further, the role of job resources (autonomy, development opportunities and feedback) in the relationship between workload and work engagement was investigated. The results displayed that job resources increase work engagement and buffer the relationship between workload and work engagement. Moreover we found that for the job resources autonomy and development opportunities, the buffering effect between workload and work engagement differed between younger and older workers. Specifically, the study showed that the buffering effect was stronger for younger workers.

The findings have important theoretical implications; first, it sheds light on the inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between workload and work engagement (Crawford, et al., 2010). The results of this study demonstrate that the effect of workload on engagement is neither strictly negative, nor positive but inverted u-shaped. As such, the study contributes the job demands and resources model. Second, this study demonstrates that there are age differences in the relationship between workload and work engagement. In doing so, it provides an ‘aging’ perspective on the model and accounts for individual age related differences. This study has applied various lifespan development theories to the job demands and resources model and the job characteristics model, and has extended the current understanding of these models. Finally, the study demonstrated that the buffering effect of the resources autonomy and development opportunities is moderated by age. Specifically, the buffering effect of the resources is stronger for younger workers. The findings regarding the job resource feedback were not in line with the hypotheses. For all job resources it was expected that they would increase work engagement (direct effect) and would buffer the inverted u-shape relationship between workload and work engagement (two way interaction) and that this buffering effect would be different for older and younger workers. The hypothesized relationships were confirmed for the job resources autonomy and development opportunities but not for feedback. The results displayed that the perception of feedback increased work engagement (direct effect), a buffering effect of feedback on the relationship between the linear component of workload and work engagement (two way interaction) was found, and there was no difference between the two age groups. The results demonstrated that feedback did not buffer engagement under conditions of high workload.

A possible explanation can be derived from Kluger and DeNisi’s (1996) meta-analysis on the effects of feedback on performance. The authors conclude that the effects of feedback are contingent on the feedback itself (e.g. type of feedback, the way it is been given) as well as situational factors. This study suggests that under high workload, feedback does not affect work
engagement. Similar to the job resources autonomy and development opportunities, feedback is a tool to improve task performance. However, efforts of improvements through feedback are initiated by an external agent (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996), while for autonomy and development opportunities, the individual initiates efforts of improvement. As such, these job resources can promote people’s taking responsibility to motivate or regulate themselves. As noted earlier, feedback is not always interpreted in a positive manner, particularly when feedback is provided in a controlling way it has negative outcomes (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Hence, under conditions of high workload, thus where the individual is already busy enough, receiving feedback may be unwelcome and perceived negatively.

4.5.1 Theoretical implications

The results of this study contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between job demands and work engagement by incorporating theoretical views from the P-E fit literature and the work stress literature (Edwards, et al., 1998; Kahn & Byosiere, 1992). These streams of literature suggest that the relationship between workload and employee well-being is curvilinear, whereas traditionally, workload is regarded as a negative job characteristic causing strain and thus negatively affecting employee wellbeing (Bakker, et al., 2003). In a more recent study by Crawford and colleagues (2010) explain that workload is a challenge stressor, a job demand that can be met by employees and thus is perceived as a challenge. The authors explain that because workload challenges employees, it is a motivator to successfully complete job tasks and thus positively and linearly relates to work engagement. The results of this study demonstrate that both views are incomplete and need further investigation. In particular, this study has found that a moderate level of workload is positively related to work engagement, however excessive workload is negatively related to work engagement.

Secondly, the study contributes to the job-demands and resources model by demonstrating that different job resources (i.e. job and individual) have different affects. In addition, the effects of job resources depend on contingencies outside of work characteristics, namely, individual characteristics such as age. As such, this study gives support to Kahn and Byosiere’s (1992) suggestion that the effect of job characteristics can be moderated by characteristics outside of work.

4.5.2 Practical implications

The results of this study demonstrate that older workers are better in coping with workload than younger workers due to their internal resources, while younger workers’ coping success depends on the provision of external resources. In contrast with what JD-R theorists suggest, providing any kind of job resource is not similarly effective for all employees. Rather, the effect of job resources differs per resource and is also dependent on contextual factors (e.g., employee age). Specifically, the job resources autonomy and development opportunities are effective resources for younger workers supporting them in coping with workload. Hence, organizations should find out which job resources are important in specific contexts to prevent the waste of job resources.

Further, this study found that there is an optimal point of workload. Thus workload may be beneficial for employee wellbeing, but exceeding the optimal point has negative consequences.
Finding the right balance of workload is important for organizations to maximize employee wellbeing and thus performance.

### 4.5.3 Limitations

The first limitation is related to the respondents included in the study. Since the employees in the sample who were fifty years and older were still working, and hence are the employees who have aged successfully, a selection effect might have taken place. Furthermore, while the same number of male as female employees was approached to participate in the study, only 5.2% of the respondents were male. Although the aim of our study was not to test for gender differences, the small percentage of men may have biased the results. A study by Aittomäki, Lahelma, Roos, Leino-Arjas, and Martikainen (2005) about the association between psychical workload and functioning has demonstrated that woman in particular are more effected in their functioning in physically demanding working conditions at older age. The authors suggest that these differences may be due to the differences in the types of work older men and woman performed in their study, hence the absence of male respondents in our study can be considered as a limitation.

Second, all measures were self-reported and measured in the same way (5-point Likert scale), this may raise questions of common method bias. In other words, the fact that the data was collected through a common rater and a common measurement context, may have resulted in an artifactual covariance between the predictor and the criterion variables (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

### 4.5.4 Suggestions for further research

While this study contributes to the existing knowledge regarding work engagement of older workers, there are several suggestions for future research that will help expanding our current understanding on the topic more. First, the data were collected among employees working in the eldercare industry where most of them did physically demanding jobs. For future research it would be interesting to look at other sectors and jobs that are for instance cognitively demanding. Since each job has different demands, the resources that effectively buffer may vary depending on the specific demands (De Jonge, Le Blanc, Peeters, & Noordam, 2008; Tooren & de Jonge, 2010).

Related to the former, the study showed that job resources aided younger workers to successfully cope with workload more strongly, and that for older workers it mattered less to decrease potential negative effects of workload on engagement. Future research can look at whether there are other job resources that are particularly important for older workers that are not included in this study, and need further attention. Specifically, it would be interesting to look at job resources from a lifespan perspective. It may be the case that since older workers have limitations in their physical abilities, and have developed emotional regulation strategies, physical resources may be important in any work context and emotional resources may become less important for older workers regardless of the work context.

Finally, this study has found that older workers are better able to cope with workload and that job resources are more important for younger workers. Although it was found that age buffers the relationship under study, it is not age as such that causes this effect. Instead, the
factors that cause the changes are the emotional, cognitive and physical abilities that are a result of aging and which lead to the development of distinctive resources at older age. Therefore, future research can include the distinctive internal resources that allow effective coping for older workers. Possible resources could be resources related to experience or the coping strategies as described in the SOC theory (Baltes, et al., 1980).

4.5.5 Conclusion
This paper demonstrated that there are age-related differences in coping with high workload. This chapter showed support for the notion that older workers are better able to cope with high workload. This study showed that younger individuals cope with their workload through the job resources autonomy and development opportunities. Although the buffering effect was not found for older workers, the study reveals insight in how the jobs of younger workers could be designed.
4.6 References


Chapter 4 Workload and work engagement


Chapter 4 Workload and work engagement


Chapter 5

Work after retirement profiles: how do employees want to continue working after retirement
Abstract

This paper investigates employees’ preferences for working after their retirement age and the (personal and organizational) factors that are related to those preferences. The study was conducted among 356 employees of three eldercare organizations. The results demonstrated that there are four after retirement work-profiles, namely: a work profile in which the employee prefers to:

1. Work less;
2. Keep the existing work profile more or less the same,
3. Modify the content of their work,
4. Change the work context.

Further analyses demonstrated that with increasing age, preferences to change the content of the work or the context of the work decrease. Contrarily, employees with a higher education have the preference for a work profile with modified work content and have higher preference to work in another work context after their retirement. Further, the results displayed that employees who experience an accommodative organizational climate want to modify their job tasks and prefer to work somewhere else. In contrast, employees who experience a development organizational climate and psychological contract fulfillment want to modify their work involvement as little as possible.
Chapter 5 Work after retirement profiles

5.1. Introduction

The effects of the aging workforce is receiving increased attention in academic research (de Lange, Van Yperen, Van der Heijden, & Bal, 2010). The aging workforce is also a pressing topic for governments as they want to encourage the workforce participation of older workers, for instance, through offering financial incentives to continue working (CPB, 2009; European Commision, 2010). However, the debate about the workforce participation of older workers remains rather one-dimensional as it mainly focuses on how older workers are able to work and not on how they want to work when considering various forms of continuing working. Work preferences may vary in regard to the frequency of work, the type of work arrangement and the content of the job (Feldman, 1990; Kalleberg, 2000).

This chapter argues that providing options for work profiles in which older workers can continue working will increase their willingness to do so. Currently, continuing working is not seen as a next career step towards an alternative, motivating as well as profitable way of working either from the perspective of the employer or from that of the employee (Remery, Henkens, Schippers, & Ekamper, 2003). In addition, there is little knowledge about employee’s preferences regarding continuing work and even less about the factors that are related to their preferences to work in a specific manner.

The current research is an explorative study that focuses on the factors that are associated with employees’ preferences regarding various profiles of continuing work. The two central research questions of this study are:

1. How do employees want to continue working after retirement?
2. Which factors are associated with the preferences of employees to work according to a specific work-profile?

5.2 Theory

In existing studies older workers are often regarded as a homogeneous group (Nelson & Dannefer, 1992) who have demonstrated that individual differences tend to increase with age. The increase of heterogeneity among older people can be explained through the individualized aging process.

Aging is a process in which individuals experience changes in their biological, psychological and social functioning as a result of time (de Lange et al., 2006). The process of aging is accompanied by a decline in physical and intellectual abilities and an increase of knowledge and experience. The selection, optimization and compensation (SOC) theory, by Baltes and colleagues (1999), argued that, as individuals get older and they experience age-related changes, they invest fewer means in goals that are directed at growth. Instead, they increasingly invest in goals that are directed at maintenance and regulation of losses. Thus, according to the theory of SOC, successful aging can be accomplished through selecting feasible goals, optimizing the means to achieve those goals and compensating for (age-related) losses. Hence, as individuals get older they will selectively focus on tasks that they are good in. As these tasks vary per person, the heterogeneity among older individuals is intensified.

Aging is a complex process affecting multiple dimensions of the human functioning, such as their physical, mental and social abilities. The pace and the extent to which these social, mental and physical changes appear, differ individually which also results in increased heterogeneity in older age groups (Hoyer & Rybash, 1994; Lindenberger & Baltes, 1997). Studies of Nelson and
Dannefer (1992) and Henretta (1992) demonstrated that these differences were also manifest in work-related preferences. As such, in order to encourage working past retirement, it is important to acknowledge and study these differences and provide various work options accordingly.

5.2.1 Continuing work and work profiles

Hitherto, there is a considerable amount of research conducted regarding work participation and retirement behavior of older workers. Early research focuses mostly on the motivation to retire early (Feldman, 1994) and the question of whether or not to retire (Adams, Prescher, Beehr, & Lepisto, 2002). Yet, predictors of early retirement, such as health, do not necessarily predict the intention to work past retirement age or not. The changing demographics have shifted the focus of academic research towards work participation of older workers through ‘bridge employment’. The term bridge employment is defined by Feldman (1994) as “work participation of older workers in the end of their careers during which they display decreased commitment with work”. Despite the fact that these studies provide valuable knowledge about the work participation and retirement behavior of older workers, there is still little known about how individuals want to continue work after retirement and which (personal and organization related) factors are related to these preferences.

Literature regarding work participation demonstrates that there are several ways in which employees can participate in paid work. Examples are part-time work or working through an agency (Feldman, 1990, 1992, 2006; Kalleberg, 2000; Polivka, 1996). Given the up and coming shortages in the labor force, it is important to obtain insight in what older workers’ preferences are regarding continuing work. The literature regarding non-standard work arrangements and labor law this study distinguishes six dimensions of work, as follows: frequency; distribution; format; duration (of the contract); job description; and, the work context. These six features all encompass several options as displayed in Table 5.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Work context</th>
<th>Job content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unchanged</td>
<td>Year around</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Permanent contract</td>
<td>Same organization and same department</td>
<td>Unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amount of hours</td>
<td></td>
<td>hired</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>Seasonally</td>
<td>Agency hired</td>
<td>Temporary contract</td>
<td>Same organization different department</td>
<td>More demanding job description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amount of hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More hours</td>
<td>On-call basis</td>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Different organization</td>
<td>Less demanding job description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total withdrawal</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Horizontal change in job description</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first dimension, frequency is concerned with the amount of working hours (Kalleberg, 2000). After reaching formal retirement age individuals can participate in the workforce in different ways, for instance: working the same amount of hours; increased amount of hours; decreased amount of hours; or, full withdrawal from work. Kim and Feldman (2000) explain the work participation of older workers through the continuity theory of Atchley (1989). This theory argued that, as people experience gains and losses while aging, they try to maintain existing structures to cope with the physical and mental changes they are in less control of. As such, work participation of older workers depends on the level of effective commitment to their work and
their effective commitment to activities outside of work. Employees with high levels of effective commitment to work are likely to maintain continuity through work participation. Employees with commitment towards activities outside of work are less likely to continue participating in work (Kim & Feldman, 2000). In addition, one’s participation in work in older age also depends on possibilities and constrains, such as regarding health status or financial status (Gobeski & Beehr, 2009; Kim & Feldman, 2000). In short, an employee’s preference concerning the amount of working hours, or the frequency dimension, is affected by personal and work-related factors. Practice shows, however, that workers that are eligible for pension income choose to work less and spend more time with family and friends (Feldman, 1990; Rau & Adams, 2005; Shultz, Morton, & Weckerle, 1998).

The second dimension, distribution, refers to when the work is performed. This can be year-around, seasonally or occasionally. When work is distributed year-around, work is performed throughout the whole year. When work is distributed seasonally, the work is performed during a specific season (Diebels, 2004; Feldman, 1990). If work is performed occasionally, the individual effectively works depending on their agreement with the employer. Working days can be either fixed or work can be performed on an on-call basis. In the latter case, the employer can appeal to someone when there is a need, often due to temporary labor shortages (Diebels, 2004; Kalleberg, 2000). Therefore, working occasionally implies less stability (Diebels, 2004).

Work distribution has not been subject of research in the context of the employment of retirees. In the literature regarding non-standard work arrangements working on an on-call basis or seasonally has been often perceived from a negative viewpoint (Feldman, 1990, 2006; Kalleberg, 2000). It is often stated that organizations appeal to these workers as a result of temporary labor shortages, such as during the Christmas break in shops (Kalleberg, 2000). The lack of continuity of the work results in a weak relationship with the organization and colleagues (Cohany, 1996; Feldman, 1990, 1992) and the feeling of job-insecurity (Kalleberg, 2000). Because older workers value job security and social aspects of work, it can be expected that workers do not prefer work that is distributed seasonally or performed on an on-call basis when they get older (Carstensen, 1995; Carstensen, Fung, & Charles, 2003; Dendinger, Adams, & Jacobson, 2005; Finegold, Mohrman, & Spreitzer, 2002). However, other research demonstrates that flexibility in scheduling was valued by older workers (Arrowsmith & McGoldrick, 1997; Rau & Adams, 2005; Weckerle & Shultz, 1999). This suggests that distribution in itself may not have direct consequences for how work is experienced, but it may be useful to examine distribution in combination with other organizational characteristics, such as the frequency.

The third dimension is the format. The format of the work refers to how the work is arranged. Literature on contingent work identifies three ways in which work can be arranged: organization hired; hired through an agency; or, self-employed. Each format implies different job-attitudes, as they imply different relationships with the contracting organization (Diebels, 2004; Feldman, 1990, 1992; Kalleberg, 2000). Feldman (1990) and Kalleberg (2000) state that people preferred working directly for an organization instead of working through an agency because employees who are directly hired by the organization are more likely to receive training and development opportunities (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2007; Kozlowski & Hults, 1987).

Employees who are agency hired have a complex system of accountability as their administrative control and responsibility is externalized (Kalleberg, 2000) and because workers are in a way detached from the organization. The rationale behind such work arrangements is
that organizations hire employees through agencies according to their short-term needs (Kalleberg, 2000). Consequently, employees do not develop emotional attachment to the organization or their colleagues.

Self-employed people are responsible for themselves in many fronts, their deliverables, risks of unemployment, social security, taxes and their client is not vicariously liable (Kalleberg, 2000). Research by Curran and Blackburn (2001) found that older workers often did not regard self-employment as a feasible option because of the financial insecurity, their lack of knowledge to run a business or, simply, because they cannot not think of an idea for a business. As stability and security are important issues for people at older age (Carstensen, 1995), self-employment was an unlikely or preferred option for them.

The fourth dimension is the duration of the contract and is concerned with whether the work is permanent or temporary. Permanent participation refers to arrangements that are based on contracts without a fixed end date whereas the latter refers to arrangements that do have a fixed end date. Temporary job arrangements are often perceived as less preferred than permanent work arrangements, as they often imply jobs with less quality with respect to development opportunities, earnings, and job content (Kalleberg, 2000). In addition, temporary contracts do not offer financial security nor job security (Feldman, 1990). Therefore, it is expected that, when people get older, they prefer to work through permanent contracts and also prefer stability in other aspects of work, such as work distribution that is year around.

The fifth dimension is job description. An employee’s job description changes when job responsibilities or tasks change. As explained earlier, the lifespan development theory of Baltes and colleagues (1999) argues that the process of aging is accompanied with gains and losses. When people get older they experience decline in biological abilities that both affect their physical- and their intellectual functioning. At the same time, people experience gains in crystallized intellectual capabilities as they have acquired knowledge and experiences throughout the years. At work older workers may try to maintain optimal functioning by compensating for losses through employing their knowledge and expertise (Baltes et al., 1999; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). Therefore it can be expected that as people get older they would want to adjust their job description in a way that they can continue performing their tasks optimally.

Finally the last dimension is the work context i.e., where the work is performed. During their careers people often change their work context (Marler, Woodard Barringer, & Milkovich, 2002). From the perspective of continuing work this is an important issue since organizations are increasingly interested in how they can retain valuable workers (Armstrong-Stassen, 2008; Collins, 2003; Gobeski & Beehr, 2009). Within this dimension there are three possibilities: continuing work in the same organization and same department; the same organization but different department; and, continuing work in another organization. Similar to the other dimensions, a choice within this dimension is a logical consequence of choices within other dimensions. Workers that prefer to continue working in another organization are expected to have a suboptimal relationship with the current organization (Weckerle & Shultz, 1999). Therefore, they may have a greater preference to work through an agency or be self-employed or withdraw from work.

The choices that are made within each dimension ultimately shape a person’s ‘work profile’. As stated earlier, the choices are not isolated from each other. Some choices rule out others, while other choices overlap and some combinations are less likely.
5.2.2 Antecedents of work profiles

Research concerning work participation of retirees demonstrates that the relationship that an individual has with work and the organizational climate are important predictors of the motivation for continuing working (Adams et al., 2002; Armstrong-Stassen, 2008; Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2007; Feldman, 1994; Gobeski & Beehr, 2009; Luchak, Pohler, & Gellatly, 2008). To investigate which factors are related to preferences to work through a specific work profile we examined various personal and work-related variables.

Demographic variables

The demographic variables researched in this study are: age, education and hours of work. In the context of this research ‘age’ is an important variable. However, chronological age is a limited representation of how old someone really is (Kooij, de Lange, Jansen, & Dikkers, 2008). Therefore, multiple perspectives of age were included in this study. The first one is chronological age, or calendar age. Secondly, psychosocial age is included which refers to social perceptions of older workers and when others perceived them as old (Sterns & Doverspike, 1989). The last perception of age that is included is lifecycle age which underscores the fact that the pace of aging differs for each individually (Sterns & Doverspike, 1989).

Education is the second demographic variable researched in this study. A study of Wang, Zhan, Lui and Shultz (2008) found employees who received more years of education were more likely to participate in employment at older age. Hence, the level of education is expected to be an important predictor of people’s work profiles during retirement.

Working-hours were not a variable commonly researched with respect to work participation during retirement. Yet, it is an important factor in this study since older people’s declining physical abilities may force them to adjust their amount of working hours to less (Baltes et al., 1999; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004).

Continuing work and the relationship with the organization

The first work related variable, development climate is the degree to which an organization encourages its employees to develop themselves continuously and provides them with opportunities to gain new knowledge and learn skills to enable them to improve and maintain their levels of functioning (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008; Tracey & Tews, 2005). Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008) demonstrated that an organization’s development climate was related to effective commitment and that this subsequently leads to the intention to remain with the organization. We expected that workers who experienced a development climate would prefer a retirement work-profile in which they could continue working for the same organization.

Accommodative climate is an organizational climate in which workers are encouraged to work less and decrease their workload preparing themselves for retirement (Dikkers et al., 2004; Friede, Kossek, Lee, & Macdermid, 2008). Research has found that an accommodative climate can lead to people having a passive work attitude and make them feel less valued by the organization (Greller & Stroh, 2004). This study expects that, when workers experience an accommodative climate, they will more likely prefer a work-profile in which they can work less (both in terms of frequency as well as in terms of workload). Furthermore, it is expected that accommodative
climate will be related to the preference to work in another organization, as employees may feel less valued.

The psychological contract is defined by Rousseau as “individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of the exchange agreement between individuals and their organization” (1995, p.9). The psychological contract arises when a party presumes that there is a promise made concerning future obligations. Thus, the contract arises at the beginning of the work relationship and is adjusted continuously (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1989). When the employer does not comply with these obligations there is a breach of contract. Conversely, when the obligations are met the psychological contract is fulfilled. Feelings of contract breach will give rise to feelings of distrust and betrayal (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Research has demonstrated that psychological contract breach is related negatively to work outcomes, such as organizational commitment and positively related to turnover intention (Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007). We expected that employees who experience psychological contract fulfillment would prefer to continue working for the same organization.

5.3 Method

5.3.1 Respondents

The data were collected through questionnaires. Three elderly-care institutions participated in this study, 1493 questionnaires were sent out and 676 questionnaires were returned (response percentage= 45%). Before merging the datasets of the three organizations, factor analyses were conducted which determined that the structure of the measured scales in the three organizations corresponded. After deleting questionnaires with missing values, 356 questionnaires were ultimately used. The average age of the respondents was 51.31 years old (SD= 5.94 years), 89% of the respondents were female and 11% were male. The average amount of working hours per week was 23.16 hours (SD=8.79 hours). Among the respondents, 18% was not married, 74% was married or had a registered partnership (from which the half also had children), 3.5% were single and had children, and 4.5% percent was divorced. Of the respondents 4.7% had primary education as their highest completed education level; 31% high school; 47.1% intermediate vocational training; 17.1% university.

5.3.2 Instruments

The questions regarding the work profiles were derived from literature about non-standard work arrangements (Diebels, 2004; Feldman, 1990, 1992; Kalleberg, 2000). The dimensions and the options within the dimensions as presented in Table 5.1 were converted into items reflecting specific behavior. Respondents were asked to which extent the behavior specified in the items applied to them. For example, within the dimension frequency four items were formulated: After pension age I want to:

1. Work the same amount of hours;
2. Work fewer hours;
3. Work more hours;
4. Fully withdraw from work.

For each option respondents could give their answer on a five point Likert scale (1= totally disagree; 5= totally agree). An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with a Varimax rotation
was employed to determine the four work profiles (WARP). The results of the EFA are displayed in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Factor loadings of the explorative factor analysis with Varimax rotation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WARP less</th>
<th>WARP unchanged</th>
<th>WARP content modification</th>
<th>WARP context modification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Work at the same organization and the same department</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>-.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Work at the same organization but another department</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Work in another organization</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Work via an agency</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Be self-employed</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work via a permanent contract</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Work via a temporary contract</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Work year around</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Work seasonally (for example only during winter)</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Work occasionally</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Work on an on-call basis</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Work less hours per week</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Continue doing the same job</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Have a more complex job</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Have a less demanding job</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Change my job description</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Do a more interesting job</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Be able to plan my own working hours</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Temporarily withdrawal from work</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Completely withdrawal from work</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>-.47</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Factor loadings > .40 are boldface.
Extraction method: Principal component analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization.

The items that load above .40 are boldface. The table demonstrates that items 2 and 18 are cross-loading and that item 14 does not load on any of the factors. Therefore, items 2, 18 and 14 were disregarded in further analyses. Based on the EFA factor solution four work profiles for working after retirement age were discerned: a work profile in which the employee:

1. decides to work less (WARP less);
2. prefers to keep the work-involvement more or less the same (WARP unchanged);
3. prefers to modify the content of their work (WARP content modification);
4. prefers to change the context of their work (WARP context modification).

Based on the results of the EFA a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with LISREL 8.72 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2005) was performed to test the fit of the four factor model. The fit indices of the CFA showed that the four-factor solution had an acceptable fit ($\chi^2 = 99.84; df = 58; p < .001; RMSEA = .041; NNFI = .98; GFI = .97; CFI = .99$). The four-factor model fit the data significantly better than alternative models such as a three-factor model ($\chi^2 = 235.61; df = 61; p < .000; RMSEA = .082; NNFI = .94; GFI = .93; CFI = .96$) or a one-factor model ($\chi^2 = 1544, df = 90, p < .000; RMSEA = .20; NNFI = .71; GFI = .67; CFI = .75$).

1 The items belonging to the work-profiles can be found in the EFA displayed in Table 5.2.
Finally, reliability tests were conducted to specify the final distribution of the items in the scales. The reliability analysis demonstrated that items 20 and 7 did not correlate sufficiently with the corresponding scales. Therefore, these items were disregarded in further analyses. The final distribution of the items was based on the reliability analyses and is displayed in Table 5.3. The results of the reliability tests are displayed in Table 5.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.3: Distribution of the items in the scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WARP less</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work seasonally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on a non-call basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work less hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary withdrawal from work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WARP unchanged</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in the same organization and the same department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work via a permanent contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work year-around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue doing the same job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WARP content change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a less demanding job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change my job description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do more interesting tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WARP context change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in another organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work through an agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be self-employed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining concepts were measured with existing scales or one-item questions. 
*Chronological age* was measured by asking respondents for their year of birth. *Life cycle age* was measured by asking respondents for their civil status. *Psychosocial age* was measured through the five-item future time perspective scale of Carstensen (1995) which essentially measures self-rated psychosocial age. The scale measured to which extent one has the feeling that their future is open for them and that there are possibilities to fill the future with. An example question is “My future limitlessly lies ahead of me”. Education was measured by asking respondents what their highest completed education is. The options were in accordance with the Dutch education system, and can be translated into:

1. Primary education
2. High school
3. Intermediate vocational training
4. University.

Working hours were measured by asking directly how many hours respondents worked per week.
Development climate was measured by the five-item scale of Tracey and Tews (2005). An example question is: “In our organization older people are developed and encouraged to learn new things.”

Accommodative climate was measured with three items. The questions were based on studies about HR practices that focus on demotion, culture and stereotypes of older workers (Armstrong-Stassen, 2008; Dikkers et al., 2004). An example question is: “In our organization older workers are encouraged to work less hours.”

Psychological contract fulfillment was measured with the five-item psychological contract breach scale of Robinson and Morrison (2000). The items were recorded to measure fulfillment, an example question is: “The organization did not live up to their promises although I did”.

5.4 Results

The mean score for the four work-profiles (see Table 5.4) demonstrated that employees prefer WARP unchanged and WARP content modification the most (the scores are 3.11 and 2.88 on a scale of one to five). In addition, the results demonstrate that the mean scores of WARP unchanged, WARP less and WARP content modification are very close. To test whether the mean scores of the work-profiles significantly differ from each other a paired-samples T-test was performed. The results of the paired-samples T-test illustrated that with the exception of the difference between WARP unchanged and WARP less (\(T= -1.46, p > .09\)) the mean scores of the work-profiles significantly differed from each other.

The correlations among the variables are displayed in Table 5.4. The results demonstrate a significant correlation among the work-profiles: WARP less and WARP unchanged (\(r=.25, p<.01\)), WARP less and WARP content modification (\(r=.56, p<.01\)), WARP unchanged and WARP content modification (\(r=.51, p<.01\)), WARP unchanged and WARP context modification (\(r=.13, p<.01\)), WARP context modification and WARP content modification (\(r=.38, p<.01\)). This is as expected since employees can have multiple preferences with respect to how they want to continue working after retirement. For example, one may wish to change the amount of working hours (frequency) and at the same time may wish to do the same task (content).

The analyses show that the demographic variables age, education and working hours per week are significantly correlated with the four work profiles. Chronological age is negatively correlated WARP content modification (\(r=-.14, p<.01\)). Thus, older employees do not prefer to modify the content of their job. Psychosocial age (future time perspective) is positively correlated with WARP less (\(r=.12, p<.01\)) and WARP content modification (\(r=.14, p<.05\)). This means that people that feel that they have an open future wish to work less and want to modify the content of their job. Lifecycle age is positively related to WARP unchanged (\(r=.24, p<.01\)) and WARP content modification (\(r=.14, p<.01\)). This means that employees who are in a further life stage prefer to work in an unchanged manner, thus in the same organization, the same amount of hours and also want to modify the content of their jobs. Education is positively correlated with WARP less (\(r=.20, p<.01\)) and WARP context modification (\(r=.25, p<.01\)). Thus employees who have higher level of education wish to work less and also want to work somewhere else. The amount of working hours per week positively correlates with WARP less (\(r=.11, p<.05\)) and WARP unchanged (\(r=-.11, p<.05\)), suggesting that employees who currently work a lot of hours want to reduce working hours.
their involvement in work in the future and want to keep their existing work profile more or less the same.

The work related variables development climate, accommodative climate and psychological contract fulfillment are also uniquely related to the four work-profiles. Development climate is positively related to $WARP$ unchanged ($r=.24, p<.01$). Thus employees who have the feeling that the organization and their supervisor supports older workers in their development and encourages them to learn new skills prefer to keep working in the same organization and do the same tasks. Accommodative climate is positively related to $WARP$ less ($r=.20, p<.01$), $WARP$ content modification ($r=.13, p<.05$) and $WARP$ context modification ($r=.22, p<.01$). This means that an organizational climate in which older workers are stimulated to reduce their task demands is significantly related to the preference to reduce the amount of working hours, to change the content of the job and most strongly is related to changing the work context. Finally, the variable psychological contract fulfillment is positively related to $WARP$ unchanged ($r=.19, p<.01$) and is negatively related to $WARP$ context modification ($r=-.20, p<.01$). Thus, employees who have the feeling that the organization has kept its promises prefer to work in the same organization, the same amount of hours and do the same job task. Employees who feel that the organization has not kept its promises wish to work somewhere else.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Chronological age</td>
<td>51.31</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Psychosocial age</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>-.24**</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lifecycle age</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Education</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Hours of work</td>
<td>23.16</td>
<td>8.77</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. WARP less</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. WARP unchanged</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. WARP content modification</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. WARP context modification</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Accommodative climate</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-.16**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Development climate</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Psychological contract fulfillment</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N= 356. **p < 0.01; *.p < 0.05. Values in bold along the main diagonal are coefficient alphas for scaled variables.*
5.5 Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate:

1. How employees want to continue working after retirement age, and
2. Which personal and work-factors are related to their preference.

The literature review about non-standard work arrangements led to a model being presented and empirically tested with a sample of 356 respondents working in eldercare institutions. Results demonstrated that there are four working after retirement profiles (WARP) according to which employees want to continue working after retirement, namely: a work-profile in which employees want:

1. To work a reduced amount of hours per week and do not want to work the whole year around (WARP less);
2. As many possible aspects of their work remaining the same (WARP unchanged);
3. To modify their job tasks; preferring either to have a more demanding or a less demanding job description (WARP content modification);
4. To work somewhere else, whether this includes working for another organization or working through an agency (WARP context modification).

This study also investigated which work and non-work factors are related to the preference to work according to a specific work profile. Since the concept of work-profiles is new and there is not a lot of knowledge about it, an explorative approach was applied in studying these 'antecedents'.

The results demonstrated that different perspectives on age, education, hours worked per week, organizational climate and psychological contract fulfillment are each unique predictors of preferences to work according a specific profile. The results of the correlation analyses demonstrated that WARP less is positively related to education level and accommodative climate. The positive correlation between WARP less and education may be due to the fact that employees who are higher educated often have jobs with a higher income and, therefore, are able to get by with a part-time contract or have been able to save up money for their retirement.

Several studies have demonstrated that one’s financial status is an important factor in retirement decision-making (Beehr et al 2000). The positive correlation between WARP less and accommodative climate is in line with expectations. Employees who experience an organizational climate in which older workers are encouraged to work less or perform less demanding jobs ultimately prefer to work accordingly after retirement. Other research has already demonstrated that an organization’s climate influences its employees behavior (Bock, Zmud, Kim, & Lee, 2005; Naumann & Bennett, 2000).

This study found a positive relationship between development climates and WARP unchanged. Employees who have the feeling that the organization encourages them to continuously develop themselves to maintain their level of functioning prefer to keep working for the same organization and doing the same tasks. These findings are in line with the study of Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008) which showed that employees who experience a developmental climate display higher levels of affective commitment which subsequently leads to the intention to remain in the organization.
The results of this study showed a positive relationship between \textit{WARP unchanged} and psychological contract fulfillment. Employees who have the feeling that the organization has kept its promises prefer to keep working for the same organization. Existing studies have already demonstrated that the fulfillment of the psychological contract is negatively related to turnover intention (Zhao et al., 2007), the current study shows that this is also the case when it concerns the decision to retire. \textit{WARP unchanged} is also positively related to lifecycle age. This is in line with Super’s (1980) theory of career stages that argues that, as people move towards mid- and later career stages, they prefer stability and gradual withdrawal in their vocational life. The preference for gradual withdrawal is not found, yet this is likely to be due to the sample’s mean age (46 years) since Super (1980) argues that the career stage that is signified by withdrawal commences at a later age.

The study found a negative relationship between \textit{WARP content modification} and chronological age. This is not in line with what would be expected, as the life span development theory (Baltes et al., 1999) suggests that, when people get older, they experience losses in physical abilities and, therefore, want to reduce their job demands. In line with this, psychosocial age is negatively related to \textit{WARP content modification} suggesting that employees who have a longer future time perspective prefer to change their job tasks when continuing work. In addition, the study has found a positive relationship between \textit{WARP content modification} and accommodative climate. This is in line with what would be expected as content modification also includes reducing job demands and an accommodative climate encourages employees to do so. When employees get older reducing their job demands could be a way to cope with the physical and mental losses that they are experiencing (Baltes et al., 1999; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004).

The results show a positive relationship between \textit{WARP context modification} and education. This could be because people with a higher education think they have better chances at getting another job (Groot & De Brink, 2000). Moreover, the study found a positive relationship between accommodative climate and \textit{WARP context modification}. Thus, an organizational climate signaling employees that they should work less and perform less demanding jobs may give them the feeling that they are not valued by the organization. When an individual is motivated to work past retirement age they will prefer to continue working in another organization. Furthermore, the results showed a negative relationship between psychological contract fulfillment and \textit{WARP context modification}. This is in line with other research that found that psychological contract breach is positively related to turnover intention and negatively related to organizational commitment (Zhao et al., 2007). This finding is also in line with the earlier finding that showed a positive relationship between \textit{WARP unchanged} and psychological contract fulfillment.

\subsection*{5.5.1 Theoretical implications}

The current paper has investigated how employees want to work after their retirement. This paper contributes to existing studies because it looks further than predictors of the decision to retire or not (Adams et al., 2002; Feldman, 1994; Kim & Feldman, 2000). Instead of just looking at whether or not individuals want to continue working after retirement, this study has asked respondents how they want to shape their work involvement after retirement. Studies by
Chapter 5 Work after retirement profiles

Gobeski and Beehr (2009) and Wang and colleagues (2008) have only made a distinction between continuing work in a career job or a non career job. The current study specifies employee’s preferences regarding their after retirement work-profiles in some depth and relates them to several work and non-work factors (age, education, working hours, organizational climate and psychological contract fulfillment).

5.5.2 Limitations and suggestions for further research

The first limitation of the study has to do with the explorative research design. To test the generic value of the findings the study should be repeated.

The second limitation is related to the research sample; 89% of the respondents were female. Although this is a limitation of the study, as any results in a more male-dominated organization could be different, it can also be seen as an advantage because demographic research demonstrates that women retire earlier than men (Eurostat, 2007). Scientific research has found that there are gender differences in retirement behavior. For instance, research by Talaga and Beehr (1995) showed that the financial situation is an important factor influencing the retirement age of men. From this perspective, men often are ‘obligated’ due to their financial situation to continue working. Therefore, having a large female sample may be considered as an advantage, as financial considerations often play less of a role in their retirement decision-making. Therefore, being able to explain women’s motivation to continue work may also be explanatory for men. Yet, a sample with a more even gender will have to confirm this line of reasoning.

The second limitation regarding the sample is the skewed distribution of respondents’ education level (intermediate vocational training in average) and the type of job (physically demanding) and the specific sector (eldercare sector). In accordance with other research (Wang et al., 2008), this study demonstrated that education level is an unique predictor of work preferences after retirement. Therefore, it is important to repeat this study in a group of respondents with a more evenly distributed education level and types of jobs. We expect that the structure of the work-profiles will remain the same, whilst the preferences may differ.

An additional limitation is that this was a cross-sectional study. Therefore it is not possible to research whether offering different types of work profiles may change attitude and behavior. Future research should look in to whether providing different options regarding continuing work influences the intention to work past retirement age and whether it changes the preference for a specific work profile.

Finally, the last limitation is related to the results of the second analyses. The results displayed weak correlations. Because of the explorative nature of the research question correlation analyses were used to examine the relationships between the concepts. It is possible to find stronger interaction effects in additional analyses.
5.5.3 Implications for practice

This study shows that employees have different preferences with respect to their work participation after retirement. Currently there is little knowledge about diverging preferences of employees’ work participation after retirement. Supervisors should pay attention to the different needs and clearly communicate the possibilities and limitations in the organization. As such, employees will be better prepared for their retirement. To retain their valuable personnel, organizations should create an organizational climate in which older workers are encouraged to develop themselves to maintain a proper level of functioning. A development climate helps retaining older workers and is also related to higher performance (Kozlowski & Hults, 1987).

5.5.4 Conclusions

The main conclusion is that employees have different preferences concerning continuing work after retirement. These preferences can be classified into four work after retirement profiles: a work profile in which the employee prefers to:

1. Work less;
2. Keep the existing work profile more or less the same
3. Modify the content of their work
4. Change the work context.

Employees’ perceptions of the organizational climate and the state of the psychological contract predict the preference to work according to a specific work-profile. For instance, organizations that want to retain their older workers should provide a climate in which employees are encouraged to and supported in developing themselves.
Chapter 5 Work after retirement profiles
5.6 References


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Chapter 6

Discussion
6.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this dissertation was to investigate how older workers can be kept active and engaged in the workforce and motivated to continue working beyond retirement age. Retirement theories were examined to discern which factors are important in understanding retirement behavior and to identify knowledge gaps. Lifespan development theories (Baltes, Staudinger, & Lindenberger, 1999; Carstensen & Lang, 1996) were investigated to understand the process of aging; particularly the biological, psychological and socio-relational changes that take place as a result of it (De Lange, Taris, Jansen, Smulder, Houtman, & Kompier, 2006). Subsequently, retirement theories and lifespan development theories were used as lenses to investigate how human resource management (Guest, 1987; Paauwe, 2009; Wright & McMahan, 1992) could contribute to employees’ motivation to continue working.

The studies in this thesis give answers to various unresolved issues. Specifically, the studies revolve around the following key issues as discussed in Chapter 1:

1) How do HR inducements contribute to employees’ motivation to continue working;
2) What is the role of the organizational climate in employees’ motivation to continue working;
3) How do employees want to work after retirement (Work after retirement Profiles).

This chapter summarizes the main findings regarding these key issues. Second, the main contributions of this thesis are discussed. Third, the practical implications of the findings are discussed, together with the limitations, and finishes with suggestions for future research and the prime conclusion.

Summary of Main Findings

Key issue 1: HR inducements contributing to the motivation to continue working.

The first key issue concerned the role of human resource management practices in relation to the motivation to continue working among older workers. Existing research on retirement demonstrated that a variety of factors influence employees’ retirement decisions. These can be categorized as: individual; job; organizational; family; and, socio-economic factors (Wang & Shultz, 2010). However, despite their relevance, organizations have only limited control over them, particularly personal and family factors. Organizational and job-related factors could be influenced by HR practices. The first key issue investigated was the factors that organizations do have control and influence over and where HR systems could be developed to increase employee motivation to continue working beyond retirement age.

The HRM literature argues that HR practices are key communicators between the organization and its employees and affect organizational outcomes (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). Development-oriented HR practices, in particular, can contribute to older workers’ motivation and their ability to stay active in the workforce (Armstrong-Stassen, 2008). Development HR practices can enable employees to continue working by increasing their employability and motivate them to continue working by establishing a good relationship with its employees (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008; Van der Heijden, de Lange, Demerouti, & Van der Heijde, 2009).

In Chapter 2 the availability and use of HR practices were investigated in four healthcare organizations participating in the Sustainable Employment in the Health Sector project. The
results demonstrated that, although employees’ perception of availability of all HR practices was high, the actual use of these practices was low. For example, for the practice *Exemption from irregular hours or overtime*, the perception of availability was 51.8%, while the use was 7.2% in one of the organizations. This suggested that the practices did fulfill their signaling function, but not necessarily their practical function, as employees refrained from using these practices.

Chapter 3 focuses on how development-related HR practices contribute to the motivation to continue working and the mechanisms through which these practices relate to the motivation to continue working. In line with HRM theorists, I have argued that HR practices shape how employees perceive the collective psychological climate in the organization and their individual psychological contract with the organization (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). This perception of the psychological climate and psychological contract are then related to how employees evaluate their organization. This is indicated by, for instance, their commitment to the organization and engagement in their work. These attitudes are related ultimately to employee behavior and, thus, also the motivation to continue working (Ajzen, 1991).

The described model (see page 61) is tested in Chapter 3 in two samples of employees working for two healthcare organizations. The results demonstrated that, in both samples, perceived development HR practices are positively related to employees’ perception of a psychological development climate and the fulfillment of the psychological contract. The results also show that, in both samples, psychological development climate and psychological contract fulfillment are related to higher organizational commitment and work engagement. Finally, organizational commitment was related positively to the motivation to continue working in one sample, while this relationship was not significant in the other sample. Work engagement was related to the intention to continue working in both samples.

Since age was such an important factor in the study, additional analyses were conducted to see whether age affected any of the relationships in the model. The results of the first sample demonstrated that the relationship between development HR practices and psychological development climate was stronger for older workers. In the second sample, the path between psychological contract fulfillment and organizational commitment was stronger for younger workers than for older workers. Thus, for younger employees (between 40 and 50 years old), the fulfillment of the psychological contract is a stronger predictor of organizational commitment than it is for employees who are 50 years and older.

The results of Chapter 3 shed particular light on how development HR practices are related to the motivation to continue working through mediation of organizational climate and work attitudes. The results demonstrate that the perception of the availability of (development) HR practices fulfill the signaling function by creating an organizational climate that encourages older workers to continue working and fulfilling the psychological contract. This subsequently induces positive attitudes related to the organization and work which then, ultimately, is related to a higher motivation to continue working. Hence, the study showed how HRM practices relate to motivation to continue working. Development HRM is important for workers, regardless of their age, and relates to higher motivation to continue working through creating an organizational climate in which people become engaged and committed. These positive work attitudes are imperative for employees in considering whether to continue working.
previous research has shown that work attitudes predict motivation to continue working (Wang & Shultz, 2010).

The results of Chapters 2 and 3 have demonstrated that work engagement is a consistent and important predictor of the motivation to continue working.

Chapter 4 investigates how work engagement can be generated through work characteristics, and how age plays a role in this relationship. The job characteristics model argues that core job characteristics increase work engagement (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Kahn, 1990). The job characteristics included in Chapter 4 were: workload; autonomy; development opportunities; and, feedback. Specifically, the relationship between work engagement and workload was investigated for older and younger workers, as were the effects of autonomy, development opportunities and feedback on this relationship.

First, the study demonstrated that the relationship between workload and work engagement is curvilinear, and shaped as an inverted U. Workload can be perceived as a work demand that is challenging because employees expect to meet the demands by investing efforts and to be rewarded for that (Vroom, 1964). As such, this has a positive effect on work engagement. However, when workload becomes too high and exceeds the capability of the individual to successfully cope with it, the effect becomes negative (Edwards, Caplan, & Harrison, 1998; Karasek, 1979). This has a negative effect on work engagement. In summary, workload is related positively to work engagement, but when workload becomes too high, work engagement decreases.

Second, the results showed that the relationship between work engagement and workload was different for older and younger workers. Lifespan theorists suggest that individuals develop mechanisms to cope with the (physical and cognitive) losses they encounter as a result of aging (Baltes, Reese, & Lipsitt, 1980). Consequently, older workers, in general, have more resilience and experience (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004) which enables them to cope better with demanding situations. Hence, age buffers the effect of workload on work engagement such that older workers are less prone to negative effects of workload.

Finally, the results showed that job resources (i.e. development opportunities, autonomy and feedback) increase work engagement, and that the resources development opportunities and autonomy buffer the relationship between workload and work engagement among younger workers. Specifically, when age is high, the buffering effect of resources on the relationship between work engagement and workload is weaker than when age is low. The latter can be explained by the notion that older workers buffer the negative effect of workload through their individual coping mechanisms, while younger workers are more dependent on externally provided job resources (Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995).

The finding that feedback did not affect the buffering effect that age has on the relationship between work engagement and workload can be explained in two ways: First, there are other forces that affect the effectiveness of feedback, namely, the type of feedback, the way it has been given and situational factors (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). The context of high workload may decrease the effectiveness of feedback as when employees are already busy feedback may become unwelcoming, undermining their ability to cope with workload at the moment. Second, feedback differs from autonomy and development opportunities in that the improvement in
performance comes from an external force. Contrastingly, in the case of autonomy and development opportunities, people themselves initiate improvement in performance.

The results of Chapter 4 demonstrate that HR inducements (job resources) increased work engagement and provided employees support while performing their job tasks. Second, the result suggests that there are age-related differences in how HR inducements are perceived. This suggests that some HR inducements may be more effective for younger workers than for older workers, and vice-versa. Further, some HR inducements may even be counter-effective for older workers. These could include development-related HR practices that require cognitive abilities, which decrease with aging. Kanfer and Ackerman (2004) explained two types of developments in the adult intellect; individuals are confronted with losses regarding fluid intellectual abilities (working memory, abstract reasoning, attention and processing of novel information), while encountering gains with crystallized intellectual abilities (educational knowledge and experience). When development HR practices are offered in the form of a training that requires fluid intelligence, it is conceivable that older workers have a hard time successfully completing their training and it may even cause stress.

Two important implications stem from this key issue. First, the studies show the importance of development-oriented HR inducements in motivating older workers to continue working. Earlier studies have demonstrated that development leads to employability and that this is important for them to keep performing well at their jobs (Van der Heijden, Schalk & Veldhoven, 2008) or through an organizational development climate employees feel that the organization is committed to them and want to reciprocate this commitment by demonstrating commitment towards the organization and, ultimately, having a higher intention to remain (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008). In this dissertation, a more integrative view is taken by including actual development practices as a source of development climate and employability. Second, the effect of HR inducements on psychological states, but most probably also on employee behavior, may play out differently for older and younger workers.

Key issue 2: Organizational climate and the motivation to continue working. This key issue is related to the former one. The relationship between HR practices and employee behavior, we noted, was not a direct one. HR practices have a signaling function. For example, practices signal to employees what is expected from them and the subsequent interpretation of those practices by the employees form an organizational climate (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). As such, when organizations want to encourage prolonged employment, this should be supported by the organizational climate and shaped by the organization’s HR practices. In Chapter 3, I researched and demonstrated the key role of organizational development climate in the relationship between development HR practices and the motivation to continue working. The study demonstrated that the perceived availability of development HR practices create an psychological development climate which leads subsequently to positive work-related attitudes and which, ultimately, is related positively to the motivation to continue working.

In Chapter 5 I investigated how individuals want to work after retirement and four work after retirement profiles were discerned that represent different preferences regarding post
Chapter 6 Discussion

retirement employment. This study demonstrated that the different work after retirement profiles were related to organizational climate. The relationship between organizational climate and work profiles is discussed in more detail as part of key issue 3.

The implication that stems from this key issue is that organizational climate is an important predictor of the motivation to continue working and also of the preferences regarding the work profile of the after retirement employment. Prior research had demonstrated already that a development climate is a predictor of the intention to remain in an organization (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008). However, my findings take this further by demonstrating that organizational climate can predict how employees want to continue working after retirement.

Key issue 3: Work after Retirement Profiles (WARPs). In Chapters 2 and 5 the question of how older employees want to work after retirement was investigated. Existing studies on continued work participation of older workers often have focused on how to motivate older workers to continue working (e.g. Armstrong-Stassen, 2008). Recent studies have investigated how older workers want to participate in employment after retirement (so called bridge employment). However, the variations in the types of work participations were defined ex ante and, generally, limited in scope. In these studies work participation after retirement, or bridge employment, is categorized based either on the field of participation (i.e. career bridge employment versus non-career bridge employment) (e.g. Davis, 2003; Gobeski & Beehr, 2009) or on the organizational domain (i.e. same organization or different organization) (Zhan, Wang & Yao, 2013). My work takes a more detailed approach to discerning types of work participation after retirement. After retirement work profiles were expanded with regard to important domains, such as the content, frequency and distribution of the work. Considering the upcoming labor shortages (Eurofound, 2011) it is important to research which type of work profiles would motivate employees to take on bridge employment. Chapter 2 and Chapter 5 investigated how older employees want to work after retirement. Chapter 5 takes this a step further and discerns four work after retirement profiles and investigates which individual and work-related factors are related to employees’ specific work profile preferences.

The literature on contingent work arrangement and part-time work allowed a taxonomy with six dimensions of work to be designed. These dimensions included: frequency; distribution; format; duration; work-context; and, job-description. Within each dimension different options were defined. For example, the options of frequency were: unchanged amount of hours; decreased amount of hours; more hours; or, total withdrawal (see Table 5.1 on page 114). For each option employees were asked to what extent they would want to work in that manner after retirement. So, the work after retirement profiles (WARPs) were constructed via an exploratory factor analysis which demonstrated that four work profiles could be distinguished. The first work profile is that in which employees want to work less in their retirement (WARP less). The second one is a work profile in which employees do not want to change their work existing work profile (WARP unchanged). The third is a work profile in which employees want to modify the content of their work (WARP content modification). The final work profile is directed at context modification (WARP context modification).
Chapter 6 Discussion

How the preference for each work profile would be related to individual and work-related factors was investigated also. The results demonstrated that age, education, hours worked per week, future time perspective, organizational climate and psychological contract fulfillment each were unique predictors of the preferences to work in according to a specific work profile. The results showed that employees with a higher level of education and employees, who perceive the organizational climate as accommodating towards older workers, prefer to work according to the \textit{WARP less}. Development climate and psychological contract fulfillment were related positively to \textit{WARP unchanged}. Thus, when employees perceived that the organization supports and encourages them to develop themselves; employees did not want to change their retirement work profile. Similarly, when employees felt like the organization meets their promises, they did not want to change their retirement work profile. Further, \textit{WARP content change} was related negatively to chronological age and related positively to future time perspective and accommodative climate. This means that that older employees did not want to change their job tasks in their after retirement jobs and the more employees perceived that they have a long future ahead, the more they wanted to change their job description.

Further, when employees perceived a climate in which the organization encourages them to work less and to do less demanding jobs, employees wanted to change their job description. Finally, \textit{WARP context modification} was related positively to education level and accommodative climate and related negatively to psychological contract fulfillment. Also, employees with a higher level of education were more likely to want to change their job description in retirement. The need for older workers to change their job description is in line with recent work on job crafting and aging. This argues that job crafting (i.e. self-initiated work-related changes so that work demands meet personal abilities and needs) is important for successful aging because motives and abilities change with age, and job mobility is low among older workers (Kooij, Tims, & Kanfer, 2014). In addition, employees who perceived the organizational climate as encouraging them to work less and do less demanding tasks also wanted to change their job context. Contrastingly, employees who felt that the organization had met its promises wanted to remain working in the same organization.

An important implication is that, when investigating work participation at older age, work profiles are very relevant to consider. Similar to any other life stage, work participation at older age can take on various forms. When these various forms of preferred work profiles are considered and “continuing working” is not just regarded as doing the same thing for an additional time, it is likely to increase the motivation to continue working. Therefore, communicating the various possibilities to continue working to older employees can be a very important tool for organizations to provide employees with more control over their careers, as well as a realistic outlook on the last stage of their careers. Moreover, when older employees are aware of the possibilities to craft the later stages of their careers, this may increase their motivation to continue working.

6.2 Theoretical implications and Contributions related to the key issues

This dissertation began with the question: how employees could be motivated to continue working, and particularly how organizations could influence this? Any organizations’ main tools to manage employees are their HR practices. As suggested by the signaling theory
Chapter 6 Discussion

(Ostroff & Bowen, 2000), an important function of HR practices is that it signals to employees what the organization expects from them. Thus, an organization’s HR practices are vital in encouraging older workers to continue working. The key issues of this thesis in this respect were:

1. How can development HR practices contribute to the motivation to continue working?
2. What is the role of the organizational climate in motivating employees to continue working?; and,
3. How do older employees want to continue working?

The section below gives an overview of the theoretical contributions related to these key issues.

Contribution 1: The impact of development HR practices on the motivation to continue working

The first contribution of this dissertation is that it investigates the role of development HR practices in the context of encouraging older workers to continue working. Earlier studies have demonstrated that development is an important predictor of employment at older age (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008). However, there are no studies that investigate the particular role of development HR practices. Development HR practices are especially important in increasing older employees motivation to continue working, since employees who use development HR practices continuously develop themselves and, by so doing, acquire relevant skills and remain employable (Van der Heijden, Schalk, & van Veldhoven, 2008). Furthermore, offering development-related HR practices, their availability signals to employees that the organization considers them worthy to invest in (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). In exchange employees want to return the commitment that organization is showing them by displaying commitment towards the organization and/or work.

The role of development HR practices was investigated in three ways: first, the use and availability of HR practices was researched. The results demonstrated that, while usage of HR practices was low, the perception of the availability was high. Second, the effect of the perception of availability of development HR practices on the motivation to continue working was investigated. The results demonstrated that the mere availability of development HR practices could contribute to employees’ motivation to continue working by creating a psychological development climate for older workers and fulfilling their psychological contract. This increases work engagement and organizational commitment and, consequently, the motivation to continue working. The perception of the availability of HR practices was related to a psychological development climate and the fulfillment of the psychological contract. This is related to organizational commitment and work engagement of which work engagement is consistently related to the motivation to continue working. While the perception of availability was an important predictor of engagement and the motivation to continue working, when actual usage is low, development HR practices do not contribute to the performance of employees. In so doing, development HR practices do not actually increase employability when they potentially could.

In the third approach of investigating the effect of development HR practices, I demonstrated that the weekly availability of development opportunities affected weekly work engagement in the context of high workload. Specifically, weekly development opportunities increased work engagement, and buffered the negative effects of high workload. Hence, the
perception of the availability of development HR practices (climate) increased work engagement on an organizational level, while actual weekly development opportunities increased work engagement on a personal level. Also, engaged workers are more willing to continue working (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3). This underscores the fact that development was important for employees, and especially for older employees who were often offered limited development opportunities (Maurer & Rafuse, 2001).

This dissertation has demonstrated that the availability of development HR practices creates a climate that encourages employee development. This is related to the motivation to continue working through work engagement. Development HR practices in the form of weekly development opportunities increase work engagement by helping to deal with high levels of workload. Hence, development HR inducements are both effective psychologically, by creating a climate and positive work related attitudes, as well as practically, when they are provided at the job.

Contribution 2: The impact of work engagement on the motivation to continue working

The second contribution of this dissertation is related to the role of work engagement in motivating older workers to continue working. Existing studies have demonstrated that individuals’ evaluation of their relationship with work and organization (e.g. organizational commitment, job satisfaction) is an important predictor of its retirement behavior (i.e. early retirement, bridge employment) (Gobeski & Beehr, 2009; Wang & Shultz, 2010). However, in this context, work engagement is a concept that has received little attention. As a concept, work engagement refers to a state of personal investment in the work role such that the person is willing to allocate personal resources to perform well at work and has an emotional connection with work (Kahn, 1990). According to Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2009) engaged workers feel enthusiastic about their work, they have high levels of energy and are often deeply involved in their jobs. Thus, conceptually, work engagement is a more active psychological state compared with organizational commitment or job satisfaction, which are more passive responses to how employees perceive their jobs and their organizations.

For engaged workers, work is a source of energy instead of something that absorbs energy out of a person. Moreover, as suggested by the work role attachment theory (Carter & Cook, 1995), leaving the work role would cause stress for the engaged worker instead of relief. The findings in this dissertation confirm that work engagement is crucial in prolonged work participation. Specifically, my results demonstrate that work engagement is a consistent predictor of the motivation to continue working and, therefore, should be included in studies about retirement behavior. Since motivation is inherently an intrinsic concept, work engagement would be the most relevant type of work related attitude to study it, especially when it comes to studies about the motivation to continued employment.

Contribution 3: Determinants of work engagement

Related to the second contribution, the third contribution involves further investigation of how work engagement can be generated on an individual, job characteristic level and how this differs for younger and older workers. This dissertation has investigated what the conditions were for work engagement in the context of high workload and how this differed for older and
Chapter 6 Discussion

younger workers. In addition to the development opportunities discussed above, job autonomy and feedback were included as core job characteristics that would increase engagement (Hackman & Oldham, 1980).

Existing studies have often assumed that the relationship between workload and work engagement is linear (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). Based on the job stress literature (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992) and the person organization fit literature, I demonstrated that this relationship is curvilinear. Lifespan theories of development demonstrated that older workers develop resources to cope with workload and, therefore, are better in coping with high workload and are affected less by fluctuating workload, compared with their younger counterparts. This dissertation demonstrated also that the buffering effect of job resources, as suggested by the job demands and resources literature (i.e. autonomy and development opportunities), differs for older and younger workers. The results demonstrate that, while job resources increase work engagement for both young and old, for younger workers they are stronger buffers in the relationship between work engagement and workload. This dissertation contributes by demonstrating that there are age-related differences in how workload effects work engagement and in how job resources buffer the relationship between work engagement and workload. Moreover, these differences are likely to be related to how age-related changes affect how older employees operate at work. Age-related differences should be taken into consideration in the context of an aging work force when we want to keep older workers active and engaged in the workforce and we need a better understanding of which job characteristics are effective in doing so.

Contribution 4: Work after retirement profiles.

Finally, this dissertation contributes to retirement literature by examining how employees want to work after retirement. Existing studies have often investigated factors predicting early retirement or postponing retirement. However, little research has been done on how individuals want to continue working considering different possibilities regarding the work dimensions, frequency, distribution, format, duration content and context of work. Chapter 5 investigated employees’ preferences regarding these work dimensions. Based on these preferences, four work profiles were created: the first work profile is one in which employees want to work less in their retirement (WARP less). The second work profile is when employees do not want to change their work existing work profile (WARP unchanged). The third work profile is where employees want to modify the content of their work (WARP content modification). The final work profile is directed at context modification (WARP context modification). Subsequently, the relationship between these work profiles and organizational climate and the psychological contract was investigated. The work after retirement profiles were related to the following organizational factors: WARP less was related to organizational accommodative climate; WARP content change was also related to accommodative climate; WARP context change was related to accommodative climate and negatively related to psychological contract fulfillment and WARP unchanged was related positively to organizational development climate and psychological contract fulfillment. The findings demonstrated that organizational climate is important not only in increasing employees’ motivation to continue working after retirement age, but also in shaping their after retirement work profiles.

142
Chapter 6 Discussion

6.3 Limitations and related suggestions for future research

As with every study, this research has limitations is discussed at the end of each chapter. The section below addresses the overarching limitations that run through the dissertation.

The first limitation is related to the most important variable in this research: the motivation to continue working. While motivations and intentions are important predictors of actual behavior, they do not necessarily translate to actual behavior (Armitage & Conner, 2001). Thus, even though employees may be motivated to continue working, this does not necessarily have to result in actual working beyond retirement. Hence, it is important to investigate, not only whether people can be motivated to continue working, but also the extent to which they actually work beyond their retirement age. Notwithstanding, motivation is important, because when motivation to continue working is absent, it is very unlikely that people will continue working, and, thus, motivation is a necessary requirement for employees actually to continue working (Bal, de Jong, Jansen & Bakker, 2012).

The second and a related limitation is that a large part of the data for this research was cross-sectional. Considering the nature of the research that stems from the research question of how organizations can motivate employees to continue working, a longitudinal design would be more desirable. The actual effect of the organizational inducements could be tested if there were at least two times of measurement. As it takes time for the availability of HR practices to show their effects on employee attitudes and behavior, a longitudinal design would be desirable. Further, by conducting a longitudinal study with multiple measurements, it would also be possible to measure actual behavior. Therefore, a suggestion for future research would be to conduct a longitudinal research to test:

1) What the effect of HR inducements are over time;
2) To investigate actual retirement behavior, in addition to motivation;
3) To investigate actual work after retirement profiles;
4) To investigate what the effect is of providing different work profiles on retirement vs. Continue working.

It is conceivable that providing different options will increase employees’ motivation to continue working.

The third limitation relates to the samples of the studies. Since the dissertation was part of a larger project regarding sustainable employment in the health sector, all studies were conducted in the health sector, and mostly in the eldercare sector. Consequently, some sector specific characteristics are reflected in the samples. Specifically, most respondents were female, and had on average intermediate vocational training as their highest completed education. Yet, in practice, a sample with these characteristics is very interesting to study since women on average retire earlier than men (Eurostat, 2007) and lower educated individuals are likely to retire earlier since education is associated with skills and ability to perform at work (Von Bonsdorff, Shultz, Leskinen & Tansky, 2009). Furthermore, the healthcare sector in particular is struggling with shortages of skilled employees (Eurofound, 2011). However, for future research it is important to investigate other sectors with other demographics. Thus, more men and a more even distribution in education level in order to confirm the generic usefulness of the findings.
A final limitation is related to the data collection method used in the studies. All data were collected through surveys and were self-reported. While some variables contained personal feelings and motivations, for other variables, such as availability HR practices or job resources, it would have been useful to have multiple sources to prevent common method bias. Nonetheless, statistical techniques were used to test for common method bias. The results suggested that there was no evidence of common method bias. Yet, future research should address this limitation and apply a multi-source approach in collecting data.

6.4 Future Research Agenda

6.4.1 Age sensitive HR inducements

A central finding in this dissertation is related to the importance of individual differences in how HR inducements are interpreted. It was shown that there are individual age-related differences in how core work characteristics or job resources affected employee wellbeing. In a broad sense this suggests that more research should be done on individual differences in the effect of core work characteristics or job resources on employee wellbeing. Hitherto, there has been hardly any research that differentiates on the basis of individual differences. If we are to contribute to the aging literature, it is important to investigate what types of work characteristics are valuable for older workers to perform their daily tasks.

6.4.2 Work after retirement profiles

One of the central themes of this dissertation was how employees want to continue working after retirement. This dissertation suggested different work after retirement profiles for older workers. The idea of work profiles is new and requires more research. In this dissertation work profiles were studied among mostly female workers working in the health sector with vocational training as their average highest completed education. Future research could investigate more the idea of work after retirement profiles in different sectors and with a dataset with a more evenly distributed gender and education distribution. The notion of different possibilities regarding the work profiles may increase the motivation to continue working as well. It is conceivable that when different profiles are offered, employees find that they could fit their work better with other activities. Future research could develop also the idea of work profiles in general by investigating how preferences regarding work profiles shift during life span.

6.5 Practical Implications

The main theme of this thesis (continuing working) is, apart from being an important matter from an academic perspective, also imperative from a societal and practical perspective for organizations that are increasingly dealing with an aging workforce. This thesis has demonstrated that organizations can encourage older workers to continue working through HR inducements. Valuable practical implications can be derived from these findings.

The findings demonstrate that to encourage older workers to continue working is an objective that should be integrated in the organization’s HR strategy. I do not advocate specific age-related policies, but advocate rather that policies and practices should be viewed as applicable at all ages; yet possibly to differ in content or execution, as appropriate.
The findings demonstrated that providing development-related HR inducements contributed to the motivation to continue working. Both the availability of development-related HR practices, as well as having development opportunities at work, increased older workers’ work engagement and, ultimately, their motivation to continue working. The availability of development HR practices signals to workers that they are valuable and are worth investing in. Development opportunities at work increased work engagement by helping to accomplish job tasks. This can be regarded as an important job resource. Since older employees encounter losses in cognitive and physical functioning (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004) it is important that their skills are continuously updated so they are better able to successfully perform their job tasks. Therefore, employee development, especially for older employees, should be an important part of organizations’ HR strategy. The availability of practices should be clearly communicated and the actual usage should be promoted so organizations continuously invest in development throughout employees’ working lives to keep their employees employable, active and engaged in the workforce.

The possibilities for development can be communicated through various means. An important tool is the annual performance evaluation between the employee and the manager. Managers should ask structurally what employees’ development needs are to fulfill their ambitions. They should also evaluate the fit between their individual competences and the competences required for the job. Effective participation in learning and development activities should be encouraged for employees, regardless of their age. The specific content and implementation of these activities may vary for older and younger workers. Considering age-related losses and gains, learning and development activities for older workers should be primarily focused on strengthening their best qualities. Moreover, there is an important task for managers related to this; they are the closest to and have the best insights of the employees and the work. To deploy managers effectively to fulfill this task may require time allocation and possibly also training.

Another important finding in this dissertation is that work engagement is an important concept when it comes to the motivation to continue working. Work engagement is important because for engaged workers, work is an important part of life, such that they have a positive emotional bond with work and to leave the workforce would result in distress (Carter & Cook, 1995; Atchley, 1989). Therefore, organizations should carefully nurture work engagement at all ages. The findings demonstrated that organizations can do this through development HR practices that create an organizational development climate and by providing job resources that support employees to successfully accomplish their job tasks.

Research in the field of job stress, the job characteristics model and the job-demands and resources model argue that job characteristics are predictors of employee wellbeing; e.g. too many demands may cause burnout and stress and core characteristics, or job resources will lead to engagement. The study on the relationship between workload and work engagement demonstrated that there are age-related differences in the effects of job characteristics on employee wellbeing. Therefore, nurturing work engagement needs customization, and interventions on task level should be considered.

With regard to the latter, the third practical implication is related to the finding that older employees have different work-related preferences and needs. An important finding was that job
Chapter 6 Discussion

characteristics have a different effect on older and younger workers’ wellbeing. In addition, the findings demonstrated that employees want to change their work profiles in retirement. Hence, an important implication is that there is a need for age sensitive HR management. To keep employees effectively active and engaged in the workforce organizations should develop a HR management structure that is responsive to individual differences and, specifically, age-related needs and abilities. It is important to evaluate what the organizational needs are. There should be a clear problem definition and accordingly goals should be defined. The goal could be retaining older workers but, in a larger context, could be decreasing absenteeism among older workers or increasing work engagement – depending on the problem definition. When the problems and goals are identified, HR practices should be implemented accordingly.

We have investigated how older workers want to continue working and identified different work after retirement profiles. I demonstrated that employees have different preferences with regard to their work after retirement profiles. Second, organizational factors (i.e. organizational climate and the psychological contract) impact the preference for a specific work after retirement profile. Hence, organizations can use work profiles as tools to offer different options in post-retirement employment. Since organizations can influence employees’ preferences for certain work profiles through organizational climate and psychological contract, they can actively encourage employees to select a profile according to the organizations’ wishes. By monitoring employees’ preferences regarding their work after retirement profiles, organizations can anticipate to changes in their workforce composition. A possible way to do this is via the annual performance evaluation talk when managers should openly discuss work profile possibilities. Since employee’s preferences regarding the work profile may change at different life stages, work profiles should be discussed all ages. For instance, starting a family may include specific preferences, as does reaching older age.

6.6 Conclusion

This thesis aimed to research how older employees can be motivated to continue working after retirement age. It has shown that organizations’ HR inducements play an important role in this respect. Development HR practices contribute to older employees’ motivation to continue working through organizational climate that affects employee attitudes and, ultimately, the motivation to continue working. However, due to age-related individual differences, the effects of HR inducements are heterogeneous. Thus, it is important to take these differences into account when deploying HR systems to induce a positive organizational climate, a positive evaluation of the psychological contract and positive work attitudes. Individual differences also emerge in preferences regarding older workers’ after retirement work profiles. These individual preferences regarding older retirement work profiles are associated also with organizational factors that can be influenced by HR inducements.
6.5 References


Chapter 6 Discussion


Chapter 6 Discussion


Samenvatting

150
Samenvatting

Actief ouder worden en de motivatie om langer door te werken
Introductie

De bevolking van Nederland en andere westere landen vergrijs in hoog tempo. Er worden minder kinderen geboren, terwijl ouderen langer en gezonder leven. Deze demografische ontwikkelingen brengen de vergrijzing van de beroepsbevolking teweeg. Dit effect wordt nog eens versterkt door de grote omvang van de babyboom generatie (mensen die geboren zijn tussen 1946 en 1964), die binnenkort de pensioengerechtigde leeftijd bereiken. Hoewel de voorspelde tekorten op de arbeidsmarkt als resultaat van de vergrijzing door de huidige economische crisis uitblijven, zullen de tekorten weer zichtbaar worden op het moment dat de effecten van de crisis uitgewerkt zijn. Daarom is het van groot belang voor organisaties om inzicht te krijgen in hoe zij hun medewerkers langer actief en gemotiveerd aan het werk kunnen houden. Hoewel de effecten van vergrijzing zichtbaar zijn in alle sectoren, wordt de zorgsector het hardst getroffen. De sector heeft te kampen met een gemiddeld oudere werknemerspopulatie en tegelijkertijd een gemiddeld lage toestroom van jongeren. Bovendien zal de vraag naar personeel ook toenemen in de sector, naarmate de vergrijzing toeneemt.

In deze dissertatie is onderzoek gedaan naar hoe ouderen langer actief en gemotiveerd aan het werk gehouden kunnen worden.

Deze dissertatie draagt bij aan bestaande kennis door de volgende vragen te beantwoorden: 1) Hoe dragen HR instrumenten bij aan de motivatie om langer door te werken?; 2) Wat is de rol van organisatieklimaat bij de motivatie om langer door te werken?; 3) Hoe willen medewerkers langer doorwerken na hun pensioen (doorwerkprofielen)?.

Resultaten

HR instrumenten die bijdragen tot de motivatie om langer door te werken


HRM literatuur toont aan dat de HR praktijken signalen afgeven aan medewerkers over wat van hen verwacht wordt binnen de werkcontext. De HR praktijken van de organisatie vormen dus een belangrijk communicatiemiddel naar de medewerker toe en beïnvloeden op die manier organisatie uitkomsten (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). In de context van langer doorwerken, zijn met name HR praktijken die gericht zijn op ontwikkeling voor ouderen belangrijk bij de motivatie en het vermogen om langer actief te blijven op de arbeidsmarkt (Armstrong-Stassen, 2008). Ontwikkel HR praktijken dragen bij aan het vermogen om langer door te werken door de inzetbaarheid van ouderen op pijl te houden en de motivatie om langer door te werken te verhogen door een goede relatie tussen de werkgever en werknemer te bewerkstelligen (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008; Van der Heijden, de Lange, Demerouti, & Van der Heijde, 2009).

In Hoofdstuk 2 is de beschikbaarheid en het gebruik van HR praktijken onderzocht in vier zorgorganisaties. De resultaten laten zien dat ondanks medewerkers aangeven dat HR
praktijken beschikbaar zijn, het gebruik van de praktijken vaak aanzienlijk laag is. Dit suggereert dat de signaal functie van HR praktijken wellicht wordt vervuld, maar de praktische functie niet.

In Hoofdstuk 3 wordt specifiek ingezoomd op ontwikkel HR praktijken en de rol die zij hebben in de motivatie om langer door te werken. In lijn met HR theorieën laat Hoofdstuk 3 zien dat ontwikkeld HR praktijken voorspellers zijn van een organisatieklimaat dat zich kenmerkt als ontwikkelen en de vervulling van het psychologische contract (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). Deze positieve percepties van het organisatieklimaat en het psychologische contract zijn vervolgens bepalend voor de relatie die medewerkers hebben met de organisatie, welke onder meer wordt uitgedrukt in organisatie betrokkenheid en werk bevlogenheid. Deze attitudes zijn vervolgens gerelateerd aan de motivatie (Wang & Shultz, 2010) en uiteindelijk de beslissing om langer door te werken (Ajzen, 1991).

De resultaten van zowel Hoofdstuk 2 als Hoofdstuk 3 hebben aangetoond dat bevlogenheid een consistent en belangrijke voorspeller is van de motivatie om langer door te werken. Daarom is bevlogenheid nader onderzocht in Hoofdstuk 4. In Hoofdstuk 4 is onderzocht hoe bevlogenheid gegenereerd kan worden met behulp van werkkenmerken en de rol van leeftijd hierbij. Volgens het work characteristics model bevorderen kern werkkenmerken of job-resources bevlogenheid op het werk (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Kahn, 1990). Job-resources die onderdeel uitmaken van de studie in Hoofdstuk 4 zijn: werkdruk, autonomie, ontwikkelmogelijkheden en feedback. In de studie is onderzocht wat de invloed is van werkdruk op bevlogenheid, en hoe dit verschilt voor jong en oud. Tevens is onderzocht wat het effect is van autonomie, ontwikkelmogelijkheden en feedback op de relatie tussen werkdruk en bevlogenheid (zie figuur 4.1 pagina 89).

De resultaten hebben aangetoond dat de relatie tussen werkdruk en werkbevlogenheid curvilineair is, als een omgekeerde U-vorm. Werkdruk heeft in eerste instantie een positief effect op bevlogenheid omdat het wordt gezien als een uitdaging, werknemers verwachten namelijk aan de taakeisen te kunnen voldoen door inspanningen te leveren en in ruil daarvoor beloond te worden (Vroom, 1964). Indien de werkdruk de capaciteiten van de werknemer overstijgt en de werknemer niet meer in staat is om aan de taakeisen te voldoen, heeft werkdruk een negatief effect op bevlogenheid (Edwards, Caplan, & Harrison, 1998; Karasek, 1979). Verder laat de studie zien dat de relatie tussen bevlogenheid en werkdruk verschillend is voor oudere en jongere werknemers. De resultaten laten zien dat leeftijd een modererend effect heeft op de relatie tussen werkdruk en bevlogenheid, ouderen worden namelijk minder beïnvloed door het negatieve effect van werkdruk. Dit is in lijn met de levensloop theorieën, waarin wordt uitgelegd dat ouderen leren omgaan met de (fysische en cognitieve) verliezen waar zij mee worden geconfronteerd (Baltes, Reese, & Lipsitt, 1980). Derhalve hebben ouderen meer ervaring en flexibiliteit (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004), wat hen in staat stelt beter om te kunnen gaan met situaties die veeleisend zijn. Tenslotte laten de resultaten zien dat werk gerelateerde energiebronnen (zoals mogelijkheden om te ontwikkelen, autonomie en feedback) werkbevlogenheid verhogen en dat de ontwikkelmogelijkheden en autonomie de relatie tussen werkdruk en werkbevlogenheid voor jongeren bufferen. De studie toont aan dat wanneer de leeftijd van werknemers hoog is (50+), het modererende effect van de werkkenmerken op de relatie tussen bevlogenheid en werkdruk zwakker is dan wanneer de leeftijd van werknemers laag is. Het laatste kan verklaard worden
doordat oudere werknemers de negatieve effecten van werkdruk dempen door ervaring en flexibiliteit die hen in staat stelt om te kunnen gaan met veeleisende situaties, terwijl jongeren meer afhankelijk zijn van werk gerelateerde energiebronnen (Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995).

Twee belangrijke implicaties vloeien voort uit dit onderwerp. Ten eerste laten de studies zien dat HR praktijken die gericht zijn op ontwikkeling belangrijk zijn om ouderen te motiveren om langer door te werken. Dit is in lijn met eerdere studies die hebben aangetoond dat continue ontwikkeling een belangrijk onderdeel is van HR beleid gericht op duurzame inzetbaarheid (Van der Heijden, Schalk & Veldhoven, 2008). Bovendien creëren HR initiatieven die gericht zijn op ontwikkeling een ontwikkelklimaat en laten daarmee aan werknemers zien dat de organisatie loyaal is aan hen, en in hen investeert. Werknemers willen deze loyaliteit belonen door betrokkenheid te tonen, wat uiteindelijk hun motivatie om te blijven werken vergroot (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008). Ten tweede is aangetoond dat de invloed van HR praktijken op werk gerelateerde attitudes verschilt voor jongeren en ouderen. In dit proefschrift is bijvoorbeeld aangetoond dat de effectiviteit van job resources anders is voor werknemers van verschillende leeftijden.

Organisatieklimaat en de motivatie om langer door te werken

Zoals eerder al is aangegeven, bestaat er geen directe relatie tussen HR praktijken en het gedrag van werknemers. HR praktijken geven een signaal af van de verwachtingen van de organisatie ten opzichte van haar werknemers en de interpretatie van deze praktijken vormt vervolgens een organisatieklimaat (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). Wanneer organisaties langer doorwerken willen aanmoedigen moet het organisatieklimaat, dat wordt gevormd door de HR praktijken, dit ondersteunen. In Hoofdstuk 3 is de belangrijke rol van organisatieklimaat in de relatie tussen HR praktijken en de motivatie om langer door te werken onderzocht. De studie heeft laten zien dat de perceptie van aanwezigheid van ontwikkel HR praktijken een psychologisch ontwikkelklimaat creëren, wat leidt tot positieve werk gerelateerde attitudes en uiteindelijk ook de motivatie om langer door te werken. Voorts is in Hoofdstuk 5 onderzocht hoe ouderen langer willen doorwerken. In de studie zijn vier doorwerkprofielen onderscheiden, welke verschillende voorkeuren voor aanvulling van langer doorwerken weergeven. De bevindingen tonen aan dat de voorkeuren voor de verschillende doorwerkprofielen gerelateerd zijn aan organisatieklimaat. De relatie tussen organisatieklimaat en doorwerkprofielen worden in meer detail behandeld in de volgende sectie.

De belangrijkste implicatie die voortvloeit uit de bevindingen rondom organisatieklimaat is dat het een belangrijke voorspeller is van de motivatie om langer door te werken en invulling van het doorwerkprofiel. Eerder onderzoek heeft al aangetoond dat ontwikkelklimaat een voorspeller is van de intentie om te blijven werken (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008). De bevindingen in deze dissertatie gaan echter een stapje verder door aan te tonen dat organisatieklimaat ook een voorspeller is van hoe ouderen willen doorwerken.
Samenvatting

Doorwerkprofielen

In Hoofdstuk 2 en 5 is onderzocht hoe ouderen willen doorwerken. Studies omtrent werkparticipatie van ouderen leggen vaak de nadruk op hoe ouderen gemotiveerd kunnen worden om langer door te werken (e.g. Armstrong-Stassen, 2008). Hoe het doorwerken er dan uiteindelijk uitziet is echter onduidelijk. In bestaande studies die gaan over de werkparticipatie na het pensioen (ook wel bridge employment genoemd) worden de mogelijkheden ex ante vastgelegd, met vaak een beperkte scope. In deze studies wordt onderscheid gemaakt gebaseerd op het werkveld (i.e. career bridge employment versus non-career bridge employment) (e.g. Davis, 2003; Gobeski & Beehr, 2009) of op basis van organisatie domein (i.e. dezelfde organisatie versus andere organisatie) (Zhan, Wang & Yao, 2013). In deze dissertatie is gekozen voor een meer gedetailleerde aanpak om verschillende typen doorwerkprofielen te onderscheiden. Voorkeuren voor doorwerkprofielen zijn onderzocht op basis van bijvoorbeeld inhoud van het werk, frequentie of omvang van het werk en de werkdistributie. Gezien de toenemende vergrijzing (Eurofound, 2011) is het gunstig om na te denken over welke type doorwerkprofielen motiverend zijn bij de keuzes om langer door te werken.

In Hoofdstuk 2 is onderzocht hoe ouderen willen doorwerken na hun pensioen door hun bereidheid voor verschillende opties ten aanzien van langer doorwerken te onderzoeken. Hoofdstuk 5 gaat een stap verder door vier doorwerkprofielen te onderscheiden en te onderzoeken welke individuele en werk gerelateerde factoren gerelateerd zijn aan de voorkeur voor een bepaalde werkprofiel. In deze studie is, op basis van literatuur op het gebied van niet-standaard werkvormen, een taxonomie gemaakt waar zes werkdimensies naar voren zijn gekomen. Deze dimensies waren: frequentie, distributie, vorm, duur, werkcontext en werkinhoud. Binnen elke dimensie zijn verschillende opties gedefinieerd. Bijvoorbeeld, voor de dimensie frequentie waren de opties: gelijk aantal uren, minder uren, meer uren en volledig stoppen met werken (zie Tabel 5.1. op pagina 114 voor een volledig overzicht). Vervolgens is aan medewerkers gevraagd in hoeverre elke optie voor hen van toepassing is. Op basis hiervan zijn vier doorwerkprofielen (DWP's) geconstrueerd: (1) een doorwerkprofiel waarbij werknemers wensen om minder te werken (DWP minder), (2) een doorwerkprofiel waarbij werknemers zoveel mogelijk aspecten van het werk hetzelfde willen houden (DWP onveranderd), (3) een doorwerkprofiel waarbij werknemers het werk inhoudelijk, dus op taakniveau, willen aanpassen (DWP inhoudelijke verandering) en tot slot (4) een doorwerkprofiel waarbij werknemers de werkcontext willen veranderen en dus niet willen doorwerken bij de huidige werkgever (DWP verandering werkcontext).

Tevens is onderzocht hoe de voorkeur voor een bepaalde doorwerkprofiel gerelateerd is aan werk en individuele factoren. De resultaten van het onderzoek tonen aan dat leeftijd, opleidingsniveau, omvang van het contract, toekomstperspectief, organisatieklimaat en psychologisch contract vervulling elk unieke voorspellers zijn van de voorkeur voor een bepaald doorwerkprofiel. Volgens de studie willen werknemers met een hoog opleidingsniveau en werknemers die een onzeker klimaat voelen werk volgens DWP minder. Ontwikkelklimaat en psychologisch contract vervulling waren positief gerelateerd aan DWP onveranderd. Dus wanneer werknemers het gevoel hebben dat de organisatie hen steunt en aanmoedigt om zichzelf te ontwikkelen en wanneer zij het gevoel hebben dat de organisatie haar beloftes is nagekomen,
Samenvatting

willen zij zo min mogelijk veranderen aan hun werkprofiel. *DWP inhoudelijke verandering* was negatief gerelateerd aan chronologische leeftijd en positief gerelateerd aan toekomstperspectief en ontzieklimaat. Dit betekent dat werknemers de inhoud van hun werk niet willen veranderen en hoe meer werknemers het gevoel hebben dat zij een lange toekomst voor zich hebben, des te meer zij de voorkeur hebben om andere taken uit te voeren. Eveneens laat het onderzoek zien dat wanneer werknemers het gevoel hebben dat de organisatie hen stimuleert om hun taaklasten te verminderen en om met pensioen te gaan, zij een doorwerkprofiel willen waarbij ze andere taken hebben. De behoefte van de oudere werknemer om zijn taakinhoud te veranderen is in lijn met recent onderzoek op het gebied van *job crafting* en ouderen. Dit onderzoek laat zien dat *job crafting* (i.e., zelf geïnitieerde werk gerelateerde veranderingen in het takenpakket om deze beter te laten aansluiten aan persoonlijke capaciteiten en behoeften) belangrijk is bij succesvol ouder worden op het werk, omdat werkmotieven en capaciteiten veranderen met ouder worden en mobiliteit afneemt (Kooij, Tims, & Kanfer, 2014).

Ten slotte was *DWP verandering werkcontext* positief gerelateerd aan opleidingsniveau en ontzieklimaat en negatief gerelateerd aan psychologisch contract vervulling. Volgens deze bevindingen willen werknemers die hoger opgeleid zijn en medewerkers die een ontzieklimaat ervaren vaker anders werken. Tevens is het gevoel dat de werkgever zich niet aan zijn beloftes heeft gehouden negatief gerelateerd aan de voorkeur om de werkcontext te veranderen. Volgens de resultaten hebben hoogopgeleiden vaker de voorkeur voor een doorwerkprofiel waarbij de werkcontext anders is.

Een belangrijke implicatie van deze bevindingen is dat het onderzoeken van doorwerkprofielen in de context van langer doorwerken relevant is. Vergelijkbaar met andere levensfasen, veranderen bij het ouder worden ook werkbehoeften en kunnen de behoeften rondom het werkprofiel verschillende vormen aannemen. Wanneer verschillende werkprofielen in acht worden genomen en doorwerken niet alleen wordt gezien als hetzelfde blijven doen voor een langere tijd, is het denkbaar dat de motivatie om langer door te werken ook toeneemt. Daarom zou het communiceren van verschillende doorwerkopties een belangrijk middel zijn om de doorwerkbehoeften van oudere medewerkers te accommoderen, hen meer controle te geven over hun carrière, en een realistisch beeld te schetsen van de laatste fase van hun carrière.

**Conclusies en implicaties**

In Hoofdstuk 6 worden de bevindingen van het proefschrift samengevat en worden de theoretische en praktische implicaties beschreven. Het proefschrift heeft aangetoond dat HR instrumenten een belangrijke rol spelen om ouderen te motiveren om langer door te werken. Ontwikkeld HR instrumenten dragen bij aan de motivatie om langer door te werken door een organisatieklimaat te creëren dat een positief effect heeft op werk gerelateerde attitudes en uiteindelijk de motivatie om langer door te werken. De bevindingen laten tevens zien dat door leeftijd gerelateerde individuele verschillen, de effecten van HR instrumenten heterogeen zijn. Het is daarom belangrijk om deze verschillen in acht te nemen bij het opzetten van HR systemen. Individuele verschillen zijn ook relevant ten aanzien van voorkeuren voor het doorwerkprofiel.
Leeftijdsbewust personeelsbeleid is een belangrijke voorwaarde om ouderen actief en bevlogen aan het werk te houden. Dit kan door voldoende ontwikkel HR instrumenten te bieden aan ouderen, maar ook door taken zodanig in te richten zodat deze passen bij de behoeften van ouderen en ouderen in hun kracht worden gezet. Tevens laat het proefschrift zien dat ouderen verschillende voorkeuren hebben ten aanzien van doorwerken en het doorwerkprofiel en dat organisatieklimaat een belangrijke voorspeller van deze voorkeuren is.

Theoretische implicaties

In dit proefschrift is getracht te onderzoeken hoe medewerkers gemotiveerd kunnen worden om langer door te werken en hoe organisaties hieraan kunnen bijdragen.

Ten eerste toont dit proefschrift het belang aan van ontwikkel HR praktijken bij de motivatie om langer door te werken. Eerder is aangetoond dat ontwikkel HR praktijken en een ontwikkelklimaat voorspellers zijn van werkparticipatie van ouderen (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008). Ontwikkel HR praktijken zijn belangrijk in de motivatie om langer door te werken, omdat medewerkers die er gebruik van maken zich continu ontwikkelen en hun vaardigheden op pijn houden en op die manier duurzaam inzetbaar blijven (Van der Heijden, Schalk, & van Veldhoven, 2008). Bovendien geeft het aanbieden van ontwikkel HR praktijken het signaal af naar medewerkers dat de organisatie hen belangrijk vindt om in te blijven investeren (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). In ruil daarvoor tonen medewerkers loyaliteit naar de organisatie. De bevindingen laten zien dat de perceptie van beschikbaarheid van ontwikkel HR praktijken bijdragen aan de motivatie om langer door te werken door een positief ontwikkelklimaat te creëren en het vervullen van het psychologisch contract, wat een positief effect heeft op werkbevlogenheid en organisatiebetrokkenheid en uiteindelijk de motivatie om langer door te werken. Hoewel is aangetoond dat de perceptie van de aanwezigheid van HR praktijken bijdraagt aan de motivatie om langer door te werken, bij het ontbreken van gebruik draagt het niet bij aan hun inzetbaarheid.

Ten tweede draagt dit proefschrift bij aan de literatuur over het effect van werkdruk op werkbevlogenheid door het verrijken van de persoon-organisatie fit literatuur en werkstress literatuur (Edwards, et al., 1998; Kahn & Byosiere, 1992). Dit proefschrift heeft laten zien dat de relatie tussen werkdruk en werkbevlogenheid curviliair is en dat deze relatie sterker is voor jongeren dan voor ouderen. Tevens is aangetoond dat positieve taakeigenschappen (job-resources) het effect van werkdruk op bevlogenheid sterker beïnvloeden bij jongeren dan bij ouderen. Dit betekent dat er leeftijd gerelateerde verschillen zijn in het effect en dus ook de effectiviteit van HR initiatieven.

Tenslotte draagt dit proefschrift bij aan de literatuur over werkparticipatie na het pensioen (bridge employment) door meerdere vormen van langer doorwerken te onderzoeken. Dit proefschrift heeft aangetoond dat medewerkers verschillende voorkeuren hebben ten aanzien van hun doorwerkprofiel. Tevens is aangetoond dat de verschillende voorkeuren gerelateerd zijn aan het door de medewerker waargenomen organisatieklimaat en de staat van het psychologisch contract.
Praktische implicaties

Afgezien van de academische relevantie van het thema van dit proefschrift, dient dit onderzoek een praktische relevantie voor organisaties die in toenemende mate te maken hebben met een vergrijzende werknemerspopulatie. In deze dissertatie is aangetoond dat Human Resource Management een belangrijke bijdrage kan leveren aan het motiveren van ouderen om langer door te werken en vanuit de bevindingen van deze dissertatie kunnen waardevolle praktische implicaties worden herleid.

Ten eerste laten de bevindingen van dit proefschrift zien dat ontwikkel HR initiatieven bijdragen aan de motivatie om langer door te werken. Zowel de beschikbaarheid van ontwikkel HR initiatieven als het hebben van ontwikkelmogelijkheden op het werk vergroten de werkbevlogenheid en daarmee uiteindelijk de motivatie om langer door te werken. De beschikbaarheid van HR praktijken geeft een signaal af aan medewerkers dat de organisatie hen belangrijk en waardevol genoeg vindt om in hen te investeren. Mogelijkheden om te ontwikkelen op het werk verhogen werkbevlogenheid door werknemers in staat te stellen om hun werk beter uit te voeren. Gezien het feit dat ouderen te maken hebben met een achterstand in het cognitieve en fysieke functioneren (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004), is het voor hen belangrijk dat hun vaardigheden constant op niveau worden gehouden om hen in staat te stellen om succesvol hun taken te kunnen vervullen. Daarom zou de ontwikkeling van werkgerelateerde energiebronnen van oudere werknemers, constant deel moeten uitmaken van de HR strategie van de organisatie. De beschikbaarheid van deze HR praktijken zou moeten worden gecommuniceerd en het gebruik zou moeten worden bevorderd. Organisaties zouden dus continue moeten investeren in de ontwikkeling van hun werkgerelateerde energiebronnen die de werknemers helpen in het succesvol voortbrengen van hun werktaak.

De derde implicatie is gerelateerd hieraan. Het is namelijk belangrijk om leeftijdsbewust HR praktijken in te zetten, omdat leeftijd een voorspeller is in hoeverre HR initiatieven het beoogde effect bereiken. De bevindingen in dit proefschrift hebben aangetoond dat ouderen andere werk gerelateerde behoeften hebben dan jongeren en dat werk gerelateerde energiebronnen een ander effect hebben op oudere dan op jongere werknemers. Bovendien blijkt uit de bevindingen van deze dissertatie dat ouderen mogelijk behoefte hebben aan een ander werkprofiel. Om werknemers langer actief en bevoegd aan het werk te houden zouden organisaties een HR structuur moeten ontwikkelen die flexibiliteit vertoont voor individuele verschillen en met name leeftijd gerelateerde behoeften en vermogen.

Ten slotte is de laatste implicatie gerelateerd aan hoe ouderen willen doorwerken. In dit proefschrift zijn vier doorwerkprofijlen onderscheiden en is laten zien dat de voorkeur voor een specifiek werkprofiel samenhangt met individuele- en organisatie gerelateerde factoren (zoals
Samenvatting

organisatieklimaat en het psychologisch contract). Organisaties kunnen doorwerkprofielen inzetten om zo continue een match te vormen met de behoefte van de oudere werknemer. Bovendien kunnen organisaties hierop sturen door in te zetten op het organisatieklimaat en het psychologisch contract. Voorts kunnen organisaties door de behoeften ten aanzien van het (door)werkprofiel te monitoren inspelen op de ontwikkelingen in hun personeelsbezetting.
Referenties


About the author
Tuğba Polat holds a Bachelor degree in Public Administration and a Master degree in Business Administration, both completed at the VU University Amsterdam. During her studies she did an exchange program at the University of Ottawa in Canada, and she also studied at Paul Cézanne University in France. After completing her degrees, she started her PhD-project at the VU University Amsterdam. The project was co-funded by Stichting Senior Werkt, as part of this project she did research in nine health care organizations for which she wrote advisory reports regarding sustainable employability. In 2012, she spend three months as a visiting scholar at the University of Florida, USA. Tuğba Polat currently works as a policy advisor at the Ministry of Finance in the Netherlands and is also affiliated as a researcher to the VU University.