

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR
PEOPLE IN LATE ADULTHOOD IN THE FOOD
SERVICES INDUSTRY

By

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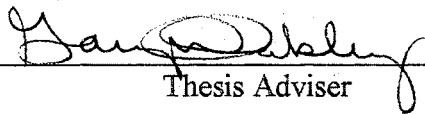
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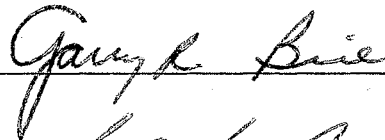
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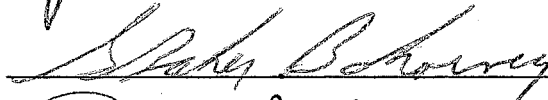
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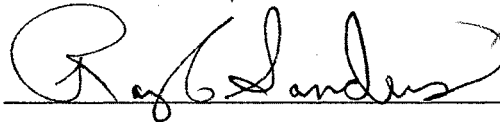
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Fifty percent of the adults in America ate food prepared away from home on a daily basis in 1987 and the trend is expected to continue as over fifty percent of households in America are being supported by dual incomes (Restaurant Management Today, 1988). Families where both the parents work are more likely to dine out since there is not a spouse at home to prepare the meals.

The growing number of meals eaten outside the home increases the need for someone to fill positions at food service establishments (Dychtwald, 1990). However, the dual-income families that are eating out more are also producing fewer children, causing a shortage of teenage employees to fill the counters of America's restaurants. The fastest growing segment of the American population is now the person in late adulthood, a person who is fifty-five or older (Dychtwald, 1990). Because the teenage population is decreasing and the number of people in late adulthood is increasing (Dychtwald, 1990) it seems to be a logical alternative for restaurants to hire people in late adulthood to fill the open positions. Many food service companies have begun to actively recruit people in late adulthood (DeMicco, Reid, 1988).

Many employers are skeptical of hiring older employees to fill the vacant positions because they are uncertain of their abilities. However, studies have shown that older employees are capable of doing as much if not more work than their younger counterparts (DeMicco & Reid, 1988; Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1988).

A few restaurant chains have implemented training programs specifically designed to train people in late adulthood. This is in response to studies that indicated that new employees in late adulthood learn differently from their younger co-workers (Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1990; DeMicco & Reid, 1988). However, the majority of restaurants have no plans to implement special training programs for their older employees, even though studies indicate that employees in late adulthood need specialized training to function at their highest ability (Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1990; DeMicco & Reid, 1988).

Many employers are aware of the studies done on employees in late adulthood. However, they are often skeptical of these programs, and unwilling to spend the money and time to develop special training programs (DeMicco & Reid, 1988). Training employees is an expensive process (Allen, 1993). Therefore, the majority of older Americans who have gone to work in the food service industry have been trained the same way as their younger counterparts.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the demographic shifts in the United States, the food service industry is beginning to realize the need to recruit employees in late adulthood and provide appropriate training. Several studies (McLaughlin, 1989; Shields, Hentges, & Yancey,

1990; Schaie, 1973; McNeil & Valden, 1981) indicate that workers in late adulthood learn differently than the traditional young adult employee. Therefore, some major corporations, including food service corporations, (Reid, 1986; Dee, 1987; Dychtwald, 1990) have responded by developing and implementing training programs specific to the different learning styles of older employees. No research has examined the effectiveness of the food service industry's specialized training programs for older employees at the time of the study. One indication of the effectiveness of a specialized training programs is whether or not managers perceive a difference in the quality of the employees who received the specialized training versus those who received the traditional training. Therefore, this study is designed to determine the managers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the training program for older employees in the McDonald's Corporation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to determine whether food service managers are more satisfied with their employees in late adulthood if the employees had completed a training program specifically designed for their age group than if the employees had completed traditional training programs.

Objectives of the Study

✓ The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

1. to determine if food service managers are more satisfied with older employees who have completed training programs specifically designed for older adults than they were with older employees who have completed traditional training programs.
2. to determine if food service training programs specifically designed for people in late adulthood are judged by managers as being more effective at training older workers than traditional training programs.
3. to determine if food service managers use their employees more extensively if the employees in late adulthood have completed a specialized training program.

Assumptions of the Study

✓ The assumptions of this study are as follows:

1. The food service managers have adequate knowledge to complete the questionnaire.
2. Responses to the questionnaire are accurate and truthful.
3. Questions asked are considered common to all regional participating managers.

Limitations of the Study

✓ The limitations of this study are as follows:

1. The population studied consists of managers employed by McDonald's Corporation in five regions of the United States of America. Therefore, generalizations

may only be made to the McDonald's restaurants in these five regions.

2. Due to the participants' hectic schedules, a brief measuring instrument that could be administered in fifteen minutes or less was used.

Definitions

The following definitions are included to enhance the understanding of this study.

Baby Boomers: People born between the end of World War II and the beginning of the sixties.

Baby Boomlets: People born in the late eighties and early nineties.

Baby Busters: People born in the mid sixties to early eighties.

Food Service Industry: Any business that produces meals to be served to the public, either for profit or non-profit.

Late Adulthood: A person who is 55 years of age or older.

Rehirement Program: A program designed by the McDonald's Corporation to train people in late adulthood for employment in the food service industry.

Scope of the Study

The study includes McDonald's corporate managers from all regions that have implemented training programs for older employees and from one region that has not implemented a training program for older employees. The data were collected over a 14-month period between March 1994 and May 1995.

Chapter II reviews the existing research related to training and hiring people in late adulthood. Chapter III explains the methodology used to obtain information from managers in the hospitality field. Chapter IV reports the findings and discussion. Chapter V states conclusions and recommendations based on the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

It is a warm afternoon in July and a parent is treating the family to lunch at their favorite restaurant. As usual the restaurant meets their expectations with prompt service, courteous help, and well-prepared food. The family realizes there is something different about the restaurant but they just can't put their finger on it. Then one family member realizes the difference is that the entire staff of teenage employees has been replaced with people over 55 years of age.

This scenario may seem a little far fetched for some; however, it may be more accurate than imagined for the near future. America is getting older. There are fewer teens today and a growing number of people over fifty-five (Odiorne, 1988). The number of people over fifty-five will continue to increase as the Baby Boomers age (Odiorne, 1988). The older population will be reflected in an older workforce. The U.S. Department of Labor predicts that the number of workers over 45 years of age will shift from the current level of thirty percent of the workforce to thirty-eight percent by the year 2005 (Hill, 1995).

Baby Boomers are the 70 million people born between the end of World War II and the beginning of the sixties. The Baby Boom was followed by the Baby Bust.

Today there are 7 million fewer people between the ages of 18 and 24 than in 1980 (Odiome, 1988). There will not be an increase in this age group till the year 2000 when the children of the Baby Boomers, referred to as the Baby Boomlets, reach 18 (Reid, 1985).

A major reason for the increasing number of older Americans is the improvements in health care made in the late twentieth century. Public health agencies have set strict standards to assure a safe water and food supply and improvements in sanitation have reduced the incidence of diseases. In 1900 typhoid was eliminated as one of the top killers. By the 1930's the majority of Americans were immunized, protecting them from deadly childhood diseases (Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1990).

The twentieth century was also when people became aware of the need for safety precautions in the workplace. Technology was developed that could ensure safe working conditions and constantly check the environment to assure that it remains free of pollutants (Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1990).

The quality of life has also greatly increased in the twentieth century with the invention of devices such as hearing aids, artificial joints, and improvements in drugs. Surgical procedures have also greatly improved allowing the replacement of diseased organs. Plastic surgery has allowed for the physical appearance to match the improvements in health care (Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1990). The larger number of older, healthier, and younger-acting Americans is expected to find its way into the workforce.

Trends in the American Population

Twenty percent of the American population is over 55, in comparison to fewer than ten percent in 1980 (Ananth & DeMicco, 1991). According to Ananth and DeMicco (1991) there are as many people over 55 as there are teenagers. This "graying of America" trend is expected to peak in 2030 when one in three adults will be over 55 years of age (Ananth & DeMicco, 1991). People are also retiring earlier which has further shrunk the potential employee market. Reid (1985) has projected that if current trends continue, 40 percent of the men and 20 percent of the women over 55 will be active in the work force.

One out of every three Americans is a member of the Baby Boom (Dychtwald, 1990). Dychtwald (1990) likens their impact on the economy to that of a pig moving through a python. Different segments of industry have prospered as the Baby Boomers matured.

Dychtwald (1990) estimates 28 percent of the Baby Boom generation will have no children and another 25 percent will have only one. Today there are twice as many women of childbearing age as there were in their parents' generation (Dychtwald, 1990). However, they are only having half as many babies. The births that would even out our population scale, balancing the old with more young people, are simply not occurring.

Today most Boomers are in their 30s and 40s, the period of life when raising a family, earning a living, and the meaning and purpose of work become compelling social themes (Dychtwald, 1990). It is this generation that produced such social trends as

hippies, preppies, and most recently yuppies. And it is this generation that will expand the numbers of older workers.

Trends in Food Service Industry

The decreasing size of the American family is having a drastic effect on the food service industry as they rely heavily on the teenage market for employment possibilities. Restaurants are having difficult times filling their counters with young smiling workers (Dychtwald, 1990). Managers can no longer fill their empty positions by simply putting help wanted signs in their windows. In search of employees, restaurants are running full page ads in newspapers, and even offering bonuses to employees who help find job applicants. They are even turning to alternative sources of employees such as the disabled, military veterans, single parents, immigrants and older adults (Dychtwald, 1991).

A U.S. Department of Labor study reveals that more than one of every five older Americans returns to work (at least part-time) after retirement (Ananth, 1991). Many return to work to supplement social security which is the only source of income for 37 percent of the people over 65 (Ananth, 1991).

Older Americans are a source of potential employees that is getting considerable interest from several larger food service employers. McDonald's, KFC, Marriott, and Pizza Hut all actively hire people in late adulthood (DeMicco & Reid, 1988). Thirteen percent of McDonald's work force is over the age of 55 (DeMicco & Reid, 1988).

In 1987, KFC sponsored a conference, "Experience at Work," to address the issue of older workers in the food-service industry (DeMicco, 1988). The conference

was co-presented by the National Restaurant Association (NRA) and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). The conference offered information on how to hire older workers, where to find them, and how to develop a working environment conducive to retaining them.

However, the food service industry overall has been slow to hire people in late adulthood. This is largely due to stereotyping by management of older people as decrepit and senile.

Breaking the Stereotyping of Older Employees

Travelers' 1988 study of retirees who work and those who do not has found that many of the stereotypes associated with the hiring of the retired should be classified as "myths". Five of these stereotypes that are false are listed below.

Older people are not interested in working.

Older workers are not flexible, they resist change.

Older workers are not as productive, absenteeism is a problem.

Older workers cannot learn new technologies.

Hiring older workers will create conflict between younger and older members of the workforce (p. 74).

Doering, Rhodes, and Schuster (1983) found data that were quite different from the usual stereotypes of people in late adulthood. They found most older workers to have the following attributes:

they have fewer absences than younger workers;
they are less likely to leave a job;
they have fewer on-the-job injuries;
they are more satisfied with their jobs;
they experience less job-related stress; and
they are less likely to need counseling or to use drugs (p. 65).

Older workers make up 13.6 percent of the labor force, yet account for only 9.7 percent of the accidents at work, while workers between the ages of 20 and 24 account for 50 percent of all on-the-job accidents (Dychtwald, 1990). Older workers have fewer avoidable absences than younger workers, and good attendance records overall (Dychtwald, 1990).

Some physical realities of aging affect the older worker, however. The older worker (over 45) is injured much less frequently than the younger worker and about as often as the worker in the 25 to 44 year-old age group, but loses more work time per injury than younger workers (Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1990). The frequency of injury declines steadily until age 64 and then drops even more for workers over 65. The older worker has the lowest incidence of permanently disabling injuries, but the highest fatal-injury risk. In general, experienced workers have fewer injuries (Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1990).

An added aging effect for females is menopause in which normal female hormone production slows. This may cause the employee to lose stability of body temperature causing severe reactions to room temperatures. After menopause there is a marked

increase in the loss of calcium, leaving women more likely to acquire osteoporosis (Shields, Hentges & Yancey, 1990).

Food service managers painted a positive picture of older employees. They were rated above average in overall performance during the training period, with highest ratings in: quality of work, self-confidence, speed with which they learned new tasks; and the appropriateness of prior training (DeMicco & Reid, 1988). Managers also rated the performance of older employees above average and highest in: dependability, attitude, emotional maturity, guest relations, and quality of work produced (DeMicco & Reid, 1988). However, people in late adulthood were rated low in adaptability and creativity (DeMicco & Reid, 1988).

There is evidence that there is an age related difference in job satisfaction and job commitment. Older workers have greater job satisfaction than younger workers. There is a greater need for security and a sense of belonging. An older worker is also more likely to be committed to the company than a younger employee (Doering & Rhodes, 1983).

Older workers are more concerned with the quality of work they produce than with extrinsic rewards such as money, which is the main motivator of teenagers. As people grow older, the importance of security, esteem, and affiliation increases, while the need for self-actualization decreases (DeMicco & Reid, 1988)

A study by Siassi, Crocetti, and Spiro (1975) shows overall job satisfaction is positively associated with age. Another study found that occupational level and age were the strongest predictors of job satisfaction (Near, Rice, Hunt 1978). A similar

study aimed specifically at food service managers found that age was the strongest predictor of overall job satisfaction (McNeil & Valden, 1981).

Schaie (1973) found that learning and adaptability are multi-faceted and that some areas decrease with age while others improve. He also found that there is greater diversification between older people than younger people.

Economic analysis shows that older workers contribute more to an organization because of personal loyalty and concern for the community. Shields, Hentges and Yancey (1990) attribute this to their familiarity with the business system, and that they have established deep roots in the community.

Atchley (1980) found that being dependable and reliable are the highest personal goals for persons over age fifty. Managers often overlook the fact that people in late adulthood are more emotionally mature than the traditional teenage employee. Older employees have more experiences and can share them with younger employees. The older worker can also often work well as a manager or supervisor (Bosselman 1984).

Recruiting Employees in Late Adulthood

The 1988 Travelers' survey was conducted to better understand why some retirees go back to work. Several of the reasons for returning to work are listed below:

Most retirees (53%) who work do so primarily for economic reasons. However, many (47%) cited social and emotional factors as their main reasons for returning to work.

Retirees who work generally feel less economically secure and less satisfied with the timing of retirement than do those who do not work.

Retirees who work reported fewer health concerns at retirement and fewer health problems after returning to work than did the retirees who did not go back to work.

Most retirees who do not work showed little inclination to do so. However, sizable sub-groups (totaling 30%) cited having not been offered a job, having care giver responsibilities, having transportation problems, and wanting to keep their Social Security benefits. If these concerns could be solved, some of these retirees would also attempt employment (p. 62).

To recruit employees in late adulthood, managers should have programs for compensation, fringe benefits, and flexible hours. DeMicco, and Reid (1988) found that older employees respond better to individualized training. McDonald's has a very successful program with a 71 percent retention rate. However, many companies might find the added training costs too expensive unless they have government backing to share the cost like McDonald's does (Rainero & Chon, 1990).

Ananth and DeMicco (1991) developed a model to assist hospitality managers in recruiting and hiring older workers. They offer two alternatives or suggestions:

Recruit prospective older workers, i.e., retirees or potential rehires.

Retain current older workers, i.e., proactive retirement planning, delay retirement ('platinum handcuffs'), part-time work as a transition to full retirement (p. 30).

Hospitality managers must realize that older people do not respond to the usual methods of recruitment. Managers must identify sources for recruiting older employees. Some of the sources include the local area office on aging, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), senior citizens centers National Association for Hispanic Elderly (local chapters), National Council on Aging, local churches, and senior citizen homes (Dee, 1987).

Naugles, a major West Coast restaurant chain, found that after it changed hiring policies to concentrate on older workers, its turnover rate dropped from 400 percent per year to 80 percent (Dychtwald, 1990).

The majority of older workers seek only part-time employment. This is no problem for the food service industry since they are the largest employer of part-time employees (Bosselman, 1984).

A study by Richard Belous (1989) found that the number of temporary workers increased 175% from 1980 to 1988, part-time employees increased 21%, and business service company employees increased 70%, while the total U.S. labor force increased only 14%. He states that 25% of America's workers are members of the contingent workforce.

Brown and Gray (1991) suggest that any manager who relies on significant numbers of contingency workers should consider hiring the retired. They found retirees to give better long-term results and have a more favorable impact on profitability.

Below are nine steps to get a company on the right track to hire retirees.

1. Involve the personnel executives and other middle and top managers.
2. Set up a task force to investigate the issue.
3. Examine the 'corporate culture'.
4. Consider surveying recent retirees.
5. Examine pension and other benefit provisions to identify barriers or problems which must be solved.
6. Consider creative, innovative non-wage compensation and/or benefits that would not have the effect of reducing social security income.

7. If all other factors are favorable, make necessary pension and benefit changes.
8. Identify positions for job categories that can utilize retirees.
9. Invite interested retirees to a 'Retiree Job Fair' or an 'Unretirement Party' to kick off the program (p. 8).

Studies have found that employers and employees view the Social Security earnings test as a disincentive to staying in the work force (Golding, 1989). The current laws are listed below.

Older workers between the ages of 65 and 69 who earn income above \$8,800 (\$740 monthly) lose \$1 in Social Security benefits for every \$3 they earn above the limit.

Beneficiaries age 62 to 64 may earn up to \$6,480 a year (\$540 monthly), in wages before they start losing \$1 in benefits for every \$3 they earn above the limit.

There is no earning test for individuals age 70 or over.

The earnings test does not apply to pensions, rent, dividends, or any other types of 'unearned' income (p. 3).

The increasing number of employees in late adulthood has prompted studies by the United States government.

U.S. Government Policies on Hiring Older Adults

American employees are protected under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. The Act protects the job security of Americans between the ages of 40 and 70. Human resource practitioners will need to become more sensitive to training needs

of older employees. Any training that places older employees at a disadvantage relative to younger employees could be a violation of the Act (Webster & Martocchio, 1993).

In June 1988, Secretary of Labor Ann McLaughlin established a task force consisting of 11 Labor Department agencies. The goal of the task force was to examine issues relating to America's maturing labor force and outline policy alternatives to address these issues. Below are the major findings of this study:

In Tomorrow's Workforce . . .

the median age of the workforce will be higher . . .
 older people will be healthier, live longer and be available for work longer . . . but older workers may opt for earlier retirement instead of continued employment.

Tomorrow's Workplace . . .

will want and need more workers . . . will need to reconsider traditional methods of recruiting, training/retraining and managing older workers...may be expected to restructure benefit packages to address the needs and expectations of the workforce, reduce job turnover, and offer incentives to mature, experienced workers to retire later.

Key Public Policy Conclusions and Issues . . .

must enable older workers to remain in or return to the workforce without institutional barriers limiting their choices . . .

must insure that employees are not prevented from effectively responding to the opportunities and challenges for recruitment and retention of workers in light of demographic trends . . .

should encourage workers and employers to pursue the most effective means for enhancing and upgrading the skills and capacity of the workforce to ensure the best utilization of our nation's human resources (pp. 139-140).

Ann McLaughlin (1989) cited several ways to encourage the recruitment or retention of older employees. Such strategies might include:

Creative and targeted recruitment efforts designed specifically for older workers.

Flexible work options, including part-time employment or reduced workloads, job sharing, flex-time, sabbaticals, and volunteer time.

Positive work environments that offer opportunities for upward mobility.

Supervisory training for managers to overcome negative stereotypes about aging and employment.

Pre-retirement planning programs that focus on options for continuing to work rather than primarily on early retirement.

Development of work assignments to fit needs of older workers.

Training and retraining opportunities that allow older workers to compete equally with younger workers (pp. 151-152).

Studies conducted by Ann McLaughlin (1989) found that older workers may take longer to learn a task and may need different training techniques, but they do learn effectively. Traditional classroom instruction has been found ineffective, and in many cases, specific training programs for older employees have been developed. According to 66 percent of the respondents of a 1988 survey jointly conducted by the American Society of Personnel Administration and the Commerce Clearing House, certain types of training techniques such as self-paced learning, experiential training, on-the-job coaching, pragmatic or application-oriented training and training in which older workers, themselves, participate in designing are most effective in teaching new skills to older workers.

Dychtwald (1990) has found most companies to be unwilling to adapt work schedules to accommodate the preferences of older men and women. However, as employers feel the demographic pinch they will be more willing to renegotiate their scheduling arrangements to meet the needs of older employees.

Training Techniques for Older Employees

The fundamental principals of training older employees include practices helpful for any adult worker. Trainees want a supportive environment, the ability to apply what they have learned, an understanding of why they are learning what they are being taught, and a chance to build new learning on past experiences (Fyock, 1991). But there are special considerations to adapt training to older workers. E. E. Jones (1984) offered several tips to managers to help in successfully training older employees:

Adjust training design according to the educational level of the worker.

Address new skills using the employee's work experience or old skills.

Provide opportunities for the older workers to help plan, design, and evaluate the training program.

Try to tap creativity of employees through programs.

Allow more time for practice and skill acquisition.

Avoid any stress applications and use self-paced programs wherever possible.

Since attitude, motivation, self-concept, and responsibility are a large part of older workers, retraining programs should include activities that stimulate and motivate through involvement.

Present lectures and audio visual aids in low, clear tones to aid hearing and large format to aid reading.

Use more feedback during training programs and solicit opinions about attitudes toward subject matter and training requirements.

Avoid 'rote learning' but use more handouts and other memory assists (p. 12).

To reflect the increased presence of older adults in the workforce and help make training more relevant to them, teaching illustrations should include mature individuals.

If the training staff is relatively young, companies should invite older people to be guest

presenters or use older class participants as resources (Taylor, 1989). Older workers report higher comfort levels when learning from people closer to their ages (Fyock, 1991).

Shorter training segments are useful for training older workers for several reasons. It can take longer for older adults to store and retrieve data, so shorter segments help them be more successful at learning. Also, many older adults seek part-time work, and shorter training segments allow workers on flexible or part-time schedules to participate (Fyock, 1991).

Visual materials must use high-contrast colors, and high-gloss items should be avoided, as many people have trouble reading them. Because many older workers wear bifocals, training materials should be posted so workers do not have to look up to read them (Fyock, 1991). Bifocals also make computer screens difficult to read (Hill, 1995).

Accommodation for the visual or auditory impairments of older workers is a requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act. An aging population is far more likely to experience problems with deteriorating sight or partial hearing loss than complete blindness or profound deafness. It is just as important for trainers to learn to avoid glare on printed materials and small print as it is for them to know how to get materials transcribed in Braille (Hill, 1995).

Webster and Martocchio (1993) found an age-related difference in training effectiveness. Specifically, they examined the proposition that encouraging play and playfulness in training sessions will enhance microcomputer software training. They found that while younger trainees out-performed older trainees when training was labeled as play, there was no difference in outcomes between the two groups when the

sessions were labeled as work. Trainers must be sensitive to the impact of training techniques on older workers as opposed to younger ones not only for legal reasons, but to maximize productivity of older workers.

KFC's Colonel's Tradition and Other Programs

KFC is a company that actively recruits people in late adulthood. This only seems proper since the company was founded by Colonel Harland D. Sanders at the age of 65.

KFC offers employment in food production and customer service and has recently developed a new position for a part-time assistant manager, which is designed to meet the needs of older workers. This position includes a good salary, medical and life insurance and paid vacations and holidays. KFC also has a program for older recruits called Career Advancement Program (CAP) which cross-trains employees to perform both front and back-of-the-house jobs.

Marriott is attracting more employees in late adulthood by offering flexible work schedules, rotating shifts and part-time positions. Marriott has targeted older recruits for their customer assistance program. They function as host and problem solvers in the fast food restaurants. Marriott trains the older recruits for a period from one week to two months.

General Mills Restaurants Inc. is recruiting older employees through a direct mail campaign to obtain workers for its York Restaurants in the Boston area. The potential older recruits are invited to breakfast at which hosts of the same age group not only help

recruit new employees, but also get information on the eating habits of older people.

(Dee, 1987)

McDonald's McMasters Program

McDonald's has made significant efforts in hiring older employees. It advertises for older employees and sends recruiters to senior citizen clubs. McDonald's offers older recruits their choice of days, hours, and jobs and puts them through a special McMasters training program (Dychtwald, 1990).

McDonald's McMasters program emphasizes the personal touch to training and has a very successful 71 percent retention rate (Reid, 1986). Many companies find this added training expense to be cost prohibitive; however, McDonald's shares the cost with a government agency (DeMicco & Reid, 1988).

McDonald's began the McMasters program in Baltimore in 1986. During its peak years the program operated in over 17 cities including Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Memphis, Phoenix, Tulsa and Washington, D.C. (Dee, 87). In recent years the number of markets has decreased to four: Phoenix, Washington, D.C., San Diego, and Southern Florida. The name of the program has also been changed to the Rehirement Program in an attempt to reduce the use of the "Mc" prefix.

McDonald's recruits groups of six to ten candidates into a four week training program. By training in small numbers they become a self-contained support group. Each Rehirement trainee works one-on-one with a job coach and trains 15 to 20 hours each week. Jobs were designed to fit the interest of older employees, positions like salad maker, biscuit maker, host and hostess, maintenance and even some swing managers.

After four weeks of training the graduates receive their Rehirement diploma from Hamburger University along with a pin and a spatula. The trainees are then mainstreamed into the crews of McDonald's. (Dee, 1987)

McDonald's alerts older people to the Rehirement program by placing table tents on the tables, trayliners on the trays and counter cards on the counters. The company has newspaper ads specifically designed to entice the older worker into applying.

McDonald's representatives speak at senior citizen groups and show a video entitled "A Perfect Fit." The award-winning video focuses on the concerns of older people re-entering the workforce and the value McDonald's places in their older employees.

A television commercial entitled "The New Kid" depicts the value McDonald's places in their employees and the value older employees place in their job. The commercial followed a man in late adulthood on his first day of work as a new employee and ended with the line, "I don't know how they ever got along without me."

McDonald's has developed a seminar with the assistance of the National Association of State's Units on Aging (NASUA) which provides restaurant management with a solid foundation for managing an older workforce.

McDonald's has also produced a video of the workshop that is intended to provide ongoing training for managers and employees who supervise older employees. This video is an effort to reach all people in a supervisory position.

The Future

Carolyn Golding (1989) presented some very interesting demographics on aging employees in the workforce that are listed below.

Since 1960, the participation rates for workers age 55-64 dropped from 87% to around 70% today.

The median retirement age in 1980 was 61, with two-thirds of the workers retiring before age 65. Projections for the year 2000 by the Department of Labor show a continuation of this trend.

Although males spend on average seven more years in the labor force in 1980 than they did at the turn of the century, their working lives account for a smaller proportion of their lives (around 55%) than in 1900 when males spent 69% of their lives working. For women, since 1900 the average number of years spent in the labor force increased from 6.3 to 30 years today, and from 13% of their lives to 38%.

Despite stereotypes to the contrary, numerous studies reveal that older workers are more dependable, stay at their jobs longer, are able to learn new tasks just as quickly, and do as much work of similar or superior quality as younger workers. Older workers have better attendance records than younger workers and a lower accident rate, even when the older worker has no more experience on the job than the younger worker.

As workers grow older, the occupations in which they are employed change somewhat from those they occupied during their youth, particularly for workers 65 and over. Workers 65 and over tend to be in occupations that require more seniority or experience, or those which allow for flexible schedules or part-time work. For older workers (all races), service occupations represent a larger share of total employment for those 65 and over compared to all workers.

Certain groups of older workers, such as women and minorities, tend to experience particular difficulties trying to re-enter the labor force due to past work histories, stereotypes, and other barriers. Black and Hispanic workers 55 and over have a higher unemployment rate and are unemployed longer than other older workers.

National surveys indicate that a substantial number of retirement age workers (some surveys indicate as much as 40-50%) are interested in continuing to work, generally on a part-time basis, and that if flexible working arrangements were made available, many 'retirees' would continue to work.

The number of older individuals will increase during the next decade, while the pool of potential younger workers will actually decrease. By the end of the century, the median age of the labor force will increase from 36 to 39.

Between now and the year 2000, the number of workers over age 55 will slowly increase, while the number between the ages of 16 and 24 will almost be less than in 1986.

Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians and other races are projected to make up approximately 57% of the growth in the labor force between now and the year 2000. Including non-Hispanic white women increases this percentage to 90%.

By the year 2000, workers between the ages of 35 and 54 will make up 53.2% of the labor force compared to 41.7% now. The percentage of workers 65 and over in the labor force is projected to decline slightly, falling from 2.8% in 1987 to 1.8% in 2000 (pp. 18-19).

Food service employers who traditionally hire large numbers of teenagers will have to rethink their hiring programs to fulfill their staffing requirements. The number of food service employees needed is expected to increase well into the next century.

The food service industry is already beginning to feel the bite of labor shortages and must take action immediately to prepare for the lack of young employees in the future. The hiring of people in late adulthood is a practical solution to the employment problem. The only possible concern for the future is that once companies start hiring older employees, they may be unwilling to return to their old recruiting practices of employing teenagers.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine whether food service managers are more satisfied with their employees in late adulthood if the employees had completed a training program specifically designed for their age group than if the employees had completed traditional training programs.

Chapter III provides a description of the population that was sampled, how the instrument was designed, the method of collecting the data, and the procedure for analyzing the data.

The study was submitted for approval by the Institutional Review Board and given a status of exempt. Appendix C is the documentation of the approval of the study by the Institutional Review Board.

Population and Sample

McDonald's is an international chain of fast food restaurants specializing in hamburgers, french fries and an assortment of other items. Some stores in the chain train older employees with a program designed specifically for them, known as the Rehirement

program. Others use traditional training programs for all employees. Therefore, it was possible to study the perceived effects of the different training programs within the same general environment without introducing unwanted variables such as differing types of work assigned to older employees by different food service chains. As such, generalizations could only be made to McDonald's restaurants in the five regions of the study.

The sample for this study consisted of management personnel employed by the McDonald's Corporation. Management teams were selected from the four regions of the United States that participated in the Rehirement program. These four regions of the United States are: Phoenix, San Diego, Washington, D.C., and southern Florida. Central Illinois was also added due to low response rate from non-participating management in the four regions that offer the Rehirement program, as seen below. Questionnaires were mailed to the regional offices of McDonald's Corporation for distribution to the managers and were either completed in a staff meeting or at their leisure. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed and one hundred twenty-one were returned giving a response rate of 40.33%. Managers were chose to participate in the study without regard to whether or not they were from restaurants with specialized training programs for older adults. However, the response rate was unevenly distributed with a much higher return rate by managers who did participate in the Rehirement program, hence the addition of managers from central Illinois who did not participate in the Rehirement program.

Instrument Design

A research instrument entitled “Employees in Late Adulthood Effectiveness Study” was developed. The questionnaire facilitated the collection of data from the sample population. The questionnaire was designed to collect data from McDonald’s managers at stores with and without the Rehirement training program.

Section one of the instrument ascertained whether or not the store offered the Rehirement program, how many employees in the restaurant were over 55, and the manager’s age, title, and length of employment by McDonald’s. Section two contained statements to ascertain what duties were expected to be completed by employees in late adulthood. The statements were taken directly from a list of duties expected of all entry-level employees and included: cleaning tables, greeting customers, sweeping the floor, preparing salads, mopping the floor, cleaning restrooms, removing trash and garbage, fryer cooking, making biscuits, operating cash register, cleaning parking lot, grill cooking, assembling orders, checking product stock, backing up the crew, working the drive-thru, checking equipment, production control, handling deliveries and off loading (Rogers, 1992). Section three asked the managers to compare their employees in late adulthood to their other employees and rate their personal satisfaction with the job performance by the older employees.

Sections one, two, and three consisted of closed-ended questions, in that respondents were given explicit answer choices. Closed-ended questions are easier for respondents to answer and also yield results that are easier to analyze quantitatively than open-ended questions (Czaja & Blair, 1996).

The fourth section consisted of open-ended questions and asked the manager to suggest ways to improve the Rehirement program and state what benefits employees in late adulthood had brought to their McDonald's. Open-ended questions allow the respondents to express opinions and make suggestions, but are not easily quantified (Czaja & Blair, 1996).

A panel of experts consisting of regional managers of McDonald's completed, reviewed, and critiqued the instrument to establish face validity. Regional managers found the questionnaire to be easily understood and straight to the point. The panel of experts suggested slight modifications in the wording of the instrument, which was changed in accordance with their suggestions.

Method of Data Collection

The investigator contacted the McDonald's Corporation and was told to contact the Director of the Rehirement program. After an initial meeting with the Director to explain the study, she agreed to assist with it. The next step was to get approval from each of the four regions to allow distribution of the questionnaire. The Director originally contacted each of the regions but found their schedules too busy for participation at that time. The investigator waited four months and then contacted the regional offices directly. The Director of Human Resources became the contact person in each of the regions (a list of contact names can be found in Appendix B). Each of the Directors of Human Resources and the Director of the Rehirement program were asked for their advice on the study and for their support and promotion of the study. They reviewed and critiqued the instrument, and their suggestions were incorporated in the

instrument. The regional offices of McDonald's Corporation agreed to support the study and assisted in fine-tuning the questionnaire by rewording the job duties to agree with actual usage. For example, the phrase "busing tables" was amended to "cleaning tables."

All of the McDonald's restaurants in the four regions offering the Rehirement program were selected to participate in the study and each manager was given a cover letter and a questionnaire. McDonald's Corporation would not allow the investigator to personally contact the managers. The corporation did allow the investigator to contact the Regional Managers and make arrangement with them for distribution. In one region, the questionnaire was distributed in a meeting and collected immediately after managers were given time for completion of the instrument. In the other regions, the Regional Managers distributed the instruments in meetings and asked the managers to complete the instrument and return it at their leisure. The return rate was extremely high in the region where the instrument was distributed in a meeting (San Diego, 100%). However, in the other three regions the return rate was much lower (Washington, D.C., 17%; Phoenix, 25%; South Florida, 53%). Due to low response rate by managers who did not participate in the program, central Illinois was added to the study Central. The franchisees in this region either distributed the questionnaires to managers in a meeting and asked them to complete it later, or allowed time for completion of the instrument in a meeting.

Analysis of Data

Once the data were collected they were divided into two groups. The first group of data was from managers who participated in the Rehirement program. The second group of data was from managers who did not participate in the program. The statistical package used to analyze the data was SPSS 6.1. The data from the two groups were statistically analyzed using an independent sample t-test, which is also known as a group t-test. An independent samples t-test tests the null hypothesis that the population mean of a variable is the same for two groups of cases (Norusis, 1995). A t-test is a statistical procedure frequently employed by researchers to analyze the results of two-groups studies (Keppel, 1991). All data were analyzed to see if a difference existed at the .05 level of probability. According to Keppel (1991), the .05 level of significance is the most commonly used measure of incompatibility of the sample distribution with the null hypothesis. The t-test was used to determine whether or not older food service employees who received specialized training were deemed to be better workers by their managers. Therefore, the data were divided into two groups based on the managers' participation or non-participation in the Rehirement program. The data also told what kinds of duties were performed by older workers and what other duties the managers felt could be appropriately performed by older employees.

Of the 122 managers who responded, 89 (73%) had participated in the program, and 33 (27%) had not participated in the program. The groups were each large enough for significance testing using an independent sample (group) t-test.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine whether food service managers are more satisfied with their employees in late adulthood if the employees had completed a training program specifically designed for their age group than if the employees had completed traditional training programs. Chapter four provides an analysis of the data from the study.

Age of Managers

The study consisted of 122 McDonald's managers, of whom 89 (73%) participated in the Rehirement program and 33 (27%) were non-participants. Forty-six percent of these managers were between the ages of 25 and 34. Managers between the ages of 35 and 44 represented 21% of the participants. Twenty percent of the managers were in the under 25 age group. Only 9% of the managers were between the ages of 45 and 54. The remaining 5% of the managers were age 55 or older (see Table I). There was no statistical significance found in the t-test comparing age groups with participation and non-participation in the Rehirement program. Therefore, the age of the manager

was not a determinate of participation in the program. Table I is a breakdown of the responding managers by age and whether or not they participated in the Rehirement program.

Length of Employment

Managers were asked how long they had been employed by McDonald's to see if length of employment might have an impact on participation in the Rehirement program. No statistically significant difference was found between the manager's length of employment with McDonald's and their participation or non-participation in the Rehirement program. Seventy-one percent of the managers responding to the questionnaire had been employed by McDonald's ten years or less. Table II shows the length of employment of managers responding to the questionnaire.

Number of Late Adulthood Employees

Of the 122 McDonald's managers who participated in the study, 92 of the managers employed three or fewer employees that were 55 or over (see Table III). There was no significant difference between participation and non-participation in the Rehirement program and the number of employees who were 55 or older. Therefore, McDonald's managers who participated in the Rehirement program did not hire any more people in late adulthood than did managers of non-participating McDonald's.

TABLE I
AGE OF MANAGERS RESPONDING

Age	Percent	Number		Total Number
		Participants	Non-Participants	
Under 25	18.9	15	8	23
25-34	44.3	44	10	54
35-44	19.7	17	7	24
45 & Over	13.1	12	4	16
Non-Responding	4.1	--	--	5
Total	100.0	88	29	122

TABLE II
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

Years Employed	Number	Percent
1	7	5.7
2	3	2.5
3	4	3.3
4	6	4.9
5	9	7.4
6	13	10.7
7	7	5.7
8	18	14.8
9	6	4.9
10	13	10.7
11	2	1.6
12	3	2.5
13	7	5.7
14	2	1.6
15	7	5.7
16	4	3.3
17	3	2.5
18	3	2.5
20	2	1.6
22	1	0.8
27	1	0.8
No Response	1	0.8
Total	122	100.0

M = 9.00 SD = 5.020

TABLE III
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN LATE ADULTHOOD

Number of Employees	Frequency of Response	Percent
0	24	19.7
1	23	18.9
2	22	18.0
3	23	18.9
4	11	9.0
5	3	2.5
6	3	2.5
10	1	0.8
12	1	0.8
13	1	0.8
20	1	0.8
No Response	9	7.3
Total	122	100.0

M = 2.372 SD = 2.762

Frequency of Tasks

Managers were asked what duties were performed by their employees in late adulthood and how frequently they performed these tasks. No statistical difference was found in the frequency of tasks performed by late adulthood employees and participation or non-participation in McDonald's Rehirement program. McDonald's managers tended to use their older employees in similar ways (see Table IV) whether or not they participated in the Rehirement program. The most common duties for older employees were cleaning tables, greeting customers, sweeping the floors, preparing salads, mopping the floors, cleaning restrooms, and removing trash. The least common duties for older employees were off loading supplies, handling deliveries, production control, checking equipment, and working the "drive-thru."

When managers were asked if there were other duties that people in late adulthood could perform that were not included in the McDonald's list of duties for entry level employees, the majority responded with tasks that used social skills (see Table V). These duties included hosting (11); being a community liaison; surveying guests; and several duties which involved children, such as: supervising birthday parties (7); giving special care to children (3); giving kiddie cones to children; filling balloons; and leading groups on tours of the restaurant. Another possible duty mentioned by managers for older employees was refilling beverages (5). Two managers thought employees in late adulthood could take orders at the drive-thru but only if they were face to face with the customer. However, 76% of the managers responded they would rarely or never schedule an employee in late adulthood to work the drive-thru (see Table IV).

TABLE IV

FREQUENCY OF A TASK BEING PERFORMED BY A PERSON
55 OR OLDER--PERCENT OF RESPONSES

Task	Most Often	Fairly Often	Rarely	Never
Cleaning Tables	63.8	28.6	4.8	2.9
Greeting Customers	58.1	21.9	13.3	6.7
Sweeping the Floors	48.1	37.5	10.6	3.8
Preparing Salads	42.3	26.9	7.7	23.1
Mopping the Floor	39.4	29.8	24.0	6.7
Cleaning the Restrooms	39.2	33.3	17.6	9.8
Removing Trash and Garbage	33.7	32.7	20.2	13.5
Fryer Cooking	28.8	25.0	18.3	27.9
Making Biscuits	25.6	14.4	2.2	57.8
Operating Cash Register	22.3	23.3	15.5	38.8
Cleaning Parking Lot	21.6	27.5	25.5	25.5
Grill Cooking	19.2	25.0	19.2	36.5
Assembling Orders	16.5	27.2	28.2	28.2
Checking Product Stock	14.7	27.5	18.6	39.2
Backing Up the Crew	13.5	31.7	20.2	34.6
Working the Drive-Thru	7.0	17.0	18.0	58.0
Checking Equipment	5.9	18.6	25.5	50.0
Production Control	4.9	10.8	25.5	58.8
Handling Deliveries	1.0	5.0	22.8	71.3
Off Loading	1.0	2.0	11.8	85.3

TABLE V
OTHER POSSIBLE DUTIES FOR EMPLOYEES
IN LATE ADULTHOOD

Response	Number
Hosting	11
Supervising Birthday Parties	7
Refilling Beverages	5
Doing Any Job	4
Giving Special Care to Children	3
Taking Face-to-Face Drive-Thru Orders	2
Polishing the Stainless Steel	2
Being a Community Liaison	1
Surveying Guests	1
Giving Kiddie Cones to Children	1
Filling Balloons	1
Leading Group Tours	1
Filtering Grease	1
Cleaning Dishes	1
Restocking the Buffet	1
Doing Administrative Duties	1
Being a Manager	1

Some managers did list duties which did not rely as heavily on social skills such as: polishing the stainless steel (2); filtering grease; cleaning dishes; restocking the buffet; and doing administrative duties. One manager listed management as a possible duty and four managers said, "Older employees can do any job at McDonald's."

Work Shift Schedules

Managers were surveyed to see what times of day people in late adulthood were scheduled to work. The most common times of day for employees in late adulthood to be scheduled for work were lunch (76.2% responded most often or fairly often) and breakfast (75.4% responded most often or fairly often). The least common times of day for employees in late adulthood to work were late night (75.4% responded never or rarely), and supper (67.2% responded never or rarely). There was no statistically significant difference in the response between managers who did participate in the Rehirement program and non-participants when scheduling employees in late adulthood (see Table VI). Therefore, managers scheduled their older employees to work the same shifts whether or not they participated in the Rehirement program.

Adequacy of Training

Managers were surveyed to see if they felt employees in late adulthood were adequately trained. Of the managers surveyed, 89 of the managers agreed or strongly agreed their employees in late adulthood were adequately trained. Managers responded favorably to the level of training for their older employees whether or not they participated in the Rehirement program (see Table VII).

TABLE VI
 WORK SHIFT ASSIGNMENTS FOR EMPLOYEES
 IN LATE ADULTHOOD

	Never	Rarely	Fairly Often	Most Often	No Resposne	Mean	Standard
Breakfast							
Number	6	11	31	61	13		
Percent	4.9%	9.0%	25.4%	10.7%	10.7%	3.349	0.875
Lunch							
Number	3	10	42	51	16		
Percent	2.5%	8.2%	34.4%	41.8%	13.1%	3.330	0.765
Supper							
Number	31	51	14	6	20		
Percent	25.4%	41.8%	11.5%	4.9%	16.4%	1.951	0.825
Late Night							
Number	65	27	6	6	18		
Percent	53.3%	22.1%	4.9%	4.9%	14.8%	1.548	0.846

TABLE VII

STRENGTH OF MANAGERS' AGREEMENT THAT EMPLOYEES
IN LATE ADULTHOOD WERE ADEQUATELY TRAINED

Category	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	33	27.0
Agree	56	45.9
Somewhat Agree	17	13.9
Undecided	7	5.7
Somewhat Disagree	1	0.9
Disagree	1	0.9
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
No Response	7	5.7
Total	122	100.0

M = 5.957 SD = .950

Acceptance by Younger Co-Workers

Managers were surveyed to see how well their employees in late adulthood were accepted by their younger co-workers. McDonald's managers agree or strongly agree (58.2%) that employees in late adulthood are accepted by their younger co-workers. Managers who participated in the program responded similarly to non-participating managers regarding the acceptance of their older employees by younger co-workers (see Table VIII).

Management Capabilities

Managers were also positive about the capabilities of their employees in late adulthood to enter management. McDonald's managers agreed or strongly agreed (60.7%) that employees in late adulthood are capable of becoming managers. Managers gave similar responses to the capabilities of their employees in late adulthood to enter management, whether or not they participated in the Rehirement program (see Table IX).

Effectiveness of Training Program

Managers gave a more varied response when they were asked if the Rehirement program was a much more effective way of training employees in late adulthood than traditional training methods used for younger employees. Of the managers surveyed, 32.8% agree or strongly agree, and 21.3% somewhat agree that the Rehirement program was a more effective way to train employees in late adulthood. Of the remaining managers 32.0% were undecided, and 6.6% somewhat disagreed or disagreed about the effectiveness of the Rehirement training program. Managers who participated in the

TABLE VIII

STRENGTH OF MANAGERS' AGREEMENT THAT EMPLOYEES
IN LATE ADULTHOOD ARE ACCEPTED BY
YOUNGER CO-WORKERS

Category	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	26	21.3
Agree	45	36.9
Somewhat Agree	29	23.8
Undecided	7	5.7
Somewhat Disagree	8	6.6
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly Disagree	1	0.8
No Response	6	4.9
Total	122	100.0

TABLE IX

STRENGTH OF MANAGERS' AGREEMENT THAT EMPLOYEES IN LATE
ADULTHOOD ARE CAPABLE OF BECOMING MANAGERS

Category	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	24	19.7
Agree	50	41.0
Somewhat Agree	19	15.6
Undecided	13	10.7
Somewhat Disagree	7	5.7
Disagree	1	0.8
Strongly Disagree	2	1.6
No Response	6	4.9
Total	122	100.0

M = 5.517 SD = 1.309

Rehirement program responded similarly to non-participating managers when asked about the effectiveness of the Rehirement program (see Table X).

Reasons that managers gave for their response to the question about the effectiveness of the Rehirement program gave some insight to their mixed reviews (see Table XI). Many managers did not see the need for a special training program and said, "McDonald's training should be consistent for all ages" (10); "the training is the same except for a more adult approach" (3); "all training should be fine-tuned to the individual" (6); "adults over the age of 55 are as easy or easier to train than younger employees"; "the key to training is treating all employees with respect and dignity"; and "individuals sometimes do not need special training programs".

Other managers had more positive comments to make about the program, such as: "the Rehirement program makes them feel special"; "the Rehirement program addresses the energy level of the employee"; "the program gives them more individual attention"; "they seem to be more interested" (2); "it is more structured with a job coach, more individual attention" (2); "it corresponds to them perfectly, it meets their needs"; and "it makes the seniors feel more like a part of the team".

Not all managers had such flattering comments to make about their older employees: "they are too set in their ways" (3); "older employees tend to have a negative attitude towards their job"; and "they need the extra training because customers are less patient with them".

Twenty-four of the managers were very pleased with the Rehirement program and went as far as to say they would make no changes in the program. They also made comments such as: "I think our program is good"; and "we do a great job."

TABLE X

STRENGTH OF MANAGERS' AGREEMENT THAT MCDONALD'S
REHIRMENT PROGRAM IS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN
TRADITIONAL TRAINING METHODS

Category	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	8.2
Agree	30	24.6
Somewhat Agree	26	21.3
Undecided	39	32.0
Somewhat Disagree	4	3.3
Disagree	4	3.3
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
No Response	9	7.3
Total	122	100.0

M = 4.920 SD = 1.196

TABLE XI
REASONS FOR RESPONSES CONCERNING EFFECTIVENESS
OF REHIRMENT PROGRAM

Responses	Number
McDonald's training should be consistent for all ages	10
All training should be fine-tuned to the individual	6
The training is the same except for a more adult approach	3
Older employees are too set in their ways	3
Older employs seem to be more interested in the rehirement program training	2
The rehirement program is more structured with a job coach, more individual attention	2
Adults over the age of 55 are as easy or easier to train than younger employees	1
The key to training is treating all employees with respect and dignity	1
Individuals sometimes do not need special training programs	1
The rehirement program makes older employees feel special	1
The rehirement program addresses the energy level of the employee	1
The rehirement program gives them more individual attention	1
The rehirement program corresponds to them perfectly, it meets their needs	1
The rehirement program makes the seniors feel more like a part of the team	1
Older employees tend to have a negative attitude towards their job	1
Older employees need the extra training because customers are less patient with them	1

Others made comments which spoke more of managerial problems such as: "managers need to be more patient and more specific when dealing directly with mature adults"; "if you can't be patient, don't hire!"; "the management team need to carry the program through"; and "be more attentive and caring throughout their stay at McDonald's".

Benefits of Hiring Employees in Late Adulthood

Two of the more frequent responses listed by McDonald's managers as to what benefits workers in late adulthood have brought to their restaurant (see Table XII) were dependability (24) and stability (11). This corresponds to past studies of employees in late adulthood which also have found older employees to be more dependable and stable than younger workers (Atchley 1980, Doering, Rhodes & Schuster, 1983, and DeMicco & Reid, 1988).

Maturity (19) and experience (17) were also listed by McDonald's managers as benefits which older employees bring to their restaurants. One manager said, "They show the younger crew that they can do anything and it also helps because the younger crew won't complain when you ask them to do something. Kids are less likely to steal or give something away when older employees are around." Another manager said, "Younger employees tend to remember that they should show respect for their elders. It's very neat to watch a teenager help an older person complete a task or help with a task because of that respect for the older person."

TABLE XII
 BENEFITS THAT WORKERS IN LATE ADULTHOOD HAVE
 BROUGHT TO MCDONALD'S

Responses	Number
Dependability	24
Customer Relations Skills	24
Maturity	19
Experience	17
Friendliness	12
Stability	11
Consistency	7
Respect	5
Hardworking	5
Patience	4
Work Ethic	4
Responsible	4
Life Experience	3
Good Role Model	3
Eager To Do Well	3
High Standards	2
Dedication	1
Care	1
Integrity	1
Sense of Pride	1
Positive Attitude	1
Express Opinions	1
Follow Directions	1
Leadership	1
Sincerity	1

Customer relation skills (24) and friendliness (12) were also listed by McDonald's managers as benefits older employees bring to McDonald's. One manager took this a step further and said, "The clientele at our McDonald's tends to be older and they are more comfortable seeing seniors working in the restaurant." Another manager said, "Older people are also great P.R. people. They love to talk to their customer. They are the best people pleasers." Another manager made probably the strongest statement in favor of the Rehirement program. The manager said, "I have one worker who is 70 years old. He makes salads and does fries for lunch. In between all of this he is my main P.R. man. He meets and greets all of our customers and he gets to know 85% of them. They come back for him. I don't think I would have half the customers I have now if he wasn't a worker."

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine whether food service managers are more satisfied with their employees in late adulthood if the employees had completed a training program specifically designed for their age group than if the employees had completed traditional training programs. Chapter V provides a summary of the study, findings, and conclusions.

Summary of Study

The study consisted of 122 McDonald's managers of which 89 participated in the Rehirement program and 33 were non-participants. Of these managers, 82.9% were 44 years of age or younger. Therefore, most of the managers were younger than the employees in late adulthood whom they supervised.

Eighty-three percent of managers responding to the study had been employed by McDonald's for five or more years. Seventy-six percent of managers employed three or less employees in late adulthood.

The managers of McDonald's tended to use their older employees in similar ways without regard for participation or non-participation in the Rehirement program. The most common duties for older employees were cleaning tables, greeting customers, sweeping the floors, preparing salads, mopping the floors, cleaning restrooms, and removing trash. The least common duties for older employees were off loading supplies, handling deliveries, production control, checking equipment, and working the "drive-thru". Other tasks that managers thought employees in late adulthood could do included the following: hosting, being a community liaison, surveying guests, supervising birthday parties, giving special care to children, giving kiddie cones to children, filling balloons, leading groups on tours of the restaurant, and refilling beverages.

The most common times of day for employees in late adulthood to be scheduled for work were lunch and breakfast. Managers rarely scheduled older employees to work supper or late night.

Seventy-three percent of the McDonald's managers agreed or strongly agreed that their employees in late adulthood were adequately trained. Fifty-eight percent of managers also agreed or strongly agreed that older employees were accepted by their younger co-workers. Sixty-one percent of managers were confident that employees in late adulthood were capable of moving into management positions.

Managers gave a more mixed response when they were asked if the Rehirement program was a more effective way to train employees in late adulthood than traditional training methods used for younger employees. Thirty-three percent agreed or strongly agreed that the Rehirement program was more effective than traditional methods. Twenty-one percent somewhat agreed that the Rehirement program was more effective.

Thirty-two percent were undecided, and 7.0% somewhat disagreed or disagreed that the Rehirement program was more effective than traditional training methods.

Findings

One finding of the study was that McDonald's managers used their employees in late adulthood the same way whether or not the restaurant participated in the Rehirement program. The typical duties for an employee in late adulthood were usually less difficult tasks. Managers rarely scheduled older employees to work in the more stressful jobs such as taking orders for the drive-thru and production control, more technical jobs such as checking equipment, or more physical jobs such as handling deliveries and off-loading trucks. Perhaps McDonald's managers had fallen victim to stereotyping their older employees. However, managers did believe that employees in late adulthood were capable of moving into management positions. This seemed to be a conflict since they did not schedule employees in the more difficult, stressful positions that a manager might routinely have to deal with.

Another finding of the study was that 54 managers out of 122 responding were between the ages of 25 and 34, and the mean length of employment was nine years. Therefore, many of the managers started employment with McDonald's early in their careers.

McDonald's restaurant managers may not all know what the Rehirement program is. When the researcher administered the questionnaire to a region of central Illinois that did not participate in the program, the managers all said they did participate.

Perhaps they confused the practice of hiring older employees with participation in the Rehirement program.

Conclusions

Employees in late adulthood usually worked breakfast or lunch. This could be due to the unavailability of younger employees during these hours because of school and other obligations or the personal preferences of older employees.

The study showed no statistical difference in the satisfaction of food service managers with their employees in late adulthood who had completed a training program specifically designed for their age group than with those who had completed traditional training programs. This finding is consistent with the comments from McDonald's managers, which were not overly enthusiastic about the Rehirement program, and may explain why the program had decreased to being offered in only four regions of the United States. Therefore, this study indicates that the Rehirement program appears not to make a better late adulthood employee than traditional training and, therefore, it should be discontinued if the only decision criteria is the effectiveness of the training.

McDonald's also tried to individualize the training procedure for all employees, which might tend to blur the training difference between older and traditional employees. In a corporation that was highly recognized for training excellence, it could be difficult to recognize the subtle differences in the training procedures. A manager might not perceive the need for a specialized training program and might make the comment made by several managers, which was that all McDonald's training is great.

McDonald's managers often perceived the Rehirement program as a good public relations program more than as a training program. They like to put older employees in highly visible positions to publicize that they care about the community and hire non-traditional employees. One manager went as far as to call them "warm fuzzies". This manager liked to schedule an older employee to work in the lobby during busy times to make the customer feel as if they were visiting their grandparent's house. Perhaps many older employees work the lobby by choice, but this placement is using a person as a figurehead instead of treating them as an equal employee capable of doing anything a younger employee can do. However, the placement of a person in late adulthood in a visible position may lead other retired adults to consider a new career with McDonald's.

Perhaps the benefit of the Rehirement program is not so much to produce a more effective employee as it is to ease the anxiety of the trainee and lead to a more satisfied employee.

Recommendations

There is a need for further research in this area. This study looked only at the McDonald's corporation; a similar study could be applied to other food service companies that offer special training programs for employees in late adulthood.

McDonald's changed the name of the program from the McMasters to the Rehirement program; however, when the researcher spoke to the regional offices they were still using the old name for the program. McDonald's corporate office needs to promote the program more so that all local management knows about the program and

how it differs from traditional training or discontinue it all together instead of watching it slowly die.

There is a large growing population of people in late adulthood and McDonald's has a promotional tool to encourage these people to enter their employment. The program may not make a better McDonald's employee but it might lessen the apprehension that the person in late adulthood might feel when returning to work.

This study suggests that, in the eyes of management, McDonald's special training program for employees in late adulthood did not make them better employees. If the sole purpose of the Rehirement program is to create a better employee, then it should be discontinued. However, the study did not examine the viewpoint of the older employee and their perceptions of the quality of their training in preparing them to work at McDonald's. The Rehirement program may impact on employee job satisfaction or the retention rate. Therefore, a study of the perceptions of employees in late adulthood regarding their training is needed.

McDonald's is quickly realizing that people in late adulthood are a good source of future employees. However, McDonald's also needs to realize their potential and accept them as equal employees capable of doing the jobs traditionally performed by much younger employees.

Over 60 percent of the managers agreed or strongly agreed that employees in late adulthood are capable of becoming managers. However, McDonald's managers often do not assign older employees to the tasks that would be expected of management personnel. For example, tasks such as production control and checking equipment are rarely assigned to older employees. Instead, managers use employees in late adulthood

to clean tables, greet customers, and sweep the floors. These are tasks that do not allow the employee to demonstrate management potential.

The lack of preparation of employees in late adulthood to assume managerial positions may not be totally the fault of McDonald's managers. Many people in late adulthood may want to work, but may not want the added responsibilities and stress of management. Another study could be done to determine how many employees in late adulthood desire to become managers.

Employees in late adulthood are well accepted by their younger co-workers. McDonald's should dispel the fears that many of their managers might have that the older employee might cause a division in their labor force.

If McDonald's employees in late adulthood are going to be truly treated as equals in the work place, future managers must begin to learn how to fully realize the potential of older workers. Educators have a role to play in training future managers: they must not allow stereotyping and must teach the equality of the ages.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER AND

QUESTIONNAIRE

222 Lakewood Place
Charleston, IL 61920
(217) 348-7966

Dear Survey Participants:

The following survey is designed to measure the effectiveness of training programs for people in late adulthood. The data will be used as part of a dissertation study entitled "The Effectiveness of Training Programs for People in Late Adulthood" being conducted at Oklahoma State University (OSU), Stillwater, Oklahoma. McDonald's was selected for this study since they have assumed a leadership role in recognizing and designing employment programs for people in late adulthood.

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. The instrument is completely anonymous and should take less than ten minutes to complete. Completing the survey is completely voluntary, there is no penalty for refusal to participate and you may withdraw from participation at any time.

Any information you decide to share with me will be helpful as I examine training programs for older adults. Additionally, if you would like additional information regarding this survey or need assistance, you may contact me at (217) 581-6362, or my major adviser at OSU, Dr. Gary Oakley, 406 Classroom Building, Stillwater, OK 74074-0406, (405) 744-6275.

Again, thank you very much for your assistance in completing this questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Morgan W. Geddie
Graduate Student
School of Occupational and
Adult Education
Oklahoma State University

MWG/kp

EMPLOYEES IN LATE ADULTHOOD EFFECTIVENESS STUDY

1. Does your McDonald's participate in the Rehirement program?

- a. yes
- b. no

2. From the choices below, please circle your correct age group.

- a. under 25
- b. 25-34
- c. 35-44
- d. 45-54
- e. 55 & over

3. How long have you been employed by McDonald's?

4. How many of your employees are 55 years of age or older?

5. Please rank each of the following duties for frequency of the task being performed by a person who is 55 or older.

(1=never 2=rarely 3=fairly often 4=most often)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ a. greeting customers | _____ k. working the drive-thru |
| _____ b. assembling orders | _____ l. making biscuits |
| _____ c. grill cooking | _____ m. preparing salads |
| _____ d. fryer cooking | _____ n. checking stock of product |
| _____ e. busing tables | _____ o. off loading |
| _____ f. cleaning restrooms | _____ p. mopping the floors |
| _____ g. cleaning parking lot | _____ q. sweeping the floors |
| _____ h. handling deliveries | _____ r. checking equipment |

10. Employees over the age of 55 are accepted by their younger co-workers as equals.

-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----
 strongly agree somewhat agree undecided somewhat disagree disagree strongly disagree

Circle the response which most correctly reflects your opinion of the following statements.

11. A person over 55 years of age is capable of becoming a manager.

-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----
 strongly agree somewhat agree undecided somewhat disagree disagree strongly disagree

12. The McDonald's Rehirement program is a much more effective method of training employees in late adulthood as opposed to traditional training methods used for younger employees.

-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----
 strongly agree somewhat agree undecided somewhat disagree disagree strongly disagree

13. Please explain your response to the previous question.

14. What are the benefits that the workers in late adulthood have brought to your McDonald's?

APPENDIX B

LIST OF MCDONALD'S CONTACTS

Roger Carole Rogers
Director of the Rehirement program
Chicago, IL

Phylcia Cicalo
Regional Director of Human Resources
San Diego, CA

Patrick Dulaney
Regional Director of Human Resources
Washington, D.C.

Barb Stahl
Regional Director of Human Resources
Phoenix, AZ

Les Lucas
Regional Director of Human Resources
Boca Raton, FL

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

APPROVAL FORM

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW**

Date: 06-23-94

IRB#: ED-94-108

Proposal Title: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE IN LATE ADULTHOOD

Principal Investigator(s): Gary Oakley, Morgan W. Geddie

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

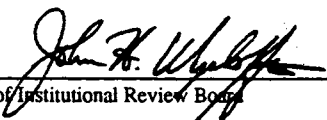
Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature:


Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: July 7, 1994

2
VITA

Morgan W. Geddie

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Dissertation: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE IN LATE ADULTHOOD IN THE FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma, February 3, 1959, the son of Ivan D. and Virginia E. Geddie.

Education: Graduated from John Marshall Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in May, 1977; received Bachelor of Science degree in Hotel and Restaurant Administration from Oklahoma State University in May, 1981; received Master of Business Administration degree in Marketing from University of Central Oklahoma in May, 1990; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in July, 1996.

Professional Experience: Summer Intern, Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May, 1980, to August, 1980; Assistant Manager, Harry Bear's, Val-Gene Associates, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1981 to 1982; Manager, Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream Stores, Oklahoma City and Edmond, Oklahoma, 1982 to 1984; Assistant Manager, Beekman Tower Hotel, New York City, New York, 1984 to 1986; Assistant Front Office Manager, Adam's Mark Hotel, Charlotte, North Carolina, 1986 to 1987; Sales Support Associate, Todd Brokerage, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1987 to 1989; Substitute Teacher, Garland Public Schools, Garland, Texas, 1990; Graduate Teaching Associate, Oklahoma State University, 1990 to 1992; Instructor, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois, 1991 to present.

Professional Organizations: Phi Delta Kappa, Council of Hotel and Restaurant Institutional Educators, Illinois Restaurant Association.