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BENEFITS OF A MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE:
PERCEPTIONS OF AGE-FRIENDLY WORK ENVIRONMENTS

By

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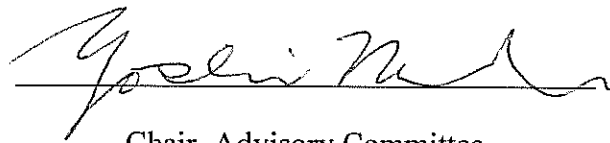
Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
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Benefits of a Multi-Generational Workforce:
Perceptions of Age-Friendly Work Environments

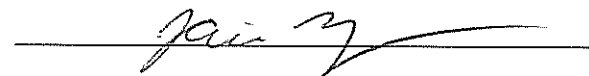
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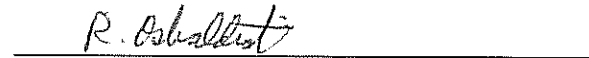
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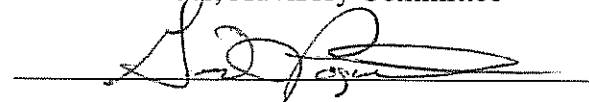
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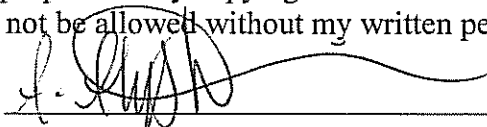
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. R. Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Date

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my amazing family, who has always loved and supported me and my endeavors and at least pretended to be interested in my research activities, even when they had no idea what I was talking about! As the five of us span all four generations and the rest of you are all contributing members to the workforce, I hope that my research may be somewhat more appealing now that it is more relevant.

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I would like to acknowledge all of those who have helped in the completion of my thesis. First, I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Yoshie Nakai, for all her hours in helping me design the study, analyze and understand the results, providing me with feedback, and the countless revisions that went into this final document. I would also like to thank her for her mentorship and helping me develop as a better researcher and professional. I would also like to thank my committee chairs, Dr. Jaime Henning and Dr. Richard Osbaldiston, for their help, support, and feedback as well. Lastly, I would like to thank all of my friends and family who have supported me and provided extra sets of proofreading eyes.

ABSTRACT

Age-friendly workplaces (1) emphasize mutual respect and inclusion at work and (2) provide comprehensive support for employees of all ages by utilizing a combination of policies, procedures, settings, and/or structures to (3) remove the barriers that segregate by age group and (4) encourages participation of all employees regardless of their age. The current study explored the idea of an age-friendly workplace by developing a measure of an age-friendly workplace and examining its influence on employees. The Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale was developed to assess the extent to which employees view their organizations to manage employees of different ages effectively. Using a working sample from a single organization, the study examined the relationship between an age-friendly work environment and employees' job-related outcomes such as engagement, satisfaction, stress, and turnover intentions.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Presently, there are many resources for organizations and management concerning multigenerational issues in the workforce. There are books, articles, even YouTube videos on managing different generations in the workforce and different theories for organizational success depending on the generational composition of an organization's workforce (e.g., *Aging and Work in the 21st Century*). The body of multi-generational workforce research has focused on the change in composition in the workforce, the differences between generations in the workforce, and how these differences may impact organizations (Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt & Gade, 2012; Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006; Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor, 2012). While effectively managing an age-diverse workforce is called for, the benefits of an age-friendly workplace are unclear. There is limited research specifically examining perceived age-friendly work environments. More importantly, there is limited empirical research looking at employee perception of age-friendly work environments and its relationships to employee attitudes such as satisfaction, commitment, engagement, job stress, and turnover intentions.

The empirical examination of employee perceptions of age-friendly work environments is important for several reasons. First, organizational policies, procedures, and practices need to be accepted by employees if they are to be truly effective. To initiate change or to introduce policies, procedures, or practices that

are new, the members of the organization must believe that this new practice is appropriate (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). Without this buy-in from the employees, an organization cannot effectively implement these practices. This is because without buy-in, the organization will most likely experience resistance from the employees, especially if new practices or policies are contrary to currently held ideologies or beliefs held by the employees or the general culture of the organization. Changing the culture or climate of an organization is hard work, and if it is not done properly, it will not succeed. Therefore, as previous research on employee perceptions of work environments has indicated (e.g., Allen, 2001; Mauno, Kiuru, & Kinnunen, 2011), having policies alone is not enough. For example, an organization may have a non-discrimination policy towards employees based on age, however the organization's culture may not support this policy and it may have very little buy-in from employees. If this is the case, then it is likely that employees will not follow this policy. However, if there is no resistance to this new policy, then perhaps the culture already encourages a discrimination-free climate and the employees will mostly likely act in accordance to the new policy.

Second, other research has provided a solid foundation for the argument that employee perceptions can have drastic outcomes for the employees as well as the organizations (e.g., Allen, 2001; Mauno, et al., 2011; McCaughey, DelliFraine, McGhan, & Bruning, 2013). Some of the evidence comes from research on safety climate perceptions and family supportive environments. For example, research has found that organizations with perceived family supportive

environments have better outcomes, such as higher work engagement and lower turnover (Mauno, et al., 2011; Allen, 2001). Similarly, safety climate perceptions are also related to work outcomes such as turnover intentions (McCaughey et al., 2013). Moreover, work outcomes are very important to organizations and can, in some situations, be quite costly to the organization (e.g., high turnover rates). These outcomes are also very important to individual employees, due to the effects the outcomes have on the employees. For example, low satisfaction at work could translate to low satisfaction with an individual's life, or high turnover can translate into instability for both the employees leaving the organization and those who choose to remain. While these outcomes can be grouped to get a general sense of an organization's outcomes, it is important to remember that these outcomes affect each individual employee as well. Therefore, it is important to identify relationships to these outcomes for both the organizations and individuals. Once relationships have been identified, future research can look at the application of these findings in organizations in order to help organizations become more effective and also help promote a better environment for individual workers.

Lastly, the aging workforce in the U.S. means that more organizations are hiring a wider age range of employees which in turn means that there is much more age diversity in the workforce now than ever before (Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006). With this increase in diversity, organizations face more challenges than ever before. This increased diversity can benefit organizations. However, if this diversity is not handled properly it can potentially be a detriment

to the organization (Hedge et al., 2006). Effectively handling age diversity could be an important factor in creating an age-friendly work environment.

The purpose of this study is to explore employee perceptions of how organizations treat employees of different ages or generations. First, an age-friendly work environment is defined. Based on the definition, a scale to measure employee perceptions of age-friendly work environments is developed. Second, the relationship between perceived age-friendly work environments and workplace outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, turnover intent, engagement, and job stress) will be examined. It is predicted that age-friendly perceptions will be positively related to job satisfaction and engagement, but negatively related to job stress and turnover intentions.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Age-Friendly?

While age-friendliness is not necessarily a new idea, it is a fairly new concept in regards to research in the workplace. There is, however, research conducted on age-friendly communities. These studies have mostly been from disciplines stemming from the social sciences (e.g., psychology, public administration) as well as social policy planning, urban planning, and even ecology. Many studies have come on the heels of the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities project and look at how to create and sustain age-friendly communities (e.g., Lui, Everingham, Warburton, Cuthill, & Bartlett, 2009; Menec, Means, Keating, Parkhurst, & Eales, 2011).

Based on research on age-friendly communities, useful information can be gleaned and translated into workplace terms. This is because a workplace, in some respects, represents a miniature community. According to Naylor and his colleagues, community is the most mentioned word in human resources and organizational development literature (Naylor, Willimon, Österberg, 1996). They identify ten defining characteristics of a community in the workplace: shared vision, common values, boundaries, empowerment, responsibility sharing, growth and development, tension reduction, education, feedback, and friendship (Naylor, Willimon, Österberg, 1996). Most organizations strive for these aspects in the workplace, whether they are consciously attempting to create a community or not.

In addition, organizations adapt to the changing workforce by implementing new policies and procedures or modifying the existing ones. For instance, redesigning a job for older workers is recommended to attract and retain this group of employees (Hedge et al., 2006). Utilizing suitable structures, policies, and procedures is one of the ways that organizations can foster an environment that is supportive of older workers' performance, work attitudes, motivation, and physical and psychological well-being (Hedge et al., 2006). By changing an organization's procedures and policies, the culture of the organization, including aging stereotypes, norms, and values, can be altered over time (Hedge et al., 2006).

The review on age-friendly communities suggests several aspects that contribute to such communities. Research on age-friendly communities in several different countries suggests the deconstruction of barriers that separate a specific age group from others and that limit their activities as a critical element of such purpose (Lui et al., 2009). Furthermore, this requires thorough planning for ample support services within the community, such as low cost meals for seniors, help with pensions, and the screening of contractors to determine if they are legitimate (World Health Organization [WHO], 2007). Second, the authors also go on to state that another important aspect of age-friendly communities is social relations, such as respect and inclusion, which can greatly improve quality of life for the elderly (Lui et al., 2009). A third definition suggests that these age-friendly communities are "characterized by the governance processes adopted for defining and building it...this implies the encouragement of bottom-up participation and

genuine involvement of seniors in voicing their concerns and participating in defining characteristics of services or facilities” (Lui et. al, 2009, p. 119). Finally, other research in this area relies on the World Health Organization’s (WHO) definition of age-friendly communities as “policies, services, settings, and structures [that] support and enable people to age actively” (Buffel, Phillipson, & Scharf, 2012; Menec, et al., 2011; World Health Organization [WHO], 2007, p. 5).

Based on the similarities between communities and organizations, an age-friendly work environment can be defined. From the first definition, an age-friendly work environment involves comprehensive planning and the provision of a wide range of support services as well as the removal of barriers that segregate employees based on age. The second definition suggests an emphasis on respect and inclusion in the workplace. The third definition makes it clear that age-friendly work environments are those that encourage bottom-up participation. Such workplaces involve employees of all different ages in voicing their concerns and in defining characteristics of services and facilities at work. Lastly, the fourth definition suggests policies (and implied procedures), settings, and structures that engage employees of all ages. This allows for a comprehensive definition of an age-friendly work environment: A workplace that emphasizes mutual respect and inclusion at work and provides comprehensive support for employees of all ages by utilizing a combination of policies, procedures, settings, and/or structures to remove the barriers that segregate by age groups and to encourage participation of all employees regardless of their age.

Why Are Age-Friendly Work Environments Important?

Age-friendly environments are important for several reasons. First, the rapidly growing rate of seniors in the workforce means a more diversified workforce in terms of age. Second, age discrimination is still prevalent in the workforce. Third, employee perceptions of their workplace may lead to many different work-related outcomes.

Growing rate of seniors in the workforce. Over the past decade and a half, there has been a shift in the workforce to an increase in older adults (65+) who are working full time (United States Department of Labor [USDOL], 2008). In 2008, the majority of workers 65 and older were working full time - an increase from 44 percent in 1995 to 56 percent (USDOL, 2008). Since 1977 there has been a 101 percent increase in older adult workers (USDOL, 2008). Breaking it down, the data show that there was an 85 percent increase in workers ages 65-69, a 98 percent increase in workers ages 70-74, and a 172 percent increase in workers that are 75 and over (USDOL, 2008). In a recent report, the USDOL projected that by 2050 nearly one-fourth of all workers will be 55 or older and that the shift from younger to older workers that has been experienced in the past few decades will continue on (2012a). The USDOL has reported that the 55 and older segment of the workforce is projected to experience the most change in the future with a 38 percent increase in the workforce between 2010 and 2020 (2012a, 2012b). These figures demonstrate the growing trend of older adults continuing to work past typical retirement age, and as such they represent an important demographic in the workforce.

Multi-generational workforce. According to the literature, this is the first time in modern history, perhaps ever, that four different generations are working side by side (Cheeseman & Downey, 2012; Hansen & Leuty, 2012).

Organizations are facing the challenge of creating a workplace that satisfies the needs and accepts the diversity of all four generations: the Silent Generation, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (also known as the Millennials). Arranged by age, the Silent Generation is the oldest and typically includes people born between 1925 and 1945. The Baby Boomers are the largest generation and comprised of individuals born between 1946 and 1964. Next is Generation X whose members were born between 1965 and 1980. The Millennials, who are the youngest generation in the workforce, were born after 1980 (Hansen & Leuty, 2012).

Research has found that there are differences in work-related values between generations (Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor, 2012). Specifically, the Silent Generation places more importance on status and autonomy, while Baby Boomers and Generation X place more importance on working conditions, security, coworkers, and compensation (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). Additionally, generation accounts for variation more so than age. Another study with correctional officers found that job satisfaction and membership in Generation X, Baby Boomers, and The Silent Generation were significantly related, with younger generations being more dissatisfied (Cheeseman & Downey, 2012). A study conducted by Lester and colleagues (2012) reported that Millennials value email communication, social media, fun at

work, and continuous learning more so than Baby Boomers (Lester et al., 2012). Baby Boomers, however, report valuing professionalism more than Generation X, but not more than the Millennials (Lester et al., 2012).

There are also differences in terms of what certain generations perceive of the values of other generational groups. In the same study by Lester and colleagues (2012), researcher found that Generation X members do not think that Baby Boomers value teamwork, flexibility, technology, and fun at work as much as Baby Boomers think their generation values these items. The Millennials believe that Baby Boomers do not value teamwork or technology as much as Baby Boomers perceive themselves to do. The Millennials also report thinking that Baby Boomers value formal authority and structure more so than Baby Boomers think their generation values it. In addition to these values, there are many other differences in what one generation believes another generation values in the workplace.

However, a meta-analysis of generational differences on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intent found that the relationship between generational membership and outcomes were moderate to small, and essentially zero in many different circumstances (Costanza et al., 2012). The authors found that older generations were slightly more satisfied with their jobs, which confirms the findings by Cheeseman and Downey (2012), however, the authors argue that this might be due to either age or tenure (Costanza et al., 2012). Another generational difference was found in commitment, but there was no discernible pattern (Costanza et al., 2012). That is, the two older generations were

sometimes more and sometimes less committed than the two younger generations, but not always together and not in a consistent pattern. The authors suggested that variables such as organizational support, transformational leadership, role ambiguity, and organizational justice were better predictors of commitment than generational membership. Lastly, the authors found that turnover intent was lower for older generations. However, this finding should be interpreted carefully since other research has shown that age does not add more predictive power above and beyond job involvement, education, and tenure.

Overall, the results suggest some generational differences in work-related values, but findings are inconclusive. These conflicting research findings suggest that perhaps differences between generations might be due to circumstance (e.g., industry). However, it is concerning that these differences do exist and that there is not an overarching movement for organizations to provide support services to address these differences—whether real or perceived. The workforce today is far more age diverse than ever before. It's important that organizations have support to address the needs of all generations. This issue is especially important due to the high rates of age discrimination in the workplace. With more generations working together, there may be more opportunity for each generation to experience discrimination based on age.

Age discrimination in the workplace. Age prejudice is one of the most socially acceptable forms of discrimination (Hedge et al., 2006). Most people understand and accept that race and gender are not acceptable grounds to judge occupational fitness, however age is only now beginning to gain ground in this

respect. Additionally, when aging myths (e.g., old people are senile) are found in an organization's culture, it is often reinforced by the organization's stated policies and procedures (Hedge et al., 2006).

In 1997, approximately 19 percent of all employment charges filed were on the basis of age (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC], 2013a). This number has risen since then, reaching a peak high in the 16-year database in 2008, when nearly 26 percent of all charges filed were on the basis of age (EEOC, 2013a). In 2012, it had decreased slightly to 23 percent. Over 22,000 cases were filed in 2012 alone based on the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, which “protects certain applicants and employees 40 years of age and older from discrimination on the basis of age in hiring, promotion, discharge, compensation, or terms, conditions or privileges of employment” (USDOL). The EEOC reports that over \$91 billion has been awarded in monetary benefits (EEOC, 2013b). Some research has suggested that the ADEA is ineffective due to the rising rates of complaints which are believed to be an underestimate of actual offences, a lack of reduced discrimination, and the prevalence of negative stereotypes of older workers (Rothenberg & Gardner, 2011). According to a report by the International Longevity Centre-USA [ILC-USA], the number of reports provided by the EEOC may greatly underestimate the actual prevalence of age discrimination in the workplace (ILC-USA, 2006). Clearly, with over one in every five complaints filed with the EEOC charging age discrimination as the cause, this is a highly prevalent and important issue in the workplace today, especially if this number is underestimating the true amount of age discrimination.

Research on age discrimination, often focused on discrimination against older workers, shows that when listening to audio interviews of two equally qualified candidates, participants rated the younger candidate more favorably than the older candidate (Avolio & Barrett, 1987). Similarly, another study found that individuals stereotype older workers as resistant to change and believe that it would be more difficult to get an older employee to change their behavior than a younger employee (Rosen & Jerdee, 1976a). Participants also identified lack of creativity as a negative stereotype, where participants recommended promotion of younger employees with identical qualifications more than twice as often as older employees (Rosen & Jerdee, 1976a). Cautiousness, lower physical capacity, disinterest in technological change, and untrainability were also identified, each with significant differences in managerial decisions between young and old workers (Rosen & Jerdee, 1976a). Participants have also rated older workers as having less performance capacity and potential for development, but being more stable than younger workers (Rosen & Jerdee, 1976b). Building on these classic studies, more recent research has shown that individuals tend to view the elderly as incompetent (Cuddy, Norton, & Fiske, 2005). Conversely, a replication of Rosen & Jerdee's (1976a) study, showed less age discrimination, but still significant effects concerning resistance to change (Maurer, Wrenn, & Weiss, 2003). However, multiple meta-analytic studies have shown evidence for age stereotypes in relation to the workplace (Posthuma & Campion, 2009; Ng & Feldman, 2012; Gordon & Arvey, 2004).

Additional research on age discrimination in employment settings shows that there are several factors that play into the selection of older employees, including individual bias, the availability of cognitive resources (such as whether the participants were induced into thinking about other things) to inhibit stereotypes, and how age-congruent the job is with the applicant (Perry, Kulik, & Bourhis, 1996). When the individual had more cognitive resources available and when they had a low bias, both young and old workers were evaluated equally. However, when there were less available resources, interviewers with low bias rated older workers more favorably while interviewers with high bias rated older workers far less favorably than young workers (Perry, et al., 1996). Additionally, the authors looked at “young” and “old” jobs. These were jobs were rated based on the perception of them as typically older or younger, whether the job was suitable for younger or older workers, and lastly what participants thought was the average age of individuals who did that job. When the job was deemed a young job and the interviewer had low bias, the older worker was rated slightly more favorably than the young, but when the interviewer had high bias, the discrepancy between the evaluation of the applicant was much more severe (Perry, et al., 1996). A meta-analysis found that younger raters tend to rate younger workers more favorably in certain domains: having more job qualifications, having more potential for development, and being more qualified for a physically demanding job (Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995). However, younger raters did rate older workers more favorably in terms of being more stable, while older workers showed no difference in ratings of job qualifications between age groups

(Finkelstein et al., 1995). Furthermore, younger people tend to be rated as more qualified, though only slightly, for “younger” jobs, as well as for age-neutral jobs, and equally qualified for “older” jobs (Finkelstein et al., 1995).

More recently, a study found that both younger (18-26 years old) and older (61-92) adults report more age discrimination than middle-aged adults (Gartska, Hummert, Branscombe, 2005). Similarly, a study based in the UK found that age discrimination was reported most by older and younger workers (16-24 and 45 and older, respectively), however age discrimination, at some rate, was reported by employees of all ranges (Duncan & Loretto, 2004). These results suggest a strong prevalence of age discrimination in the workplace.

Conversely, a review of age discrimination in the workplace literature found that field studies report less discrimination than laboratory studies (Morgeson, Reider, Campion, & Bull, 2008). These researchers argue that job related applicant information and job-applicant fit explain more variance in predicting hiring decisions than the age of the applicant does (Morgeson et al., 2008). While this review makes it compelling to believe that discrimination does not occur solely by employee age outside the laboratory, the EEOC statistics show otherwise. Additionally, a theoretical framework suggests that organizational factors may affect cognitive processes, which then affect employment decisions that contribute to age discrimination (Perry & Finkelstein, 1999). Specifically, Perry and Finkelstein argue that organizational factors might affect interviewers’ abilities to base employment decisions on job-applicant fit and that age discrimination can happen when a worker’s age ties into to the job

duties or information and there is a mismatch between the job and the applicant (1999). This theoretical approach seems to align well with the review conducted by Morgeson and colleagues to tell a more complete story of age discrimination in the workplace. These studies illustrate how important age-friendly workplaces are to employees and organizations alike.

Employee perception in the workplace. The presence of organizational policies and interactions with individuals of different ages may give cues for employees to assess how different age groups are treated at their workplace. For example, an organization with age-friendly policies may not be perceived as being age-friendly. This might be due to the policies not being enforced or employees not actually being aware of such policies. Additionally, an organization might have age-friendly policies, but upper management may still show discriminatory behavior that employees see and then emulate. Conversely, an organization may not have any policies and procedures that are official, written down, and included in Human Resources rules and regulations, but treating all people with respect and inclusion may simply be part of the culture, leading to an age-friendly perception of the organization. Implementation of policies and procedures to integrate employees of all ages is critical. However, it does not assure that employees are aware of or accepting the policies. In order to examine the benefits of an age-friendly work environment at the individual level, it is critical to look at how employees perceive their organization's treatment of employees of various ages/generations.

Research has shown that for many areas, employee perception of the workplace is linked to different work-related outcomes. For example, safety research has shown that safety climate perceptions mediate the relationship between workplace injury/illness and the outcome variables of job stress, turnover intention, and job satisfaction (McCaughey et al., 2013). Research on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual (LGB) supportive work environments show evidence that perceptions of an LGB supportive work environment, mediated with Person-Organizational (P-O) fit, had a positive indirect link with job satisfaction (Velez & Moradi, 2012). Additionally, the LGB work supportive environment perceptions, mediated with P-O fit and job satisfaction, had a negative indirect link with turnover intention (Velez & Moradi, 2012). That is, P-O fit helps to explain how perceptions of LGB supportive environments are related to higher satisfaction and how P-O fit and satisfaction are related to lower turnover intentions. Similarly, research on family supportive work environments suggests that perception of how family supportive a workplace is, including both benefits and supervisor support, mediates the relationship between family-friendly benefits available to employees and outcomes, including work-family conflict, affective commitment, and job satisfaction (Allen, 2001). That is, perceptions of family supportive workplaces help to explain why actual family-friendly benefits are related to outcomes (i.e., work-family conflict, affective commitment, job satisfaction).

A study looking at the perception of age discrimination found that age diversity in the organization was positively related to perceived age

discrimination (Kunze, Boehm, & Bruch, 2011). When there is a perceived climate of age discrimination, employees reported lower affective commitment to the organization, which in turn led to lower job performance (Kunze et al., 2011). The results show a negative indirect relationship between affective commitment, which is mediated by a perceived age discrimination climate, as well as a negative indirect relationship between perceived age discrimination climate and performance that is mediated by affective commitment (Kunze et al., 2011). That is, perceived affective commitment helps to explain why perceived age discrimination is related to lower performance.

This research provides a solid foundation for why perception research is a necessary contribution to the literature on both a basic and applied basis. The results from these studies show that there are serious implications in organizations due to their employees' perceptions that affect the company as whole and also affect the employees individually.

These studies show a pattern of employee perceptions being strongly related to several important work-related outcomes. It is highly likely that the perception of an organization's age-friendliness, that is a perception of whether an organization treats all individuals with respect and inclusion and has policies and procedures that remove barriers that segregate on age, may also have a relationship with similar workplace outcomes. If the perception of age-friendliness is indeed related to these outcomes, it is important to understand the direction in which they are linked.

Relationship between Age-Friendly Work Environments and Employee Attitudes

An age-friendly environment is expected to relate to employee attitudes such as engagement, job satisfaction, job stress, and turnover intentions. First, I will review definitions of these employee attitudes and then discuss their relationships with age-friendly work environments.

There are two forms of engagement in the workplace: organizational engagement and work engagement. Saks (2006) defines job or work engagement as the positive, opposite of burnout. Work engagement has also been described as the “antipode of burnout” and characterized as employees feeling competent in being able to handle job demands, being energetic, and lastly, having effective connection with work activities (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006, p. 702). However, it is hard to determine a specific definition when there is a general lack of consensus by researchers (Robertson & Cooper, 2010). Similarly, Saks (2006) cites several different definitions of organizational engagement: intellectual and emotional commitment to the organization; being psychologically present when performing an organizational role; being attentive and absorbed; and lastly, a state of mind that is positive, fulfilling, and work-related. This state of mind is not a specific state, but rather a persistent and pervasive state also characterized by three aspects: vigor, dedication, and absorption. For the purposes of this study, engagement is considered to be when an employees is attentive, absorbed, and in a fulfilling, work-related state of mind.

Both job and organizational engagement explained significant variance in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intentions to quit, and organizational

citizenship behaviors (OCBs) directed towards the organization, while organizational engagement alone predicted organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals (Saks, 2006). That is, engagement as a whole, helps to explain how satisfied individuals are with their jobs, how committed they are to their organization, if they intend to quit their job, and whether or not they perform OCBs for their organization. OCBs performed for individuals in the organization can be explained by how committed an individual is to their organization.

While job satisfaction is widely used, measured, and talked about, rarely do authors actually define the concept (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951). Perhaps this is due to the assumption that satisfaction is widely understood. One study that attempts to measure job satisfaction merely states that it can be inferred based on the employee's attitude toward their work (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951). This leads to two general theories on job satisfaction: attitude vs. affect (Weiss, 2002). Weiss (2002), however, argues that for many researchers, these two concepts are not mutually exclusive and are actually treated as the same thing. Weiss (2002) cites several different definitions of job satisfaction including the view that job satisfaction is an emotional state, is equivalent to job attitudes, and is an attitude towards an individual's job. For the purposes of this study, job satisfaction is simply how content and/or happy one is with their job, which is measured by a short scale that looks at overall job satisfaction.

Job stress is a person's "awareness or feeling of personal dysfunction as a result of perceived conditions or happenings in the work setting" (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983, p. 161). Job stress is related to the work itself (e.g., autonomy,

stability, numbers of hours worked per week), organizational characteristics (e.g., concern for the individual), an individual's role in the organization (e.g., closeness of supervision), career (e.g., training quality, emphasis on individual development), interpersonal relationships at work (e.g., support from boss, cohesiveness), and personal factors (e.g., age) (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983). These aspects of the workplace may contribute to the experience of work-related stress, which can lead to second-level outcomes such as job satisfaction, performance, and commitment (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983). For example, the organization's concern for individual employees expressed by top management's behavior could lessen the experience of stress, or perhaps the emphasis placed on individual development expressed through career training seminars would lessen the experience of stress.

Turnover intention is the intended behavior of the employee to leave the organization voluntarily (Tett & Meyer, 1993). However, this should not be confused with actual turnover rates in which the employee does in fact leave the organization. Turnover intention is a source of problems for many organizations, as high turnover can be quite costly. These attitude variables are related to each other and linked to perceived work environments.

A study of Finnish workers' perceptions of work-family supportive organizational culture positively predicted work engagement, both individually and as a department (Mauno et al., 2011). Both on the individual and departmental level, employee perceptions of a family-supportive organization were positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to turnover

intentions (Mauno et al., 2011). Those who perceived their organization as less family supportive experienced less job satisfaction and higher turnover intentions (Allen, 2001).

Studies on safety climate have linked this specific shared perception to engagement, job satisfaction, job stress, and turnover intentions. Psychosocial safety climate, defined as the shared perceptions of an organization's policies, practices, and procedures for the protection of employees' health and safety, directly relates to job and organizational engagement and indirectly through rewards (Law, Dollard, Tuckey, & Dormann, 2011). Similarly, another study found that safety climate perceptions are indeed positively related to job satisfaction and negatively to job stress (McCaughey et al., 2013). Safety climate perceptions have also been shown to mediate the relationship between workplace injuries and turnover intentions as well as job stress and job satisfaction (McCaughey et al., 2013). Organizations that have high rates of workplace injuries tend to have high turnover intentions and job stress and low job satisfaction. However, employees' shared perceptions of work safety could nullify such relationships.

Research has also demonstrated that perceived LGB-supportive environments were indirectly and positively related to job satisfaction (Velez & Moradi, 2012). LGB supportive environments are also negatively, though indirectly, linked to turnover intent (Velez & Moradi, 2012). The authors argue that the perception of these constructs (i.e., LGB supportive environments, P-O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions) may overlap to such an extent that

they should not be discussed separately, but rather in tandem. Additionally, the authors use the justification of the theory of work adjustment, which reasons that the amount of fit between individual factors (e.g., employees' skills and values) and environmental factors (e.g., organization's required skills, values) relates directly to work outcomes such as job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

Employees' perception of organizational support, politics, and identity could play a role in their stress level and intentions to quit. Perceived organizational support has been found to be positively related to global job satisfaction (Guitierrez, Candela, & Carver, 2012). A study on Korean hotel workers found that employees' stress was due to organizational factors, rather than individual factors (Jung & Yoon, 2013). Perceptions of organizational politics are positively related to several different job outcomes, including job stress, but can be moderated by the social environment (Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010). When there is a high perception of organizational politics, there is typically more job stress. However, the social environment, specifically social support and trust, can attenuate this relationship.

Research has found that organizational identity and satisfaction are both antecedents of turnover intentions (Randsley De Moura, Abrams, Retter, Gunnarsdottir, & Ando, 2008). That is, organizational identity and satisfaction both contribute to whether individuals intend to leave an organization. Those who have a strong organizational identity, or those who strongly relate to the organization and apply the characteristics of the organization to themselves, would be less likely to intend to quit. According to a meta-analysis conducted by

Chang and colleagues (2009), perceptions of organizational politics were positively related to turnover intentions, though mediated by work attitudes, specifically morale. The perception of organizational politics in this study meant higher turnover intentions, but this relationship disappeared when controlling for morale. This suggests that perceptions of organizational politics would be related to turnover intentions if morale could be held constant.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that employees' assessment of their work environment could impact their attitudes, including engagement, satisfaction, job stress, and turnover intentions. Employees who perceive their workplace to be supportive of age diversity would be more engaged in their job and organization, satisfied with their work, and less likely to experience stress due to work or think about leaving the work.

Hypothesis 1a: Perceived age-friendly work environment is positively related to job engagement.

Hypothesis 1b: Perceived age-friendly work environment is positively related to organizational engagement.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived age-friendly work environment is positively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived age-friendly work environment is negatively related to job stress.

Hypothesis 4: Perceived age-friendly work environment is negatively related to turnover intention.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

This study will utilize two separate samples: students and professionals.

Student sample. Participants for the pilot study were recruited from college psychology courses offered at a mid-size Southern university. Participants received a course credit in exchange. Individuals who were over 18 years of age, currently enrolled at the university, and employed were recruited for the study through an online research participation system. Individuals who agreed to participate in the study were directed to an online survey. The survey included demographic questions, the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale, and outcome variable scales (i.e., job satisfaction). It took approximately 30 minutes for participants to complete the survey.

A total of 261 participants provided usable data. Of these participants, nearly seventy-five percent were female. The overwhelming majority described themselves as Caucasian, approximately ninety percent. Nearly 5 percent described themselves as being Black or African American. Approximately 2 percent described themselves as Asian or Asian American. The remaining two categories, American Indian or Alaskan Natives and Hispanic or Latino, each comprised less than 1 percent of the pilot study participants. Lastly, the mean age of participants was 24.18 years old.

Professional sample. A total of 97 participants were recruited from a hospital in the Southern U.S. region, yielding 92 useable responses. Approximately 350 employees work at the hospital. All employees were invited to participate in this study. These employees were asked to complete the survey via email from a hospital administrator in three separate waves.

The mean age was 44.41 years old, ranging from 20 to 68 years of age. Eighty-four percent of participants were female. Over ninety-five percent described themselves as Caucasian. For the rest, 3.7% described themselves as Black or African American, and 1.7% described themselves as American Indian or Alaska Native. A comparison of demographics between the student and professional samples are presented in Table 5, Appendix K.¹

Measures

Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale. Proper development of scales is imperative to accurately research and report on psychological principles. Hinkin (1998) stated that one of the most challenging parts of studying and understanding employees' behavior is adequate measurement of abstract constructs and three stages of scale development: item development, scale development, and scale evaluation.

Item development concerns content validity, or the relevance and representativeness of the items. It is also one of, if not the, most important area in developing a new measure (Hinkin, 1995). There are two methods to item development—inductive and deductive. Deductive item development begins first

¹ All tables can be found in the Appendix.

with a literature review and creation of a theoretical definition of the construct to be measured, which guides the development of scale items (Hinkin, 1995). The Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale was constructed using a deductive item development method. An age-friendly work environment was first defined through a literature review, and items were based on each facet of the definition.

The second step is scale development, which includes design of the developmental study, scale construction, and reliability assessment (Hinkin, 1995). Design of the developmental study concerns the way in which the chosen items are administered to a sample and the assessment of psychometric properties. In the current study, the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale was examined using both student and professional samples. Hinkin (1995) also discussed the number of items and response options. Too few items might not have high enough content or construct validity or reliability, while too many items may introduce respondent fatigue or biases. Also the coefficient alpha, index for internal consistency of a scale, may increase up to five points in a Likert-scale (Hinkin, 1995). Twenty items were developed for the initial Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale, and a five-point scale was adopted for responses.

Twenty items were developed based on the definition of an age-friendly work environment (see Table 1, Appendix E). The first part of the definition is that age-friendly workplaces involve the comprehensive planning and the provision of a wide range of support services as well as the removal of barriers that segregate employees based on age. An example of an item on the scale that measures this first part of the definition is “Organizational practices and policies

are established to benefit all generations of workers.” The second part of the definition states that an age-friendly work environment emphasizes respect and inclusion in the workplace. An example of an item on the scale that measures the second part of the definition is the reverse coded item “I feel excluded at work because of my age.” The third definition states that an age-friendly work environment encourages bottom-up participation to involve employees of all different ages in voicing their concerns and participating in defining characteristics of services and facilities in the workplace. An example of an item from this definition is “My organization invites opinions and ideas from workers of all ages.” The fourth and final part of the definition of an age-friendly work environment is that there are policies, settings, and structures that engage employees of all ages. An example of an item from this definition is “Employees in different generations are encouraged to socialize and interact at work.” Responses were recorded on a five point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

For the scale construction phase, dimensionality and reliability of a scale are assessed. Hinkin (1995) suggests using confirmatory factor analysis in order to evaluate the previously identified dimensionality of the construct. While previous aging community research (Lui, Everingham, Warburton, Cuthill, & Bartlett, 2009) suggested the multi-dimensional nature of an age-friendly environment, whether or not these dimensions extend to the workplace is still in question. Thus, we have examined the Age-Friendly Work Environment scale with exploratory factor analysis for both the student and professional samples.

Hinkin (1995) also suggests reporting a Cronbach's alpha as an index of internal consistency of a scale. Results of exploratory analyses and internal consistency of the scale will be reported in the results section.

The third and final stage of scale development is scale evaluation. Specifically, this concerns construct validity evidence through methods such as through a nomological network and discriminant and convergent validity. This study aims to examine the relationship of age-friendly work environments with variables that theoretically would co-vary, demonstrating both discriminant and convergent validity, though a multitrait-multimethod matrix has not been developed.

Engagement. The engagement scale was adopted from Saks (2006). The scale consists of ten questions across two different dimensions: job and organization engagement. These items were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). This scale was found to have a Cronbach's alpha of .89 overall, with subscale alphas of .83 for job engagement and .90 for organizational engagement in the pilot study. Utilizing the professional sample, Cronbach's alpha for job engagement used was .84 and for organizational engagement was .93.

Job satisfaction. The job satisfaction scale was adopted from Messersmith, Patel, Lepak, & Gould-Williams (2011). Job satisfaction was measured using three items on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree). Preliminary analyses utilizing the pilot student sample

yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .85. Utilizing the professional sample, Cronbach's alpha was .63.

Job stress. Job stress was measured by a scale developed by Parker and DeCotiis (1983). The scale consisted of thirteen items on a four-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Strongly Agree). In a preliminary analysis using the pilot student sample, Cronbach's alpha was found to be .93. Utilizing the professional sample, Cronbach's alpha was .93.

Turnover intent. Turnover intent was measured by a scale developed by Randsley De Moura, Abrams, Retter, Gunnarsdottir, and Ando (2009). This scale uses four items on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Using the pilot student sample in a preliminary analysis, this turnover intentions scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .91. Utilizing the professional sample, Cronbach's alpha was .89.

Analysis Strategies

The purpose of this study was to develop the Age-Friendly Work Environment scale and to examine the relationship between age-friendly environments and employee-related variables, such as work engagement, job stress, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. First, overall, the internal consistency of the scale was examined using Cronbach's alpha. Second, exploratory factor analysis, using maximum likelihood and promax rotation, was performed to identify qualitatively meaningful dimensions of the scale. Finally, correlational analyses were conducted to test hypothesized relationships between

age-friendly work environment and employee attitude variables such as job and organizational engagement, job satisfaction, job-related stress, and intention to leave the work.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale Development

The internal consistency of 20 items on the initial Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale was acceptable. Cronbach's alpha was .91 in the student sample and .93 in the professional sample. Though Cronbach's alpha demonstrated high internal consistency, item-total correlations provided evidence that two of the items were related negatively to the rest of the scale. These items were item 9, "Organizational practices at my work reflect the age composition of employees," and item 12, "Employee conflicts are often attributable to generational differences." Item 9 had an item-total correlation of .12 and item 12 had an item-total correlation of .11 in the student sample. In the professional sample, the item-total correlation for item 9 increased to .26, while item 12's saw a decrease to -.08 in item-total correlation. Since the item total correlations were low in both the student and professional samples, these items were marked for deletion. Cronbach's alpha for an 18-item scale in the professional sample increased to .94, while it remained unchanged for the student sample at .93. These eighteen items were retained for further analyses.

The results of an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with the student sample are presented in Table 2, Appendix H. Nine items loaded onto the first factor, which explained 41.04% of the variance. Items in the first factor dealt with the organization and fairness and equality of all organizational members. Five

items loaded onto the second factor which explained 9.10% of the variance. These items dealt with cohesion in the workplace. Only two items loaded onto the third factor and these items concerned managerial issues which explained 6.47% of the variance. Four items loaded onto the fourth factor which explained 5.07% of the variance, and these items regarded generational differences. As a whole, the four factor model accounted for 61.68% of the total variance.

An EFA with the remaining 18 items utilizing the professional sample are presented in Table 3, Appendix I. This EFA yielded three separate factors based on eigenvalues above 1. Eight items loaded onto the first factor which accounted for 50.03% of the variance. The first factor concerned how salient age is at their workplace and was labeled as “Age Saliency.” Seven items loaded onto the second factor, accounting for 7.80% of the variance, which concerned how well generations worked together in the workplace. The second factor was labeled “Generational Working Together.” Lastly, three items loaded onto the third factor, accounting for 7.01% of the variance, which assessed managerial support regarding age and generational issues. The third factor was named “Managerial Support.” As a whole, the three factor model accounted for 64.84% of the total variance.

Cronbach’s alpha was .91 for Factor 1: Age Saliency, .89 for Factor 2: Generations Working Together, and .78 for Factor 3: Managerial Support. While the two EFAs produced similar results, it is important to note that the student sample produced an additional factor and that the items did not load in the same pattern in the two samples. However, in both samples a factor regarding

managerial issues/support emerged, as did a factor regarding cohesion or working together.

The results of the professional sample were used for the hypothesis testing and on which the discussion is primarily based. The student sample was used as a pilot study to initially test the psychometrics of the scale. However, we wanted to base the final structure of the scale as well as the hypothesis testing and discussion primarily on the results of the professional sample due to some concerns with the student sample. The first concern was the age of students; the average age of the student sample was only 24 years old. We wanted to increase variability in age in order to gain a more accurate representation of workers. Second, we theorized that many students most likely worked typical student jobs (e.g., retail) with other students, which may lead to a decrease in variability of co-workers' ages. Lastly, there are certain issues that may exist in the student sample, but not in a professional sample. For example, many students may have clear intentions to leave their organization because it is just a part time job to help them pay their bills while they are in school, but once they complete their education they may have intentions to join a different industry and organization. By utilizing a professional sample, we were able to compare differences between the student and professional sample and also gain a better understanding of the scale and the relationships with employee attitudes.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses of the current study were examined with a professional sample. Three factors from a professional sample, as well as the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale as a whole, were correlated with the outcome variables, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, job stress, job engagement, and organizational engagement. The results are presented in Table 4, Appendix J.

Overall, an age-friendly work environment was related to employee attitude variables mostly as hypothesized. Moreover, the pattern of relationships to the employee attitude variables was consistent across the overall scale and the three factors of the Age-Friendly Work Environment scale. Hypothesis 1a, that perceived age-friendly work environment is positively related to job engagement, was not supported as results were not significant. However, the results were marginally significant with a moderate correlation of $r = .19, p < .10$. Hypothesis 1b, that perceived age-friendly work environment is positively related to organizational engagement, was supported ($r = .71, p < .01$). Hypothesis 2, that perceived age-friendly work environment is positively related to job satisfaction, was also supported ($r = .46, p < .01$). Hypothesis 3, that age-friendly work environment is negatively related to job stress, was supported ($r = -.38, p < .01$). Lastly, Hypothesis 4, that perceived age-friendly work environment is negatively related to turnover intentions, was also supported ($r = -.55, p < .01$). Based on these results, employees who perceived their work place to be age-friendly are likely to be engaged in their job and employer, more satisfied and less stressed with the job. These employees are also less likely to consider leaving their job.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale

The purpose of this study was to define an age-friendly work environment, develop a scale to measure such an environment, and then to examine the relationship of age-friendly work environments to employee-related variables such as job satisfaction, job stress, turnover intentions, and engagement. The literature review allowed for the definition of an age-friendly work environment as “A workplace that emphasizes mutual respect and inclusion at work and provides comprehensive support for employees of all ages by utilizing a combination of policies, procedures, settings, and/or structures to remove the barriers that segregate by age groups and to encourage participation of all employees regardless of their age” to be developed. The Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale was then developed utilizing 18 items across three factors, with an overall alpha of .93, demonstrating high internal consistency.

Though initially developed to be 20 items, the scale was shortened to 18 items. The two items that were deleted were items 9 and 12. Item 12 was initially developed as a reverse-coded item. Hinkin (1995) noted that reverse-coded items tend to reduce the validity and have lower item loadings than non-reverse-coded items, which seemed to be the case in the both the student and professional sample studies of the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale. This may explain why item 12 did not load as intended and had a low item-total correlation.

As indicated in the factor analysis with the student and professional samples, the results supported a 4-factor solution in the student sample and a 3-factor solution in the professional sample (see Table 2, Appendix H; Table 3, Appendix I). There are several explanations for the discrepancy. First, in the student sample, our participants may work in an environment with limited variability in employee age. Therefore, the results from the student sample may reflect a workplace where age is not a large factor. Additionally, the student sample comprised many undergraduate students from various organizations, while the professional sample was taken from only one organization. Thus, the 3-factor solution may be a reflection of the particular workplace. Furthermore, as age salience was one of the factors in the professional sample and the mean age of respondents in the professional sample was significantly older than the student sample, it may be that those in the professional sample are simply more aware of age in the workplace.

There were also two similar factors between the student and professional samples (see Table 2, Appendix H; Table 3, Appendix I). The cohesion factor in the student sample and the generations working together factor in the professional sample comprised a similar set of items. The managerial issues factor in the student sample and managerial support in the professional sample also showed overlap in the items. This may in part be due to the construct of perceived organizational support. According to a meta-analytic study, supervisor support is one of the core categories associated with perceived organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

This distinction that has been made between general perceived organizational support and the more specific component of beneficial treatment—supervisor support—allows for more interpretation of this finding across the two samples (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). According to this theory or organizational support, the supervisor or manager is viewed as an agent of the organization and therefore their direct support, or lack thereof, is perceived as an indicator of the organization's support as a whole. This provides reasoning for why supervisor/managerial support was found as a factor in both the student and professional sample. Since there is a clear difference between the two and age-friendliness as a whole can be viewed as a type of perceived organizational support in a specific context, it would seem clear that supervisor support would be a clear facet of the overall construct.

Qualitatively, there is also a clear distinction between the two factors found in both samples—Collegiality and Managerial Support. Though they may seem at first glance to be very similar, collegiality is not as strongly related to perceived organizational support. Though there is research relating cohesion to commitment (DeCotiis & Summers, 1987), which is also strongly related to perceived organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). However, it is important to note that, based on these results, the two constructs could potentially be evident in particular situations without the other. This indicates that there can be generations working well together without supervisor support and vice versa.

As evidenced in the correlation results between the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale, the three factors of the scale, and the outcome variables, one

can see the similarities between correlations of the scale and the factors with each outcome variable. The correlations between the scale and all three factors with job satisfaction were all significant at the .01 level and all ranged between $r = .41$ and $r = .46$. This pattern is demonstrated throughout the outcome variables with only slight variations in r . Due to this, and the high internal consistency, it is probable that the Age-Friendly Work Environment scale can be shortened to use only one of the factors. Factors 1 (Age Salience) and 2 (Generations Working Together) both yielded high alphas (.91 and .89, respectively), making them excellent candidates for use on their own.

Relationships between Age-Friendly Work Environment and Employee Attitudes

The study hypothesized that age-friendly work environments would be positively related to job and organizational engagement and job satisfaction, but negatively related to job stress and turnover intentions. These hypotheses were mostly supported by the data.

Consistent with the previous research (McCaughey et al., 2013; Velez & Moradi, 2012; Allen, 2001), perceptions of organizational work environments, specifically age-friendliness, were related to important employee attitudes. The implications of this research are widespread as it provides stronger theoretical evidence that employee perception in general is linked to employee attitudes and practical reasoning for the importance of embracing age-friendly work environments and working to create them. Though this research is not causal in nature, the evidence of strong relationships, specifically with job satisfaction,

turnover intentions, and job stress, provides support and reasoning for practitioners to focus on creating more age-friendly work environments as this may impact important employee attitudes.

Job engagement was the only outcome variable that demonstrated non-significant correlations. Though the relationship of job engagement with the scale as a whole was marginally significant, the relationship with Factor 2 (Generations Working Together) was not significant. Intuitively, it makes sense that job engagement would not be as strongly related to the outcome variables as organizational engagement. Job engagement refers directly to the job, specifically the tasks, duties, and activities relating to the job, but not necessarily the organization itself. The age-friendly environment of the workplace would certainly affect the organizational culture, and therefore the organization, but it would not necessarily affect the job's specific duties and tasks. This may explain why job engagement did not relate as significantly as organizational engagement did to the outcome variables. Similar results were found in a study relating job and organizational engagement to perceived organizational support. There, job engagement was still significantly related to perceived organizational support, however the relationship was not as strong as the relationship between organizational engagement and perceived organizational support (Saks, 2006).

Additionally, some of the differences in the correlations, especially in regards to job engagement, may be due to the organization. Since the professional sample only came from one organization it is difficult to discern which results may be generalizable and which are specific only to this organization

Implications

Theoretically, there are various implications of this study. First and foremost, this research provides additional evidence supporting the notion that employee perceptions are strongly related to important work outcomes, such as employee attitudes. This research also demonstrates how important age-related issues are in today's workforce. The strength of the relationships between perceived age-friendly work environments and employee attitudes combined with the statistical data from the EEOC (2013) concerning age-related discrimination claims and U.S. Labor (2012b) statistics regarding the increase in older workers provide compelling evidence that age-related concerns are moving to the forefront of workforce issues. Finally, this research provides evidence for how perceived age-friendly work environments are not just important to those who are protected and can file claims with the EEOC—workers aged 40 and above—but individuals of all ages.

Practically, this research speaks volumes for why organizations should move to a more inclusive environment. These results provide evidence that a perceived age-friendly work environment may strongly affect not just the organization as a whole, but also the individual employees. The strong relationships between perceived age-friendly work environments and employee attitudes provide solid reasoning that perceptions may affect employee attitudes. Though the research was not causal in nature, if organizations want to increase satisfaction and engagement while decreasing stress and turnover intentions, attempting create a more age-friendly work environment through various

initiatives (e.g., policies, programs) may be one way to accomplish this goal. Certainly, the results provide an exciting new direction worth exploring.

Limitations

Limitations for this study concern the quality and size of the professional sample. A larger sample size may produce different or, in the case of job engagement, more significant results. Hinkin (1995) argues for a larger sample size in order to have more confidence in results and to obtain statistical significance. Specifically, a sample size of 150 or larger should be used for the best results. He also acknowledges that exploratory factor analyses are susceptible to sample size effects, meaning that a larger sample size could result in a different factor structure than what was found with the professional sample.

Additionally, the entire professional sample came from only one organization, making the results difficult to generalize. Moreover, the student sample had a four factor structure, while the professional sample had a three factor structure. Therefore, a combined sample across multiple organizations, industries, etc., similar to the student sample, may yield a different factor structure for the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale. The three factor structure may have occurred only with this particular organization. More data may help to further clarify the factor structure of the scale and allow it to be generalized across more instances. Lastly, both the professional and student samples were comprised mostly of females and Caucasians. These demographic characteristics may have influenced the relationships to the employee-related variables as well as the factor

structure. Recruiting a more diverse sample may also help to clarify the factor structure of the scale and its relationship to the outcome variables.

Future Directions

It would be beneficial to recreate the study using multiple professional samples from various organizations in various locations. Having results from multiple separate organizations may help to better understand the construct of an age-friendly work environment and how such an environment relates to important work variables. Additionally, if these results were able to be replicated across different settings (e.g., a more diverse demographic makeup of the sample, location, industries, etc.) there would be stronger evidence for generalization.

The future research should address the relationship between actual organizational practices related to employee age and perceived age-friendly work environments. This would help provide evidence for how accurately employees do or do not perceive their work environments and lend support for why perception is invaluable to understanding employee attitudes. This line of research could also address the effectiveness of practices recommended for managing a multi-generational workforce through the eyes of employees. Specific organizational policies and procedures might be tied closer to the perception of an age-supportive work environment. As demonstrated in the current study, improvement in such employee perceived environments could impact individual employees' satisfaction with their jobs, stress levels, and intentions to quit their jobs.

Further exploration into the scale evaluation process would also be beneficial. As discussed earlier, a replication with a larger sample size would provide better evidence for the factor structure. Additionally, the examination of the construct validity of the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale is needed (Hinkin, 1995). For example, future studies can test the nomological network of the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale with theoretically related constructs such as discrimination climate, work/team cohesion, and perceived organizational support.

In practice, linking the age-friendly work environment and personnel data such as a number of age-related complaints reported would be fruitful. This would allow for a better understanding of how age-friendly work environments relate to organizational and management practices (i.e., policies regarding age). This line of research may also help to identify areas where organizations can act in order to reduce the number of ADEA lawsuits that are filed each year with the EEOC.

Conclusion

This study proposed that age-friendly work environments should be studied due to the predicted relationship to four important employee-related variables: engagement, job satisfaction, job stress, and turnover intentions. An 18-item scale was developed to measure age-friendly work environments and analysis revealed three factors: age salience, collegiality, and managerial support. Overall, the hypotheses that an age-friendly work environment would be positively related to engagement and job satisfaction and negatively related to job

stress and turnover intentions were supported, lending evidence to the importance of this construct. The implications of these findings include the importance of employee perceptions in relation to the four employee attitude variables studied and the importance of age in today's workplace. Moreover, it is important to note that the respondent ages spanned across several generations, indicating that these findings are important not just to those able to file an EEOC lawsuit under the ADEA, but employees of all ages. These findings emphasize the need to further explore age-friendly work environments in order to better understand the construct, understand how to create an age-friendly work environment, and examine what, if any, causal links there are to important outcomes.

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Appendix A

Engagement Scale

Job engagement

I really “throw” myself into my job.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

This job is all consuming; I am totally into it.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my job (R).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

I am highly engaged in this job.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

Organization engagement

Being a member of this organization is very captivating.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this organization.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

I am really not into the “goings-on” in this organization (R).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

Being a member of this organization makes me come “alive.”

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

Being a member of this organization is exhilarating for me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	-------------------------	-------	-------------------

I am highly engaged in this organization.

Strongly
Disagree

Disagree

Neither Agree
nor Disagree

Agree

Strongly
Agree

Appendix B

Overall Job Satisfaction Scale

1. In general, I like working here.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
2. In general, I don't like my job. (R)
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
3. All things considered, I feel pretty good about this job.
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|

Appendix C

Job Stress Scale

1. I have felt fidgety or nervous as a result of my job.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
2. Working here makes it hard to spend enough time with my family.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
3. My job gets to me more than it should.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
4. I spend so much time at work, I can't see the forest for the trees.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
5. There are lots of times when my job drives me right up the wall.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
6. Working here leaves little time for other activities.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
7. Sometimes when I think about my job I get a tight feeling in my chest.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
8. I frequently get the feeling I am married to the company.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
9. I have too much work and too little time to do it in.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
10. I feel guilty when I take time off from my job.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
11. I sometimes dread the telephone ringing at home because the call might be job-related.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
12. I feel like I never have a day off.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
13. Too many people at my level in the company get burned out by job demands.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Appendix D

Appendix E

Table 1.

Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale Theorized Dimensions and Corresponding Items.

Items	Dimension 1: Support Services	Dimension 2: Respect and Inclusion	Dimension 3: Bottom-Up Participation	Dimension 4: Policies
1. All generations of employees at my organization are equally valued.		X		
2. My organization invites opinions and ideas from workers of all ages.			X	
3. Organizational practices and policies are established to benefit all generations of workers.	X			
4. My organization ensures that employees of all ages feel that their contributions are valued.			X	
5. Employees across generations are encouraged to work together at my organization.				X

Table 1 (continued)

Items	Dimension 1: Support Services	Dimension 2: Respect and Inclusion	Dimension 3: Bottom-Up Participation	Dimension 4: Policies
6. Employees in different generations are encouraged to socialize and interact at work.				X
7. There is a generational divide among employees in my organization. (R)	X			
8. A multi-generational workforce is viewed by my organization as a strategic management tool.			X	
9. Organizational practices at my work reflect the age composition of employees.	X			
10. My manager understands the generational similarities and differences among employees.				X
11. My manager is trained to handle the conflicts between different generations of employees.				X

Table 1 (continued)

Items	Dimension 1: Support Services	Dimension 2: Respect and Inclusion	Dimension 3: Bottom-Up Participation	Dimension 4: Policies
12. Employee conflicts are often attributable to generational differences. (R)				X
13. My company has services in place that encourage a multi-generational work force.	X			
14. My company supports all employees equally, regardless of age.		X		
15. I often work with employees of other ages at my company.	X			
16. My company encourages feedback from employees, regardless of age.			X	
17. When it comes to recognition from my company for work, age does not play a role.		X		

Table 1 (continued)

Items	Dimension 1: Support Services	Dimension 2: Respect and Inclusion	Dimension 3: Bottom-Up Participation	Dimension 4: Policies
18. My age does not stop me from giving my supervisor or company my opinions or suggestions.			X	
19. My supervisor treats all employees equally, regardless of age.		X		
20. I feel excluded at work because of my age. (R)		X		

Note: (R) Indicates a reverse-coded item.

Appendix F

Demographic and Work Variables

1. Are you currently employed, either part- or full-time?
Yes No
2. What is your age?
Open response
3. What is your sex?
Female Male
4. How would you describe your race/ethnicity? Please choose the answer that fits you best.
American Indian or Alaska Native Asian or Asian American Black or African American Caucasian Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino
5. My workplace includes people of many different ages.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Agree nor Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
6. I feel that there is a large amount of age diversity in my workplace.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Agree nor Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
7. I interact with people of different ages than myself at work.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Agree nor Disagree Agree Strongly Agree
8. What would you estimate to be the minimum and the maximum age at your workplace?
Minimum: Open response
Maximum: Open response
9. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 18-25?
Open response
10. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 26-35?
Open response

11. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 36-45?
Open response
12. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 46-55?
Open response
13. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 56-65?
Open response
14. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are above 65 years old?
Open response

Appendix G

Informed Consent

I am a Graduate I-O Psychology student at Eastern Kentucky University who is conducting a study in which you will answer survey items about yourself, your opinions, and your experiences. Your participation should take no longer than 30 minutes. Participation is voluntary and you have the right to refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time without giving prior notice and without penalty. Your responses are anonymous. After you complete the session you will be given an explanation of the study. If you wish to participate in this study and all of your questions have been answered, please press "I Agree." If you have questions or concerns you may contact the sponsored programs office at EKU by calling at 859-622-3636 or emailing tiffany.hamblin@eku.edu.

Appendix H

Table 2

Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale from the Student Sample.

Items	Factor 1: Organization Fairness	Factor 2: Cohesion	Factor 3: Managerial Issues	Factor 4: Generational Differences
1. All generations of employees at my organization are equally valued.	.81	-.23	.06	.20
2. My organization invites opinions and ideas from workers of all ages.	.94	-.13	-.08	-.04
3. Organizational practices and policies are established to benefit all generations of workers.	1.07	-.14	-.13	-.19
4. My organization ensures that employees of all ages feel that their contributions are valued.	.95	-.11	.01	-.05
5. Employees across generations are encouraged to work together at my organization.	.35	.49	-.07	-.12

Table 2 (continued)

Items	Factor 1: Organization Fairness	Factor 2: Cohesion	Factor 3: Managerial Issues	Factor 4: Generational Differences
6. Employees in different generations are encouraged to socialize and interact at work.	.29	.57	.01	-.13
7. There is a generational divide among employees in my organization. (R)	.27	.09	-.09	.41
8. A multi-generational workforce is viewed by my organization as a strategic management tool.	.20	.34	.02	-.41
9. Organizational practices at my work reflect the age composition of employees.	.17	.06	.04	-.42
10. My manager understands the generational similarities and differences among employees.	.22	.09	.52	-.07
11. My manager is trained to handle the conflicts between different generations of employees.	-.07	-.11	1.10	.01

Table 2 (continued)

Items	Factor 1: Organization Fairness	Factor 2: Cohesion	Factor 3: Managerial Issues	Factor 4: Generational Differences
12. Employee conflicts are often attributable to generational differences. (R)	.05	-.06	.05	.35
13. My company has services in place that encourage a multi-generational work force.	.32	.16	.25	-.09
14. My company supports all employees equally, regardless of age.	.63	.15	.02	.23
15. I often work with employees of other ages at my company.	-.24	.72	-.04	-.19
16. My company encourages feedback from employees, regardless of age.	.53	.21	.16	-.05
17. When it comes to recognition from my company for work, age does not play a role.	.34	.29	.06	.20

Table 2 (continued)

Items	Factor 1: Organization Fairness	Factor 2: Cohesion	Factor 3: Managerial Issues	Factor 4: Generational Differences
18. My age does not stop me from giving my supervisor or company my opinions or suggestions.	-.13	.63	-.01	.16
19. My supervisor treats all employees equally, regardless of age.	.48	.20	.19	.18
20. I feel excluded at work because of my age. (R)	.05	.49	-.09	.35

Notes: (R) indicates a reverse-coded item.
Unstandardized factor loadings.

Appendix I

Table 3.

Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale from the Professional Sample with Items 9 and 12 Removed.

Items	Factor 1: Age Salience	Factor 2: Generations Working Together/ Collegiality	Factor 3: Managerial Support
1. All generations of employees at my organization are equally valued.	.20	.56	.04
2. My organization invites opinions and ideas from workers of all ages.	.51	.42	-.01
3. Organizational practices and policies are established to benefit all generations of workers.	.25	.59	.13
4. My organization ensures that employees of all ages feel that their contributions are valued.	.36	.61	-.03
5. Employees across generations are encouraged to work together at my organization.	-.07	.63	.30
6. Employees in different generations are encouraged to socialize and interact at work.	-.15	.68	.33
7. There is a generational divide among employees in my organization. (R)	-.16	.82	-.18

Table 3 (continued)

Items	Factor 1: Age Saliency	Factor 2: Generations Working Together/ Collegiality	Factor 3: Managerial Support
8. A multi-generational workforce is viewed by my organization as a strategic management tool.	.71	-.04	.09
10. My manager understands the generational similarities and differences among employees.	-.08	.05	.68
11. My manager is trained to handle the conflicts between different generations of employees.	.15	-.28	.96
13. My company has services in place that encourage a multi-generational work force.	.52	-.11	.24
14. My company supports all employees equally, regardless of age.	.58	.25	.13
15. I often work with employees of other ages at my company.	.39	-.01	.17
16. My company encourages feedback from employees, regardless of age.	.63	.23	.07
17. When it comes to recognition from my company for work, age does not play a role.	.85	.09	-.23

Table 3 (continued)

Items	Factor 1: Age Salience	Factor 2: Generations Working Together/ Collegiality	Factor 3: Managerial Support
18. My age does not stop me from giving my supervisor or company my opinions or suggestions.	.96	-.23	.10
1. My supervisor treats all employees equally, regardless of age.	-.01	.31	.44
2. I feel excluded at work because of my age. (R)	.34	.46	-.23

Notes: (R) indicates a reverse-coded item.
Unstandardized factor loadings.

Appendix J

Table 4

Correlations Between Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale and Factors and Outcome Variables with the Professional Sample.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job Satisfaction	5.59	1.11	.63								
2. Turnover Intentions	2.42	1.11	-.53**	.89							
3. Job Stress	2.32	.67	-.58**	.49**	.93						
4. Age-Friendly Work Environment Scale	3.53	.68	.46**	-.55**	-.38**	.94					
5. Age Salience	3.65	.81	.42**	-.51**	-.35**	.94**	.91				
6. Generations Working Together	3.43	.85	.41**	-.51**	-.35**	.94**	.81**	.89			
7. Managerial Support	3.64	.80	.41**	-.44**	-.32**	.74**	.59**	.61**	.78		
8. Job Engagement	3.83	.75	.29**	-.40**	.03	.19	.24*	.06	.29**	.84	
9. Organizational Engagement	3.23	.89	.53**	-.55**	-.39**	.71**	.68**	.62**	.63**	.39**	.93

Note: Cronbach's Alpha is reported in the diagonal.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Appendix K

Table 5.

<u>Demographics for Student and Professional Samples.</u>		
Variable	Student Sample Mean or Percent	Professional Sample Mean or Percent
Age	24.18	44.41
Gender		
Female	75.4%	84.0%
Male	24.6%	16.0%
Race		
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.6%	1.2%
Asian	2.0%	0.0%
Black or African American	5.1%	3.7%
Caucasian	91.4%	95.1%
Hispanic or Latino	0.8%	0.0%
Demographic Questions		
9. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 18-25?	M = 38.65%	M = 13.82%
10. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 26-35?	M = 21.00%	M = 25.02%
11. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 36-45?	M = 17.72%	M = 27.72%
12. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 46-55?	M = 10.97%	M = 22.47%
13. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are between the ages of 56-65?	M = 6.25%	M = 12.75%
14. What would you estimate to be the percentage of employees at your workplace that are above 65 years old?	M = 2.26%	M = 4.60%