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The affective component of ageism needs attention

Abstract

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to explore responses of older workers and of managers to the call from the authorities to extend working life.

Methodology

Data are from the Norwegian Senior Policy Barometer with interviews with samples of about 750 managers and 1000 workers each year from 2003. There is no panel data.

Findings

Older workers increasingly prefer to extend their working career. The preferred age for exit has increased from 61 years in 2003 to 66 years in 2018. Managers seem less interested in expanding their older workforce. A majority of managers expressed quite positive conceptions of older workers' performance, but less often, they liked to recruit older workers. As an average, managers told that they would hesitate to call in applicants above 58 years of age to job interviews. Age for hesitation is only moderately correlated ($r = .29$) to managers' beliefs about older workers performance at work. Thus, the managers' beliefs about older workers performance, made only a small difference for their willingness to hire older workers.

Implications

The results suggest that counteracting stereotypes, prejudice and age discrimination in working life need a broad approach, including attention to the affective component of ageism. For research, the measurement of the affective component needs consideration and further exploration.

Originality/value

The article brings data from a distinctive Norwegian context, and approach the rarely studied affective component of ageism in working life.

Key words: *Tripartite model of ageism, older workers, late exit, age discrimination, Norway.*

Introduction

This article explores older workers' growing interest in working longer and contrasts this to the low interest of managers in recruiting older workers (Solem, 2018). Why are managers not progressing like older workers do, by wanting to recruit more seniors? Managers hold complex, both positive and negative, views about the older part of the labour force. Older workers are seen as both loyal, dependable and socially skilled, but as less adaptable, and less physically and mentally capable (Bal et al., 2011). Older workers are often seen as less able to learn and as performing poorly in core tasks of the job (Posthuma & Campion, 2009), which are among the most common stereotypes about older workers (Ng & Feldman, 2008). Research on the stereotype content model indicate that older

people in general are conceived as warm and incompetent (Cuddy et al., 2008). This model is primarily tested in older groups, beyond working life age, but is paralleled in studies showing that managers perceive older workers as skilled in social matters, but lagging behind in the core tasks of many types of jobs, both physically demanding jobs, as well as mentally challenging ones (Krings et al., 2011, Van Dalen et al, 2010)). Thus, managers' conceptions of older workers are mixed, and even the more negative views on productivity and core task performance are not reported universally. Some studies find that a majority of managers hold positive conceptions of older workers' productivity or performance at the job (Coleman, 2011; Solem, 2016; Egdell et al., 2018).

The article is organized like this: First, the context for the study, Norwegian senior policy, is described and related to trends in Europe and OECD countries. This work is connected to the author's participation in the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST action IS1402 on ageism). The article gives a short presentation of the tripartite model of ageism, which includes stereotypes (the cognitive component), prejudice (the affective component) and age discrimination (the behavioural component). The results section starts with exploring the increasing preferences for late exit among older workers and compare it to the rather steadfast and low interest among managers to recruiting older workers. Could this be linked to managers' negative conceptions or stereotypes about the performance of older workers? To what extent are managers' conceptions of older workers performance correlated to behavioural dispositions to discriminate against older job candidates? The discussion section explores possible explanations to the findings, condensed to the question: Why are managers reluctant to hire older applicants above the age of 58, even when they consider workers in their 60-ies to perform just as well on the job as younger workers? According to the tripartite model of ageism, implicit negative affect (prejudice) against older applicants, may offer an explanation. The discussion is rounded up with some comments on the prevention of ageism in working life.

Senior and pension policy trends in working life

Governments across Europe and the OECD countries have declared that older workers are needed in working life, to the extent that older workers should postpone their exit from work (Phillipson, 2018; OECD, 2017). To support this, many countries have revised their pension system, introducing carrots (e.g. financial incentives), whips (e.g. raising the eligibility age for old age pension), or both (OECD, 2017). This is a relatively new trend. After the post war economic growth period in the 1950-ies and 60-ies, decline and unemployment became a challenge during the 70-ies and 80-ies (Phillipson, 2018). A reaction in many countries to the unemployment, particularly among young people, was the implementation of early exit policies (Kohli et al., 1991, Phillipson, 2018). Then, towards the end of the 1990-ies, the tendency turned to the opposite, and extending working life became the predominant agenda (OECD, 2006; Wainwright et al., 2018; Phillipson, 2018; Sonnet et al., 2014; Komp, 2017).

Norway is in some ways a special case, as changing governments have followed a pro work policy (activation policy). Even if the social partners in 1989 introduced an early retirement scheme (called AFP), the agenda was to give workers in heavy jobs an option of retiring early with a decent pension. It was not, contrary to many other countries (e.g. Denmark, France, UK), an explicit intention to free

jobs for young unemployed workers. The employment rates among seniors have remained high, and the unemployment rates low, in international comparison (Hofäcker, 2015). From 2011, the AFP in the private sector is largely replaced by the new National Insurance Scheme. In contrast to many other OECD countries that have increased, or are in a process of increasing, the eligibility age for national old age pension (OECD 2017), Norway did in 2011 lower the eligibility age from 67 to 62. The result so far is counter-intuitive, as employment rates have risen among workers in their early 60-ies (Bjørnstad 2019).

The pension reform is one, and probably, up to now, the most powerful measure for increasing employment rates among seniors in Norway. The pension reform was implemented in 2011. Ten years afore of the pension reform, in 2001, the first “Agreement on a more inclusive working life” was signed by the social partners (IA Agreement, 2014). One of the goals was to increase the average age at exit from the labour market. The third measure was implemented by July 1. 2015; the raise of mandatory retirement age from 70 to 72.

Thus, the Norwegian extended working life policy includes three main elements: incentives in the pension system, actions in working life for promoting later exit, and an alleviation of the barrier against late exit in mandatory retirement age. Even if the activation policy has been strong, some stakeholders have been critical and have proposed to free jobs for young unemployed by stimulating early exit. However, this has not been the official policy for any Norwegian government the last decades.

This article explores how Norwegian older workers have reacted to the promotion of late exit, and to what extent employers are ready to incorporate larger number of older workers in their workforce. Reports from a number of other countries, e.g. USA (Abrams et al., 2016), Australia (Richardson et al., 2013), and Sweden (Carlsson & Eriksson, 2017) reveal a low preference for older workers among employers. Possibly, employers are less enthusiastic than older workers are, about a late exit policy.

Ageism

The concept of ageism, coined by Robert Butler (1969), is used in a number of various ways. In many definitions, the tripartite model of attitudes (Allport, 1954; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960) is basic, as in the conceptual elaboration of ageism done by Iversen et al. (2009). Ageism is in this context defined as consisting of stereotypes (the cognitive component), prejudice (the affective component) and discrimination (the behavioural component) against older workers because of their chronological age or because being categorized as older workers. Thus, ageism consists not only of open discrimination. Stereotypes and prejudices may result in discrimination, but may also be stopped from being expressed, e.g. by anti-discrimination legislation. On the other hand, expressed age discrimination most often is fostered by stereotypes, or prejudices, or both. Measures to counteract age discrimination should include both the cognitive and the affective components, in addition to behavior regulating measures such as legislation. Stereotypes are the cognitive conceptions of the target, older workers. It contains beliefs about the performance of older workers, about their motivation for work, sickness absence, wage-productivity gap, etc. The cognitive conceptions are stereotypes to the extent that they are generalized ideas about older workers and resistant to change. Prejudices consist of feelings for the target, like feeling sorry for or being disgusted by, or attracted to the target. Most often, prejudices include an evaluative element of liking or disliking the

target. Feelings for a target is prejudice to the extent that most members of the target group, or a generalized, hypothetical member, elicit the feeling.

Research on ageism in working life is centered on age discrimination, as this is the obvious practical consequence of ageism to be attacked. Scales measuring ageism primarily cover the behavioural (discrimination) component and often the cognitive (stereotypes) component as predictor. In their review of measures of ageism in the labour market in international social studies, Abuladze and Perek-Bialas (2018) refer to only one item covering the affective component. This item is from Eurobarometer 2015 and is about the feeling of comfort when working with one colleague above 60 or below 25. Thus, the affective component is less accessible than the cognitive and the behavioural in survey studies.

Age discrimination occurs in working life. How often age discrimination occurs is more uncertain, as studies show different results (Stypinska & Turek, 2017; Solem, 2016; Eurobarometer, 2015; Vauclair et al., 2016). Age discrimination in working life depends on the individual managers' behaviour, more or less age-friendly contexts at the work place, and of the institutional regulation at the macro level, pension system and mandatory retirement rules. Working life is embedded in the larger context of local communities and nations and even at international and global level. The position of older people in society would colour what happens in working life as well. Thus, age discrimination in working life is part of a much larger picture. In this article however, the focus is on working life, and even more restricted, data are from Norwegian working life.

Ageism may have negative consequences when applying for a job, but also for job satisfaction and retirement intentions among older workers that are gainfully employed (Thorsen et al., 2012; Gaillard & Desmette, 2010; Chiesa et al., 2016; James et al., 2013). Discrimination may take the form of less wage raise for older workers, less access to training and courses, and being left aside for promotions. These are examples of what Stypinska & Turek (2017) call hard discrimination, contrasted to soft discrimination, e.g. negative 'ageist' remarks, jokes, and lack of respect. The soft discrimination are more difficult to oppose against, as opposition to a joke may be regarded as coming from an "old grump" and build up more laughter. Hard discrimination is most often illegal, while soft discrimination is problematic to take to the court. In addition, preference for early exit may be triggered by ageism with no obvious discrimination. The older worker may sense negative sentiments from the supervisor and suboptimal trust in his or her capacities, without any direct discriminatory action from the employer. The tripartite model of ageism may help understanding the dynamics of ageism, as ageist attitudes may produce negative effects without any evident discrimination. Many older workers are sensitive to hints that they are not really welcome or that they are unattractive as workers, as such hints may fall into and reinforce self-stereotypes of ageing that older workers themselves possess. According to the stereotype embodiment theory (Levy, 2009), stereotypes about ageing are, across the life span, assimilated from the surrounding culture, and become embodied as self-stereotypes through different pathways. The self-stereotypes on ageing influence older persons functioning and health, and may trigger age-stereotypical behavior (Levy 2003).

Methodology

Data are from surveys conducted by the market research firm Ipsos for the Centre of Senior Policy, Norway.

- 1) The Norwegian Senior Policy Barometer (NSPB) for managers is collected each year, from 2003 through 2018, by telephone interviews (CATI) with 750 managers in public organisations (150) and private companies with 10 or more employees (600). The sample is representative for private companies with more than 10 employees, and for the public sector. However, the balance between private and public sector in the sample is not fully reflecting the balance in the population. The same sampling procedure is utilized every year, hence comparisons between years and trends over time are unaffected by this imbalance in the sample (Ipsos, 2018a).
- 2) The Norwegian Senior Policy Barometer (NSPB) for employed persons is collected by CATI interviews from 1000 employed persons 15 years and over, each year from 2003 through 2018. Employed persons are defined as having “income generating work on full time or part time». The sample is representative of gainfully employed persons 15 years and above in Norway (Ipsos, 2018b)

In both barometers, new samples are drawn each year, allowing time series analyses, but not the study of changes on individual or company level. Since employed persons and managers are sampled separately, it is impossible to connect employers and managers in the same company.

Questions used in this article.

To employed persons

- If it was all up to you, at what age would you prefer to retire completely from work?

To managers (affective component)

- How well or poorly would you like to recruit the following types of workers? Would you like it very well, fairly well, neither well nor poorly, fairly poorly or very poorly: Seniors / Older workers / Young workers / Experienced workers / Newly graduated workers / Immigrant workers / Disabled

To managers (cognitive component)

- Do you completely agree / partly agree /neither agree nor disagree / partly disagree /or completely disagree with the following statements:
- Workers above 60 perform at least as well at the job as those under 60.

To managers (behavioural component)

- About how old should a qualified applicant for a position be before you will hesitate to call him or her in for an interview, because of age?

The article will in the following present data on changes in preferred exit age among Norwegian workers, and contrast these changes with changes in liking of recruiting older workers and seniors, among Norwegian managers. Then, conceptions of older workers' performance are related to their hesitation to call in older applicants for job interviews.

Results

Preferred age of complete retirement from work

On average, Norwegian workers prefer in 2018 'to retire completely from work' at the age of 66. Fifteen years ago (2003), the average preferred age 'to retire with a pension' was substantially lower, only 61 years (Ipsos, 2018b). In international comparison, Norwegian workers, men and women taken together, prefer later exit than workers do in any other of the 25 countries included in the European Social Survey (Hofäcker, 2015). The increase in preference of late exit has been substantial over the last two decades. This is seen also in the increase from 5 and 7 percent in 2003 to 23 and 33 percent in 2019 who prefer to exit from work at age 70 or later (figure 1). The increase is steady, except for a huge jump from 2010 to 2011 among workers in the private sector, from 11 to 23 percent ($p < .001$). This may be an effect of the pension reform, which was effective from January 2011. The reform contains incentives for later exit, and as yet, particularly so in the private sector. However, because of the reform the wording of the question had to be changed from 'retire with a pension' to 'retire completely from work'. The different patterns in the public and the private sector indicate that it was the reform more than the slightly changed question that caused the huge jump in interest for late exit. There is also a significant jump from 2014 to 2015, however, in both the private and public sector. Thus, the raise of the mandatory retirement age in 2015 in the private sector only, was probably not influencing this increased interest in late exit. Since 2015, the increase has levelled off.

<< Figure 1 about here >>

Late exit policy is justified by demographic changes, including increased life expectancy. Older workers may want to work longer as a reaction to recent late exit policy, but the preference for later exit may also reflect personal expectations for a longer life. However, life expectancy increases have been quite steady all from the records began in 1846, and recently from 79.5 years in 2003 to 82.8 years in 2018 (NIPH, 2018; SSB, 2019), while the preferences for late exit show a less even, and larger, average increase (from 61 to 66 years, Ipsos, 2018b). Nevertheless, increased life expectancy may have shaped preferences for late exit both directly and via late exit policies. The preferences for late exit are in addition shown to be influenced by a variety of factors, in working life, in health and work ability, in pension systems, in family obligations and in leisure preferences (Andersen & Jensen, 2011; Nilsson, 2013). Rather than analyzing possible changes in such factors that might parallel

changes in preferences for late exit, in this article the focus is on attitudes towards older workers among Norwegian managers.

The cognitive component of managers' attitudes towards older workers

Older workers are often seen as performing poorly in core tasks of the job (Posthuma & Campion, 2009). Managers that have such negative conceptions of older workers' performance should be reluctant to recruit older workers. However, when the Norwegian Senior Policy Barometer asks managers about their conceptions of older workers, they are quite positive (Table 1). A clear majority, both of managers in the private and public sector, agree that workers above 60 years perform at least as well as workers below 60.

<< Table 1 in about here >>

The affective component

The employers' liking for recruiting seniors and older workers, as for other types of workers, increased up to around 2007/2008. Thereafter, the trend has been negative (table 2). In 2008, 71 percent would very well or quite well, like to recruit seniors. In 2018, this had dropped to 62 percent ($p < .001$). For older workers there is a drop from 64 percent in 2008 to 53 percent in 2018 ($p < .001$). Thus, seniors and older workers have become less popular to recruit. The fall in popularity was most obvious immediately after 2008, and may have been a reaction to the financial crisis that year. From 2015, the liking for recruiting older workers and seniors has been quite stable. For other types of workers, the trend from 2008 is not a decrease, but a levelling off or slight increase. Thus, compared to the other types of workers included in the question, only older workers and seniors have become less popular to recruit. There is an affective, liking, component in the question, but at the same time, the liking is about recruiting various types of workers. This inclusion of a behavioural component makes the variable unfit, as an affective variable, for correlation with other behavioural variables.

<< Table 2 in about here >>

The behavioural component

The behavioural component of managers' attitudes towards older workers is measured by "About how old should a qualified applicant for a position be before you will hesitate to call him or her in for an interview, because of age?"

In 2018, 16 percent of the managers replied that the worker should be 54 years or younger, 29 percent said 55-59, 41 percent said 60-64, and 23 percent said 65 or older. Thus, there is a considerable variation in the answers (SD 8.1 years). The mode was 60 years (32 percent), and the mean: 58.6 years.

The mean age for hesitation (58.6 years) has been fairly stable (not significantly different) from 2011 on, between 57.4 and 58.6, but slightly lower ($p < .05$) in the years 2008-2010 (56.0 to 57.0). Before 2008, there is no data available on this question. However, the trend from 2008 to the years after 2010 is that managers include slightly older applicants among the potential candidates for jobs. The trend is the same in both the private and the public sector. Over the whole period, managers in the public sector hesitate at about a three years higher age of applicants, and tend to be accepting somewhat older applicants.

There is a parallel trend in the categorisation of who is labeled 'older worker' by the managers. Thus, managers have moved upwards their age limit for calling in applicants for interview by moving the definition of older workers upwards. In other words, managers seem to accept applicants at older ages, by not defining them as older workers. Those still defined as older workers seem not to have become more popular to recruit.

Correlations between the cognitive and the affective components, and the behavioral component.

Beliefs about the work performance of applicants are expected to influence the selection of applicants for interview. The results show only a moderate correlation between, on the one hand, believing that the work performance of workers in their 60-ies is just as good as the performance of younger workers, and on the other hand, the age of applicants that elicit hesitation to hire older workers ($r = .29$, $r^2 = .084$). Thus, there is no strong connection between the belief in older workers' performance and the preference for hiring older workers. The correlation between the affective component, as measured in this study, and behavioral component, is stronger, but as the affective variable contains a behavioral element, it is questionable to correlate it with the behavioral variable. The measurement of the affective component needs further elaboration. However, the cognitive component, as measured here, does not add much to the explanation of the behavioral component. Additional explanations are needed.

Discussion

Managers seem to respond less positively than older workers do, to the call from the authorities to prolong the working life participation of older workers. It is intriguing that managers are reluctant to hire older applicants above the age of 58, even when they consider workers in their 60-ies to perform just as well on the job as younger workers.

Possible explanations are:

First, political correctness may distort the answers. Managers may present a more positive picture of their views of older workers, than their real views, which they probably act upon when recruiting workers. However, ageism seems, more than sexism and racism, to be accepted. For instance, to tell jokes about older people and older workers is more accepted, and more fun, than telling sexist or racist jokes. Thus, the answers about older workers probably are less influenced by political correctness, than answers about women or Africans could have been. However, positive distortions in how managers express their views on older workers may still be part of the picture.

Second, managers may think of older workers as more expensive. Ideas about the costs of hiring older workers compared to younger workers is often called the wage - productivity gap. Many studies indicate that such ideas are exaggerated or wrong as a general tendency (Sonnet et al., 2017; Charni et al., 2017; van Ours & Stoeldraijer, 2011). In general, older workers seem not to have higher pay than younger workers do, and there is no strong evidence for a wage-productivity gap for older workers.

Third, the employers have no financial incentives for hiring older workers, while older workers, in the new Norwegian old age pension scheme, have such incentives. For example, workers may earn up pension benefits by income from work, all up to age 75. However, for a few years (2002-2007) employers received tax reductions for every employee above age 62. The desired effect did not appear and this financial incentive was abolished. To some extent, the present incentive structure may explain the mismatch between the climbing interest in late exit among workers and the wanting response from employers.

Fourth, there are indications that employers' conceptions of older workers differ between older workers that they know, who are employed in the organization, and on the other side older applicants, they do not know as individuals. The conceptions of the older applicants would more probably be shaded by general, negative stereotypes of older workers. The older workers that are working in the organization may be perceived more positively than older workers may in general. This is supported by the finding of Solem (2016) that employers reported to be more positive to retain older workers than young workers, while they were less willing to recruit older workers than young workers.

Thus, when asked about conceptions of older workers, employers may think about the older workers they have, while when asked about recruiting new employees they are more likely to be guided by stereotypes of older workers. In this way, the conceptions of older workers may look more positive than the behaviour towards older applicants is indicating.

A fifth possible explanation is connected to the tripartite model of ageism. This model include an affective component as a possible predictor for ageist behavior. The affective is often implicit and may be rooted in an instinctual desire to distance oneself from mortality, which according to terror

management theory is a motivator for a wide range of behavior (Greenberg et al. , 2002, Maxfield & Bevan, 2019). The terror management theory may explain the roots and motives of ageism (Lev et al., 2018, Martens et al., 2005).

Prevention of ageism in working life

A successful counteraction of age discrimination has to take the components of ageism into account. Discrimination may be obstructed by *direct action* towards discriminatory behavior, or indirectly by neutralizing the stereotypes and prejudices behind the discriminatory behavior. One recommended intervention is to make arrangements to increase contact, both by enlarging the numbers of older workers, and by strategies for enhancing interaction between the age groups at the work place, e.g. by age diverse teams. Increased interaction is fitting the classical contact theory of Gordon Allport (1954) for improving ethnic relations. Increased interaction has been studied also with integration of older workers, with varying conclusions (Wood et al., 2008, Bal et al., 2011, Iweins et al., 2013). The success seems to depend on the basic age friendliness of the work place integrating a high proportion of older workers. There is a danger that an increased proportion of older workers in a less age-friendly atmosphere may amplify stereotyping, prejudices and discrimination.

Direct action by legislation against age discrimination is expected to show some effects, both directly by banning certain behavior, but also by sending a signal about respect and proper conduct towards the groups discriminated against (Harcourt et al., 2010; Cox & Barron, 2012). Norway has had legislation against age discrimination in working life since 2004, with the exception of mandatory retirement, which is a legal form of age discrimination. The Norwegian Senior Policy Barometer does not reflect encouraging changes since 2004, but to the contrary, a tendency to an increase in subjective experience of being discriminated against in working life because being too old, is seen the last couple of years (Ipsos, 2018b).

Stereotypes may be counteracted by information campaigns, giving information in order to correct misconceptions. Judging from the Norwegian Senior Policy Barometer, information campaigns targeting older workers would probably not have strong effects as a separate measure. The employers are expressing rather positive conceptions of older workers, and the positive views tend to be insufficient to predict willingness to hire older workers.

Prejudices may have deep roots in the culture, and in a human aversion against ageing and death. A recommendation may be drawn from this; in a broad approach against ageism, the affective component has not to be forgotten, but taken very seriously. As the affective may be implicit, there are some particular challenges in dealing with affective ageism. It may be best accessible via indirect channels, e.g. by reflections in groups between managers, line leaders, supervisors, union representatives, and workers. Such reflections may deal with possible automatic reaction towards older workers and affective preferences for younger age groups. According to terror management theory (TMT), implicit ageism may function as a strategy to cope with old age and finitude (Greenberg et al., 2002). By keeping a physical and emotional distance to the reminders of finitude, i.e. older workers, the managers, supervisors and colleagues may be protected from unpleasant thoughts about own finitude. In line with TMT, it is shown that induced mental presence of death (mortality salience) among younger persons may result in more stereotypical conceptions of older people, and inability to distinguish between people in their 60-ies and people in their 90-ies

(Boudjemadi & Gana, 2012). Openness about the negative and positive aspects of ageing, and openness about finitude and death, may produce more openness towards older workers as well. However, in an age hostile or a death denying atmosphere, reminders of finitude may reinforce affective ageism and age discrimination. Openness about ageing is obviously not easy, and not the least since preferences for youth and aversion against age is deeply rooted in the culture and in individuals of all ages, including older persons themselves (Levy, 2009).

The results presented in this article indicate that there is a growing mismatch between older workers' motivation for late exit and employers' interest in workers' late exit. Older workers preference for late exit is increasing, while the tendencies for employers are rather stable (age for hesitating to call in applicants) or in the opposite direction, as managers are becoming less interested in hiring older workers and seniors. One of the backgrounds for employers' decreasing interest may be ageism, but not necessarily an increasing open age discrimination. Implicit ageism may be as destructive as open discrimination. The results suggest that counteracting ageism need a broad approach, including attention to the affective element of ageism. Actions to fight ageism in working life will hopefully result in more age-friendly behavior from managers, alleviate the mismatch and improve the options for continued working as long as the individual older worker prefers and is able to perform sufficiently well.

This study has some limitations. Data are from a Norwegian context, with pension systems and employment rates in older groups that differs from many other countries. Cautions about wide generalizations are required. For further research, elaboration on measures of the affective component of ageism is necessary. Such measures must keep clear of references to behavior and more directly examine personal likes and dislikes, in other words, affective reactions to older workers and young workers as teammates or subordinates.

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Figure 1. Workers selecting 70 years or later as their preferred age for exit from work. NSPB 2003-2018. Private and public sector. Percent (N varying from 1000 to 1006 each year)

Table 1. Do you agree or disagree that “Workers above 60 years of age are performing at least as well at work as workers below 60”? Percentage (N). Private and public sector managers. NSPB 2018.
Percentage (N)

	Private sector	Public sector	Total
Completely agree	56	62	57
Partly agree	26	25	26
Neither agree nor disagree	7	7	7
Partly disagree	7	4	6
Completely disagree	3	1	2
Don't know	2	2	2
Sum	100 (602)	100 (150)	100 (752)

$\chi^2 = 4,984, 5 \text{ d.f.}, p = .418$

Table 2. Employers liking very well or quite well to recruit different types of workers. Difference 2003-2008 and 2008-2017. Percent (N)

Category of workers	2003 (752)	2008 (750)	Difference 2003-2008	2018 (753)	Difference 2008-2018
Experienced workers	92	96	+4**	95	- 1
Young workers	68	79	+11***	84	+ 5*
Recently educated	59	74	+15***	79	+ 5*
Seniors	57	71	+14***	62	- 9***
Older workers	48	64	+16***	53	- 11***
Immigrant workers	-	62	-	65	+ 3
Disabled workers	-	40	-	42	+ 2

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001