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EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF AGING ON JOB PERFORMANCE & WORK PRODUCTIVITY AMONGST HEALTHCARE WORKERS

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***Abstract*:** Almost all organizations globally today operate with workers of diverse ages, with older workers constituting a significant proportion of the workforce. The implications of the latter demographic trends, which have accompanied the realities of increased life expectancy, the shift to the global knowledge economy, and the mounting skills shortages experienced by many countries, have become a source of growing concern. It also applies to the productivity of organizations. The issue that this study aims to assess is the impact of employee aging on job performance and productivity in a specific industry. For this purpose, a cross-sectional research design was employed and data was collected from 50 respondents of diverse ages. Each of the respondents was expected to complete the provided questionnaires on the standard measures of job productivity and performance. In turn, some hypothesized statistics such as ANOVA, in other words, were used to establish the framework around which the hypotheses would be proved. The conclusion demonstrates that there are no significant variations in the performance and productivity across different cohorts of ages. In other words, growing older does not adversely affect workers in the healthcare industry. Other factors such as job design, training, and experience may be important for achieving performance and productivity outcomes. This study significantly adds to the existing literature on the aging workforce and provides practical insights on how to manage age diversity while promoting productivity in the workplace.

Keywords: Aging workforce, Job performance, Work productivity, Healthcare employees, Organizational effectiveness

1. Introduction

The continuing demographic transitions inevitably influences the global population structure. The report 'Global-aged projection 2020' by World Health Organization indicates that the population of elderly people is expected to reach 2 billion by the year 2050, (World Health Organization, 2020). This is important for businesses as the population dynamics directly impacts the age profile of the workforce.

The shift in the structure of the workforce to an age diverse workforce requires understanding pros and cons of having older workers and reasons why employees age 45 and older perform the best. To have the best of older employees, the organization

must be prepared to be productive, age neutral, and supportive of the employees for the ages of the employees. The organization must comprehend all aspects of this age group.

The aged effect of employees on their working performance and its effect have been mixed and poorly understood in the literature. As proposed in some studies, old age is associated with diminished cognitive and physical capacity, which impacts performance on the job, (Salthouse, 2012). Other studies, on the other hand, emphasize the value contributing of older workers who have aged in the organization due to the experience, wisdom, and loyalty gained, thus enhancing performance on the job (Ng & Feldman, 2012). As proposed by other studies, aging is associated with declines in job productivity and performance with older workers suffering the most in cognitive and physical capacity (Salthouse, 2020). Nonetheless, other studies emphasize the enhanced productivity and performance on the job due to the experience, wisdom, and loyalty the older workers bring to the organization (Ng & Feldman 2022).

Because the aforementioned efforts remain most uninformative regarding the links between an employee's age, productivity, and overall work performance, the matter remains troubling, particularly since the the age of the workforce has been increasing and this has productivity and organizational competitive capacity ramifications.

This research aims to clarify the employee's age and the corresponding productivity and work performance, while simultaneously capturing the intricacy of the age and individual differences and organizational constituents relationship. The purpose of this examination is to aid organizations in devising strategies to improve the workforce composition, particularly for the older employees, in order to enhance workforce participation.

The consideration of productivity and age in correlation to work performance has been one of the most sought after topics by researchers and practitioners alike. This literature review focuses on the recent efforts made in understanding the relation between age and performance, explains age-related theories, and critiques the work done in this direction.

2. Theoretical Frameworks

In explaining the relationship between age and work performance, several theorhetical frameworks have been used.

1. The Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST) posits that more seasoned workers focus moreing on their emotional needs and social interactions more than professional growth, and this may affect their productivity (Carstensen, 1999) because older employees feel that their working years are limited and are more likely to engage in activities that bring fulfillment (Carstenson, 2006). In this theory, there are two types of goals; knowledge acquisition goals, and emotion regulation goals. Older employees are likely to positively enhance emotion regulation compared to younger employees, and this (Charles et al 2001) boosts the chances of experiencing more positive social interactions. Such growth in social connections reduces social conflict and enhances joy (Fung et al 2008).
2. The SOC (Selection, Optimization, and Compensation) Theory states that older employees have more than one approach that they use in an attempt to offset age-related declines in abilities (Baltes & Baltes, 1990). For example, older employees who may not have the ability to pursue new career, may center their attention on family and work relationships rather than on new difficult endeavors. They may adopt the use of computer workstations to optimize performance, or use work replacement strategies to recover lost work.

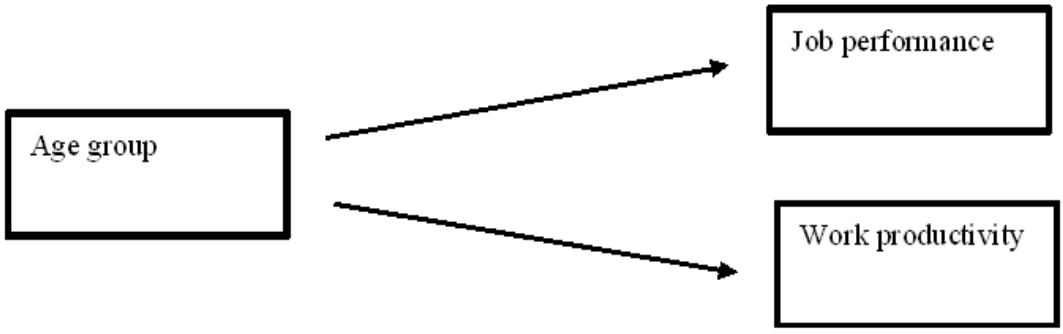

Figure 1. Conceptual model: Age relating to job performance and work productivity

3. Current Knowledge

Cognitive Declines: Based on available literature, aging is associated with a decline in cognitive domains such as memory, attention, and speed of processing (Salthouse, 2012).

Physical Health: Around occupational settings, physical health deterioration with advanced age has been shown to pose a particular problem for completing tasks that are physically intensive in nature (Ng & Feldman, 2012) .

The literature review conducted reveals that age and productivity has a complex interrelation. While older age groups suffer loss to their cognitive and/or physical abilities in the workplace, a large volume of literature suggests that older workers, in general, demonstrate greater levels of job-related well-being (that is, job satisfaction and organizational commitment) in comparison to younger workers. More attention must be directed to the methodical problems, the need for more deliberate sampling and the need to collate longitudinal datasets regarding age and work performance.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

A cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data from a sample of employees.

4.2 Sample

A total of 50 employees from various organizations across different healthcare workers participated in the study. The sample was stratified by age to ensure representation from different age groups.

4.3 Data Collection

A standardized questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of 2 sections:

1. Demographic Information: Age, education, experience, job.
2. Job Performance: Measures of task performance.
3. Productivity: measure of Work productivity

Consent was taken from the participants before distributing the survey.

4. **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Specifically:

1. Descriptive Statistics: Means, standard deviations, and frequencies were used to summarize the data.
2. Inferential Statistics: ANOVA were used to examine the impact of age on job performance and work productivity.

The hypothesis drawn from the literature review are:

H1 null: There is no variation among age groups and job performance of employees

H2 null: There is no variation among age groups and work productivity of employees

5.1 Measures

1. Job Performance: A 10-item scale adapted from the Job Performance Scale (JPS) (Williams & Anderson, 1991),

Job Performance Scale (JPS)

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

2. Productivity A 10-item scale adapted from work productivity scale (Reilly, M. C., et al. 2013).

The Work Productivity Scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Demographic:

Age

Variable	**Frequency**	Percent	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
26-30 years	10	20.0	20.0	20.0
31-35 years	10	20.0	20.0	20.0
36-40 years	10	20.0	20.0	20.0
41-45 years	10	20.0	20.0	20.0
>45 years	10	20.0	20.0	20.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	100.0

Control Variable:

Demographics	**Job Performance**	
	f statistics	**p value**
Age	.553	.702ns

ANOVA

JP

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.302	4	.325	.553	.702
Within Groups	5.887	10	.589		
Total	7.189	14			

ANOVA

wp

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	67.767	4	16.942	.392	.810
Within Groups	431.833	10	43.183		
Total	499.600	14			

Discussion

The present research analyzed consequences of employee aging on the job performance along with work productivity of the members of the healthcare. Despite certain earlier research arguing older employees face psychological and physiological decline (Salthouse, 2012), the results show that employee performance and productivity does not vary with age. This indicates that age, by itself, does not appear to be a decisive element of employee productivity in the healthcare sector.

These findings corroborate the literature concerning the intangible benefits of older employees experience, knowledge and commitment, all of which enhance productivity (Ng & Feldman, 2012). It appears these balancing factors lend credence to the age and work performance productivity paradox identified by the Selection, Optimization, and Compensation (SOC) framework, which asserts older workers employ certain crafts techniques to mitigate the decline in physical and/or mental work capacities (Baltes & Baltes, 1990). Furthermore, Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST) claims older workers focus on tasks that hold emotional significance and relationships which may increase engagement and satisfaction and thus, indirectly improve job performance (Carstensen et al., 1999).

The absence of significant disparities among age cohorts may also suggest that organizational factors such as job design, training, and on-the-job assistance have a greater impact on productivity than age. This supports the case in healthcare organizations where employee productivity means efficiency and quality of service. Organizations that bolster these supports and integrate older, seasoned employees, are positioned to provide high organizational performance along with a multigenerational workforce.

These outcomes contribute to the \{@AgingParadox@ null\} narrative by suggesting that the notion of age as an atrophying factor in one's ability to do the job becomes more tenable with ageist reasoning. I suspect the next step could explore the reciprocal interaction of age with the lack of organizational support, new technology adoption, and health maintenance strategies. Furthermore, age-related performance could be studied through a series of investigations to yield an understanding of how sustained performance with various age groups shifts over time.

6. Conclusion

The null hypothesis cannot be rejected since the p-value attached to job performance (0.702) and the p-value associated with work productivity (0.810) completely violate the standard threshold of 0.05.
The difference between the means of the two groups is not of statistical significance. There is more variance within groups than between groups, suggesting that the independent variable (aging) has no substantial influence on the dependent variable (work performance and productivity).

Practical Implication:

The findings indicate that aging is unlikely to be a critical factor in establishing an individual's performance at work. Being more important complementary factors to work performance.

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