



4

Silenced Inequalities: Too Young or Too Old?

Ning Wu

4.1 Introduction

Age discrimination is interpreted differently between countries, especially when it comes to which age group or groups are more likely to be disadvantaged and need protection than the other. Ageism, conceptualised as a third great ‘ism’ alongside racism and sexism (Palmore 1990) in the US, is defined as ‘a process of systematic stereotyping and discrimination against people because they are old’ (Butler 1995, pp. 38–39). Contrasting to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act 1967 in the US, where only older people (over 40) are protected, EU member countries passed and adopted the Employment Equality Framework Directive in 2000 to ensure all ages are protected from unfair treatment on the grounds of their age (Council Directive 2000/78/EC). In Britain, the Equality Act 2010 includes provisions that ban age discrimination against

N. Wu (✉)
Brunel University London, London, UK
e-mail: ning.wu@brunel.ac.uk

adults in the provision of services and public functions, because they are either 'younger' or 'older' than a relevant and comparable employee. The ban came into force on 1 October 2012, and it is now unlawful to discriminate any individual on the basis of age unless there is an objective justification for the differential treatment or the practice is covered by an exception from the ban. This Act concerns all age groups: any prejudice or discrimination against or in favour of any specific age group is prohibited (Acas 2014; Palmore 1999). In practice, nonetheless, two groups appear to be more likely discriminated against than the other: those who are deemed 'younger' or 'older' than the middle-aged (Acas 2017; Sargeant 2006).

While prominent attention has been paid to older people due to ageing society in America (McEvoy and Cascio 1989) and the 'live longer and work longer' position in Europe (OECD 2006), limited research has turned the spotlight to younger workers in the past two decades. Reasons include older workers are more likely to suffer from ageism, and the consequences of such discrimination would appear to be more severe than for younger workers. Such imbalance in ageism literature can also be explained by the more negative attitudes towards old than young workers widely held by a society (Kite et al. 2005), since youth is a temporary status (Garstka et al. 2004; Iversen et al. 2009). However, there is evidence suggesting age discrimination experienced by younger workers is different from that experienced by older workers (Sargeant 2006). It may be the case that younger workers suffer more profoundly by particular aspects of employment, while older workers endure greater prejudice and unequal treatment on other aspects. Research reports that certain employment opportunities consider this specific age group too young and lacking required experience and skills (Butler 2005, 2009; North and Fiske 2012), whereas other job opportunities steer away from older workers, who are perceived as lacking motivation, resistant to change and inflexible (Arrowsmith and McGoldrick 1997). Hence, age discrimination can be negative for one age group (young workers) but positive for a competing age group (the aged group) and vice versa. Additionally, strategic human resource management (HRM) has noted that age discrimination is evident throughout various processes in HRM. Employee perceived age discrimination, for example, is documented in recruitment

and selection, career advancement or promotion, opportunities for training, performance assessment and exit management (Acas 2014; Snape and Redman 2003). Researching age discrimination would appear to benefit from studying different age groups, which can provide insights for management within an organisational context to identify areas where workers are likely to suffer from unequal treatment and offer protection to workers at all ages. This has become especially important for socially responsible and high-performance organisations where a talent pool featuring diversity is pivotal for success.

Despite a steady increase in the number of ageism studies (especially those concerning older workers) in the past two decades, the definition of 'young' and 'old' workers is inconsistent among extant literature. Researchers often opt to follow the age norms held by the population within the researched countries or regions. Age norms represent commonly held beliefs regarding the standard or appropriate age that a person holds a particular job or occupation (Lawrence 1987, 1988). In practice, age norms depend on cultural, institutional and political factors. For instance, most industrialised countries define young people according to statutory minimum school-leaving age: for example, 18–24 years of age refers to 'young' in Britain, whereas many developing countries do not have a minimum school-leaving age (O'Higgins 2001). Despite such inconsistency in categorising young people between countries, United Nations defines 'youth' as those aged from 15 to 24 years inclusive (United Nations 1992), and an increasing number of researchers have started to adopt such a definition. In contrast to the generally convergent view of the high end of age band defining young people, the definition of old (or older) people varies significantly between countries as well as research. As discussed above, for example, the anti-age discrimination regulation that was brought into force in America in 1960s still maintains employees over forties as its older category and thereby outlaws any discrimination or unequal treatment towards this particular group of employees only. Contrastingly, to reflect the changing human life cycle where people are living longer and tend to work longer, for example, OECD (the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) official reports recently categorise the population into three age groups: 15–24 as young age, 25–54 as prime age, and 55–64 as old age (OECD

2017). In Britain, some studies differentiate between four age groups: young (16–24), middle age (25–49), old (50–state pension age) and senior (over state pension age) (Sargeant 2006). As the state pension age is gradually changing for both men and women, there appears a trend to synchronise the categorisation of age bands with a gradually extended life cycle of people to ensure disadvantaged age groups will be protected from unequal treatment in workplaces.

Among extant literature, several theories emerge as a useful means to understand reasons behind unequal treatment experienced by workers on the grounds of their age. Human capital theory explains that age discrimination can be hidden in recruitment, training and exit scheme when perceived gains vary between age groups (Arrowsmith and McGoldrick 1997; Urwin 2006). For instance, older workers are perceived to possess a fast depreciating stock of human capital in front of fast-changing new technology and are frequently stereotyped as incapable of, or unwilling to, adapting to such new challenges. Related career development theory stresses work motivation and resultant performance against various age-related stages in the human life cycle (Super 1990): individuals moving on to establishment via skill building and stabilisation through work experience in their mid-twenties, maintaining in the mid-forties by continually adjusting and improving position, and eventually reaching decline with reduced output in the mid-sixties. Perceived as being either too young or too old, individuals are stereotyped and managed according to the age group they belong to through recruitment, training, performance assessment, promotion and exit. When such perception and stereotyping become internalised by the general mass belonging to that specific age groups, it starts to erode self-confidence and dampen the desire to pursue future employment opportunities (Gutek et al. 1996; Loretto and White 2006). Finally, labour market segmentation theory argues that there are two types of labour markets: the primary labour market targets developing and retaining firm-specific skills and establishing loyalty and focusing on younger people with a viewpoint for long-term employment relationship and succession; the secondary market comprises atypical forms of employment with marginal jobs requiring lower skills and a view of short-term employment contract (Arrowsmith and McGoldrick 1997). The flexibility presented by the latter has been argued to create mutual gains—older workers

work shorter periods with flexible hours while employers benefit from numerical flexibility (McGregor and Gray 2003). When purposefully designed jobs start to target specific age groups in labour markets by emphasising person-job fit and at the same time stripping job security and fringe benefits, age discrimination becomes subtle and operates in silence.

Overall, research to date submits that age stereotypes are very common and likely lead to discriminatory HRM practice. While employers claim commitment to equal opportunities, they may stress that age-related disparities in recruitment and selection are due to younger candidates lacking extensive experience (Arrowsmith and McGoldrick 1997), or older workers being overqualified (Shen and Kleiner 2001). The practice of anti-age discrimination is likely to be bottlenecked especially in circumstances where multiple differentiators are intertwined and thus silence potential unfair treatment stemming from age discrimination. Given the hidden nature of age discrimination (Wood et al. 2009), legislation only presents a partial effect. This chapter therefore seeks to investigate the silenced nature of age discrimination from four perspectives: age-related employability, age-related pay differentials, age-related job quality and age-related gender inequalities.

4.2 Age-Related Employability

Both young and old workers experience age discrimination in recruitment and selection, although there are good reasons to believe employers are more likely to engage young workers than older workers. For instance, departing from human capital theory, older workers' higher pay makes them less attractive to employers, especially when younger workers are no less productive (Wood et al. 2009). On the one hand, older workers may well be overpriced; thus, hiring from the open labour market makes business sense if those workers are cheaper and flexible, rather than paying more for seniority. On the other, older workers are discouraged from following job leads in that they are 'over-qualified' or 'over-experienced' (Shen and Kleiner 2001), and they are likely to be placed in redundancy situations (Johnson and Neumark 1997; Walker 2005). However, the extent to which advantaging younger over older workers would occur

begs further questioning. In fact, young people cannot realistically compete for jobs with skilled and experienced workers. Job descriptions for certain vacancies may require ‘young’ qualities such as adaptability, while other jobs may require more ‘senior’ qualities such as responsibility or reliability. While it is indeed the case that young workers are perceived to possess higher adaptability in relation to new technology than older workers, the apparent lack of experience or skills also renders ease of being dismissed and substituted (Abrams et al. 2011). Recent research also reports a number of undesirable or negative stereotypes associated with younger workers compared to older workers—for instance, stereotypes of younger workers as less conscientious, less reliable, less trustworthy and less motivated (Bertolino et al. 2011; North and Fiske 2012; Truxillo et al. 2012). A recent study drawing upon European Social Survey Round 4 Data 2008 reports that younger people (self) reported experiencing the highest levels of age discrimination (Bratt et al. 2018). However, the study also cautions the extent to which subjective experiences of age discrimination can reflect actual differences in age discrimination. A key issue in assessing the degree of inequality faced by youth in labour markets relates to their risk of experiencing unemployment compared to adults. Across countries, the risk varies enormously: the youth unemployment rate is largely twice the adult unemployment rate in developed economies, but higher in developing regions, for example, the youth unemployment rate is more than five times the adult’s in South East Asia and Pacific region (Reinecke and Grimshaw 2015).

The unfavourable position of young workers could be because young people experience a period of ‘emerging adulthood’ in which they are not fully developed as adults and therefore lack the personal capacities needed for stable employment, which only develop in later life (Arnett 2000, 2004; Yates 2017). However, this type of essentialist explanation of the conditions of young people fails to adequately conceptualise young people as workers and situate them within the capital-labour relationship. Stemming from insecurity associated with precarious employment, young people may well be ‘comfortable with uncertainty’ (Roberts 2009, p. 262). These claims are challenged by studies suggesting that young people’s engagement in non-standard, insecure work is more out of necessity than choice and that young people would work a greater number of regular hours if offered the opportunity to do so (Furlong and Kelly 2005; TUC 2014).

The contrasting approach to understanding age discrimination in employment towards specific age group compared to another suggests that some of the negative perceptions towards young workers (experience and/or skill gap) may well work positively for older workers (experienced and skilled), especially when the nature of the job requires a 'senior' element. A case study of targeted recruitment of mature staff for part-time work at NHS hospital in Britain reveals an employer's predilection of advantaging the aged (those in their forties, as stated in the research) over the younger. The case study reveals a list of positive stereotypes or perceptions of older workers held by the human resource (HR) department: reliable but less mobile; low absence rate due to fewer responsibilities for childcare; greater intrinsic value placed on dealing with customers and colleagues, and most importantly, older workers create less trouble at workplaces (Arrowsmith and McGoldrick 1997). These findings certainly explain why there are a growing number of social theorists advocating that organisational policies need to explore new ways of capitalising older workers' talent and experience rather than viewing them as a burden (Streb et al. 2008; Tikkanen 2011). It is also argued that higher costs associated with experience are likely to be offset by better performance (Cappelli and Novelli 2010). This is backed up by evidence that older workers mean qualities (e.g. higher loyalty, fewer accidents, lower absenteeism), which makes them relatively less costly compared to younger workers. Consequently, employers attach certain 'senior' elements (experience requirements) to the jobs, as well as a part-time nature associated with the new hires; the latter deliberately deters younger candidates from applying and/or likely disadvantages young people throughout the recruitment and selection process. The permeation of bias towards different age groups is subtly built into job design with a strong business case deliberation. This is widely accepted, and no one speaks about the inequalities which ensue since it is well 'engineered' into organisational management and thus successfully 'hidden' in workplaces.

Although numerous studies report that negative attitudes towards older workers (for review see, e.g., Posthuma and Campion 2009) hinder the employment of older candidates, the negative impact of employing older workers can be moderated by the positive attitudes towards older workers from managers and employers. In circumstances that employers

had more favourable attitudes towards older workers (i.e. high competence), an older applicant was more likely to be shortlisted for a job interview (Krings et al. 2011). It is also worth noting that such positive perceptions towards older workers are largely documented in research focusing on customer service-driven industries (Arrowsmith and McGoldrick 1997; Chiu et al. 2001). Despite favourable justification for recruiting experienced mature candidates, a number of concerns regarding older employees' physical ability, the pressure/speed of work, training and new technology were also noted (p. 270). Overall, a recent review study concludes that the long-held negative perceptions and stereotypes of older workers by employers appear to outweigh countable positive perceptions (Harris et al. 2018).

Beyond the culture-free literature of age discrimination in employment predominately conducted in industrialised countries, research investigating multinational corporations seems to suggest that age norms reflecting specific characteristics and values attached to specific age group vary from country to country. Conventional wisdom stereotyped in Western studies indicates that there is less prejudice or discrimination towards older people in Chinese societies owing to their Confucian belief systems (Chou and Chow 2005). Against this, a comparative study between Hong Kong and the US unfolds greater negative perceptions towards the aged than towards the younger workers (Chiu et al. 2001). Recent research in Thailand's multinational corporates also notes that the influence of age seniority in management roles appears relatively diminishing as a result of 'intracorporate pressures for convergence' (Andrews et al. 2018). Whilst further study is needed to establish the impact (if any) of national culture upon age norms, existing research evidence undoubtedly point to the importance of researching age discrimination in context in order to appreciate the manifestation of age discrimination within specific national culture and develop effective anti-age discrimination measures across countries.

4.3 Age-Related Pay Differentials

Age-related pay literature commonly draws upon human capital theory, suggesting that pay reflects individual performance, in particular productivity. The perception of lacking experience and necessary skills and

knowledge appears to justify why younger workers tend to be paid less compared to their older peers (Anderson and Smith 2010). Among the limited research that investigates lower pay among younger workers compared to older ones, minimum wages for younger workers are frequently at the centre of debate on hidden inequality related to age. Minimum wages are adopted as a tool to prevent abusive and discriminatory pay practices and improve the purchasing power of young workers (Grimshaw 2014). However, the minimum wage gap between young and adult workers, also termed as youth wage discount (Blanchflower and Freeman 1999), has been steadily increasing despite increased average level of education of young people and a decline in their share of the working age population which should have been favourable for their pay prospects. The widening of this gap has resulted in a reduced purchasing power of young workers compared to adult workers.

The youth wage discount varies across countries and the variation is enormous. A recent research of data collected from OECD countries suggests that young workers (aged 15–24) earned on average around 62 per cent the wages of older workers. Young workers in the USA are reported to face the highest wage discount by earning just 55 per cent of the wage of older workers. In the UK, the wage gap between young and all-age workers is 60 per cent, whereas the ratio in Norway suggests the lowest discount: young workers earn 73 per cent of the wage of older workers (Grimshaw 2014). Evidence also points to downward trends of young workers' earnings among many countries. For example, the ratio of young workers' pay (aged 16–24) against the average of all workers' pay dropped from 61 per cent to 58 per cent during 2006–2011 in the US, and from 70 per cent to 66 per cent in Australia among workers aged 20–24. The size of the youth wage discount is also mirrored by the dominance of young people in areas of employment that are associated with low-wage jobs. Young workers are more than four times as likely to be in low-wage (referring to earnings less than two-thirds of the median for all workers) employment as the overall average for a country. Further evidence even suggests young workers earn less than their marginal product and old workers more (Kotlikoff and Gokhale 1992; Anderson and Smith 2010). This finding does not only contrast the perception that age is negatively associated with productivity (Mahlberg et al. 2009), but also contradicts

the principle held by labour economists that wages reflect individuals' productivity as justified by human capital theorists.

A possible explanation posits that there may well be an industry effect that needs to account for when interpreting why young workers are likely to be disadvantaged in pay when compared with other age groups. For instance, compared to middle-aged and older workers, a study shows that young employees in construction sector were underpaid but not in the service industry. This could be due to certain industries where the emphasis is more on experience than others, whilst age arguably often approximately mirrors experience. Using theory of deferred compensation (Lazear 1979; Medoff and Abraham 1980), labour economists also argue that workers and firms want to be engaged in long-term relationships whereby rising earnings do not necessarily fully reflect increased productivity. Human capital theory starts to lose its battle in reinstalling the principle of equality in relation to pay for performance; instead, it appears to be overridden by the perception of age reflecting experience. Empirical evidence confirms such 'hidden' discrimination embedded in age-related pay: workers with a shorter period of experience (8–15 years) are lower paid relative to their productivity, whereas highly experienced workers (more than 15 years) receive a wage premium that exceeds their relative productivity (Hægeland and Klette 1999).

A frequent accusation against older workers suggests that profound deterioration in mental ability, flexibility and physical activity is likely to happen when compared with their younger peers (Riach and Rich 2010). Part-time and precarious jobs with inferior pay, often providing no arrangement on fringe benefits, are ideal solutions for older workers. A big challenge to age, pay and productivity literature comes from an increasing number of research findings suggesting that there is no significant difference between the job performance of older workers and that of younger workers (Warr 1994, p. 309). Recent studies drawing upon longitudinal data show that older workers do not necessarily affect firm productivity (Göbel and Zwick 2009; Mahlberg et al. 2009, 2013), and wages often increase with age/seniority independently of productivity (Börsch-Supan and Weiss 2016). Hence, the pay-for-performance principle that often used to justify age-related pay differentials in a workplace begs further questions.

Further evidence continuously challenges the positive relationship between age and wage, or perceived overpayment of older workers. The average contribution of particular age groups to the productivity of firms indeed increases with age until 40–45 years of age but remains constant thereafter (Aubert and Crépon 2006). Similarly, a longitudinal study over a 22-year period in Portugal (mainly manufacturing and the private service sector) indicates that productivity increases until the age range of 50–54, whereas wages peak around the age range of 40–44 (Cardoso et al. 2011). This instead suggests wages increase in line with productivity gains at a younger age but wage increases start to lag behind performance gains when approaching prime age. Empirical evidence also suggests that the ageing effect on wages decreases as workers age (Lazear 1976), while years of work experience matter more after a certain age (25 years old in the study). As a result, on average, older workers may well contribute more to firm performance than their contribution to the wage bill.

4.4 Age-Related Job Quality

Against the stereotype of being dynamic, highly adaptable and able to respond fast to new technologies, there is instead some evidence pointing to ‘an enduring, pervasive and deep set cultural prejudice against perceived “youth” in managerial positions/roles and an ensuing series of (again, perceived) organizational performance implications’ (Andrews et al. 2018, p. 343). National statistics also confirm such managerial perceptions. For example, low-paid employment accounts for 21 per cent of all-age workers in the UK, 40 per cent for workers aged 21–25 years and 77 per cent for workers aged 16–20 years (Clarke and D’Arcy 2016, p. 20). Young workers often find themselves oscillating between precarious work and periods of unemployment (Gregg and Gardiner 2015). Young workers also have to tolerate the poor employment conditions because such jobs are not deemed as proper jobs but are instead ‘student’ or ‘youth’ jobs which are not worthy of decent pay or conditions due to the very fact that young people are employed in them (Sukarieh and Tannock 2014).

Different from the ‘deliberation’ in job designs targeting flexible older workers as discussed above, the age discrimination prevailing in the job design for ‘students’ or ‘youths’ is more due to changes in economic structure rather than a managerial bias. On one hand, the shrinking of the labour market sectors in terms of total employment pushes young workers to the back of job queues due to perceived lack of experience (Ashton et al. 1990). On the other hand, the increasingly ‘hour-glass’-shaped internal and occupational labour markets indicate that whilst the number of mid-level and higher-level positions drops significantly, an increase in low-skilled, low-wage jobs occurs at the bottom end of the labour market (Anderson 2009; Goos and Manning 2007), where younger workers appear to dominate (Grimshaw 2014; Yates 2017). Further evidence also suggests greater incidence of precarious employment among young workers (15–24 years old) than among the prime age (25–54) group in all OECD countries except Australia (OECD 2006; Reinecke and Grimshaw 2015). For example, the share of temporary jobs among young and prime age category in Italy is 61.9 per cent versus 14.5 per cent and in Germany is 52.6 per cent versus 9.6 per cent (OECD 2018).

This partly explains why union membership among young workers is significantly lower: their lower average tenure in the workplaces and unions fails to keep up with the fast mobilising young age category. It is therefore unsurprising to observe that vulnerable young workers, coupled with lower tenure and less firm-specific human capital, are likely to be the target during downsizing (OECD 2018). This may also explain why young workers have limited access to some of the better conditions and employment rights often associated with the formal sector of the economy where trade unions often influence on management policies and practices (Yates 2017).

Repercussions of age discrimination towards young workers in labour markets are captured by government reports and academic research concerning job quality that young workers are likely to get involved. Recent research has deepened concerns over the labour process for young people employed in service-based occupations at the bottom end of the labour market. Yates’ (2017) research of young workers in Greater Manchester reveals that over 80 per cent of young workers are employed in service sectors such as retail, hospitality and business services, where employers tend to adopt business strategies in which productivity gains are achieved

through job intensification and long working hours, mirroring an old-fashioned 'sweat shop' (Taylor and Bain 1999). Young workers also face further challenges from increased competitiveness for decent jobs in labour markets. Increasing emphasis on qualifications results in 'credentialism' when employers require candidates to possess a degree for vacancies that previously was not required (UKCES 2012). At the same time, the number of university enrolment in the UK has increased by more than 50 per cent from 1995 to 2016 (Yates 2017). As a result, the majority of UK graduates (60 per cent) are now employed in non-graduate occupations, a situation which has led to over a third of UK graduates being employed in jobs in which they are overqualified or under-utilised: for example, in telesales, data entry and retailing (Yates 2017).

However, young workers being squeezed into such low-wage employment does not mean labour markets favour old workers or older workers always occupy the 'good' jobs. Numerical flexibility is more likely to be encountered in the later phases of an individual's working life when her/his bargaining position is weaker (Urwin 2004), and such arrangements are often available in the low-end service sector (Sargeant 2001). Older workers in financial need are 'doubly disadvantaged' in not having access to decent pensions and in having to compete with younger labour market entrants for poorly paid jobs (Taylor and Walker 1994).

Contrasting to the shocks researchers have brought out regarding young workers' experience of poor employment conditions and precarious work, research investigating older workers' job quality largely emphasises variations in work experiences among older workers. For example, older workers who have been in the same job for a long time likely report a different kind of work experience compared to poor job quality experienced by those older workers looking for new jobs. Studies of older workers searching for new jobs report that employers targeting older workers actually take advantage of the flexibility of this age group or the reality that older workers have no other choice compared to other competing age groups in the labour markets. This employment model appears to be easily justified by the human capital theory, and it makes business sense to reduce costs by employing expensive (experience) older workers on part-time basis.

Older workers were also found to be enduring more pressure within working environments and losing out financially relative to younger employees (Smeaton and White 2018), a context prone to older workers' disenchantment and deteriorating social and employment relations (White 2012). Moreover, there is evidence of declining organisational commitment and overall job attitudes of older workers, relative to younger ones (White 2012; White and Smeaton 2016). This is likely to weaken the older workers' position, and challenge their self-confidence and psychological empowerment, ultimately leading them to consider retirement (Schermyly et al. 2017) or risk being relegated to lower-quality jobs.

Older workers' inferior job experiences may also be explained by the negative perceptions from younger peers and/or being stereotyped by line managers. Numerous research studies suggest that performance measures inevitably rely on the managers' own subjective assessments and perceptions of the characteristics of older workers, making them permeable to their own stereotypes of older workers, despite the extensive provision of performance indicators (Principi et al. 2015). Such discriminatory treatment results in negative affective and calculative responses (Gutek et al. 1996) and potentially damages performance. It is also arguably true that workers tend to specialise more in a concentrated part of their jobs when they age and are less likely to be flexible or diverse in their work (Van Den Berg 2011; Thijssen 1992). The decline in skill variety affects intrinsic motivation. Given the growing number of part-time jobs are relatively low skilled, and older workers in new jobs tend to be influenced most by intrinsically rewarding work, there appears to be a growing mismatch between job design and those who are willing and also sought to fill it.

It is worth noting that young and older workers are not substitutable. When it comes to precarious jobs, those jobs with poor quality many young people often occupy do not mean older workers take most of the good jobs instead. What makes the understanding of unequal treatment at work challenging resides in the variation of individuals defining 'good' versus 'bad' jobs (Arrowsmith and McGoldrick 1997). While job quality is also a subjective measure that varies between individuals, an identification of inequality engineered in specific job design due to age discrimination becomes even more challenging. A good example is a part-time job that lacks all-round benefits which, often attached to full-time roles, would be viewed as inferior especially to individuals prioritising job

security and continuity of income flow, but reported with high job satisfaction from those who value the flexibility such job design offers. A recent survey in Britain suggests that workers on zero-hour contract report relatively higher job satisfaction compared to those employed on a permanent contract (CIPD 2015). Hence, the perceived job quality varies not only between individuals from different age groups but also between those from the same age category who view flexibility differently. Hence, detection of any prejudice and/or discrimination on the grounds of age in relation to the design of job or job quality requires a closer look at how age discrimination is processed at workplaces, which is easily gone unnoticed by ignoring the fact that engagement in precarious work may well be due to individuals' limited choices.

4.5 Age-Related Gender Inequalities

Age discrimination in workplaces becomes even more subtle and hidden when it is examined intersectionally with gender. Intersectionality researchers poignantly argue that additive one-dimensional approach of investigating age discrimination alone fails to capture the complex and variable effects as a result of interactions between multiple differentiators such as gender, race, social status (Cho et al. 2013; Kelan 2014). Prior research indeed evidenced a fundamentally gendered view of age identity (Ainsworth 2002). Research shows that how 'young' and 'old' are defined varies widely and largely depends on perceptions associated with gender. For instance, female workers in their thirties can be perceived as 'too old' and 'too young' at the same time (Duncan and Loretto 2004). They are viewed as 'too old' due to their being assumed to soon opt out of work to bring up a family, yet they are simultaneously perceived to be 'too young' to be in senior leadership positions due to a presumed lack of experience (Kelan 2014).

However, the extent to which interactions between age and gender would shape managers' views and thereafter their way of managing a diverse workforce is nevertheless less understood; neither do we understand possible impact on individuals' experience at workplaces. This alerts that age and gender relations function as integrated social systems, and

their interaction has different but related effects for men and women of various age. The enforcement of equality laws across most countries, particularly in the West, tends to present a rhetorical view that age inequality, alike gender, has become history (Coppock et al. 1995; McRobbie 2008). Nonetheless, juxtaposing age and gender may unfold potential hidden inequalities individuals likely experience in workplaces.

Further research findings not only reinforce the traditional perceptions towards gendered-age discrimination, but also reveal a silenced pattern of inequalities in relation to age between the genders. First of all, there is a denial of gender inequality among young (professional) women who view it as an issue that belongs to older generations; they presume organisations are based on ability and talent and that any excesses of gender inequality are due to choice (Broadbridge and Simpson 2011; Kelan 2014; Kelan and Jones 2010). Hence, age differences silence gender inequality among young female workers (professionals): the inequality they experience at workplaces is reduced to their choice to be mothers (Scharff 2011). They also reject the concept of feminism but instead individualise the responsibility for shaping their own life chances as opposed to vying for wider systemic change (Gill and Scharff 2013; Scharff 2011). Similar to gender inequality in modern workplaces, age discrimination is often buried under a strong rhetoric of diversity management (Eisenhart and Finkel 1998) or an issue dealt with by a previous generation, and thus age is used to make gender unspeakable (Gill 2002; Kelan 2014). The unspeakability of age-related gender inequality suggests that a denial of gender inequality is necessary to allow the young individuals rather than external structures to be in control. Consequently, by neutralising gender inequality, young workers may also silence certain aspects that would allow different views to emerge.

Contrasting to the disadvantaged position young female workers are likely to face compared to their male peers, older male workers tend to be significantly disadvantaged in comparison with older female workers. This is because older women appear to be relatively successful in gaining employment, compared to older male workers, and thus not in need of government assistance (Ainsworth 2002). Against the feminine versions

of older worker identity being constructed as relatively advantaged compared to older men, more research reveals alarming concerns over the silenced nature of inequalities when age and gender juxtaposed in practice. Older women perceive age as an impediment for entering or re-entering the labour market (Moore 2009). Womanhood is often considered in relation to appearance and sexuality, and women's bodies are viewed as less attractive as they age (Duncan and Loretto 2004). The reality, nevertheless, is that females' willingness to accept low-status, low-paid jobs is wrongly interpreted as they did not need help in the form of policy initiatives, while men deserve greater support because of their inflexibility (Ainsworth and Hardy 2007). Older female workers also face unfair treatment in relation to employment status in labour markets due to gender stereotypes. This results in older female workers being constructed as 'nonworkers'. Traditional gender stereotypes of older women mean that they were not registered as unemployed because, for example, they were on other forms of government support such as sole parent benefits. Hence, the hidden unemployed remained hidden: female workers are "celebrated for their flexibility but rendered unproblematic and invisible, while older men were negatively labelled 'inflexible', and became targeted for 're-education' in the 'changing nature of the new labour market'" (Ainsworth 2002, p. 596).

A powerful revelation from intersectionality studies illustrates tremendous concerns of inequalities on various fronts in workplaces. Research indicates that young women's wages are more equal to young men's wages, and younger generations have historically driven much of the gender wage gap convergence (Blau and Kahn 2007; Roche 2017). However, a gender wage gap that does not exist in labour market entry (Fortin 2008) increases by nearly 25 per cent after ten years of experience, only half of which can be explained by differences in human capital (Manning and Swaffield 2005). An explanation for changes in the stock of human capital, especially experience-related, notes that women earn less than their male counterparts due to career interruptions and time spent child-rearing (Bertrand et al. 2010; Wu 2018). Hence, gender inequality has never gone; it is hidden behind the articulation of age by different age groups.

4.6 Methodology Issues

Four main methodological issues are identified from the literature review: (a) attention has been disproportionately paid to older workers than younger workers; there is (b) selection bias in sampling and (c) lack of research of inter-age-group discrimination; and (d) more research needs to adopt an intersectional approach to deepen our understanding of how age interacts with other differentiators and thus the impact on unfair treatment in workplaces. These will be discussed in turn as follows.

First, extant literature is overwhelmingly dominated by researching age discrimination towards older workers and discussing management initiatives to tackle such unspeakable bias. Age discrimination derived from research studying age stereotyping by one age group towards another competing age group is problematic in building up the knowledge base of the practice of age discrimination and then informing measures to tackle the reality of age discrimination (Gwenith et al. 2017). Such a research design unavoidably masks the hidden nature of age discrimination towards younger workers who are the future manpower. Without understanding potential bias towards them, a society and/or an employer may well deprive younger workers' opportunities for training, promotion, redeployment, which are essential to develop and prepare a talent pool and enable them to take on challenging roles that entail both 'young' and 'senior' elements. The omission of young workers in many current academic works may also mislead organisations to take on an imbalanced approach to hiring and firing. Leaving young people out of the debate of ageism, one would not appreciate the landscape of age-related bias, unequal treatment experienced by individuals at various ages.

Second, among the extant literature, there is great variation in the selection of research sample concerning their representativeness and potential constraints on extending their findings to more general applications. For example, considering the participants to the survey are part-time students of management courses in Hong Kong and Britain with a mean age of 31 and 33, respectively, one would anticipate the negative attitudes towards aged in their study could be due to inter-group discrimination. Similar concerns also apply to other studies that adopt

similar research design. For example, drawing on data from 184 university students residing in the UK and 249 in Taiwan, with a mean age of 21.76 and 20.72, respectively, Vauclair et al. (2017) report greater negative views towards the aged in Taiwan than in the UK, particularly on a few societal factors. For instance, a pension system with its large expenses favouring the older may well explain feelings of contempt, especially when a younger generation is unlikely to benefit from these government expenses when they are old themselves. This also corresponds with findings from a meta-analysis suggesting that, contrasting to conventional wisdom held in Western literature, rises in population ageing predict negative elder attitudes in Eastern cultures, but positive in the West (North and Fiske 2015). Consensus in the research findings among these studies aside, using one specific age group (mostly are 'younger'—below forties) and gathering their views on older people (with a broad age band ranging from 40 to 70 or older) creates two issues for intellectual comprehension. First, again, it is younger workers' age discrimination towards older workers, which is only part of what ageism entails. Second, it is hard to anticipate a HR manager or recruiting officers in their twenties, thirties, forties, fifties or sixties would view older in the same way. This is because, according to social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1986), there is a desire to maintain a positive identity of their own age group: either younger or older workers may be motivated to hold negative evaluations of their colleagues from the competing age group (North and Fiske 2012).

Third, future research of ageism would benefit from examining inter-age-group discrimination by viewing young, middle-aged and old (the actually aged) as distinctive age groups. Negative workplace stereotypes about workers either too young or too old may not only prevent them from getting fully engaged at work and identified with the organisation but also foster intergenerational tensions (North and Fiske 2015; Oliveira and Cardoso 2018). Those tensions are likely to be intensified in ageist work settings marked by negative beliefs about what other age groups think of one's own group, a belief best described as negative age-based meta-stereotyping (Vauclair et al. 2016; Finkelstein et al. 2015). Those age threats in the organisational environment are more likely to be perceived by individual workers as a work stressor rather than a challenge (Dijkstra and Homan

2016), which potentially can damage these workers' well-being and performance. However, rather than predominantly examining age discrimination from the viewpoint of the prime age group, researching inter-age-group discrimination between any two age groups would provide nuanced understanding of various patterns of age discrimination so that management can develop targeted measures to tackle age discrimination in workplaces.

Fourth, future research would also benefit from adopting an intersectional approach by examining interactions between age and other differentiators such as gender, race, social status and job types. Previous research has revealed double jeopardy against applicants having a multiple stigmatised background (Derous et al. 2012). For instance, age-related hiring bias may differ in relation to whether the job role is of low or high status (Abrams et al. 2016). It has been argued that the intersectional approach sparks deepened inquiry into the dynamics of intersectionality both as an academic frame and as a managerial intervention in a world characterised by extreme inequalities (Cho et al. 2013). Emerging research has started applying such an approach to investigating the hidden nature of inequality associated with age in combination with other differentiators. Qualitative research appears to dominate this emerging research area, and thereby more quantitative analysis would certainly provide further insights into the generalisability of previous findings generated from qualitative studies.

4.7 Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter set out to review the literature of ageism and identify how age discrimination manifests through individuals' engagement in employment opportunities, pay, job quality and gender. The review is conducted by focusing on the experience from both young and old workers. The discourse on 'ageing' apparently suggests that the boundaries between 'younger' and 'older' are not as clear-cut as a first reading would suggest (Angouri 2012). The findings show that age discrimination can happen at various stages of human resource management in workplaces due to being either too young or too old. The challenges faced by individual

employees as well as HR practitioners within an organisational context are the hidden nature of ageism influenced by perception, stereotyping, as well as human-designed procedures that reflect deeply rooted bias towards specific age groups. Such perceptions and stereotypes further channel into other forms of management which deepen unequal treatment for specific age groups through (a) their chances of securing an employment contract, (b) whether their wages or pay will have been penalised due to certain age stigma, (c) the type of jobs they are likely to get, and (d) most alarmingly, an even more subtle way of disguising age discrimination and potential negative impact on individuals' experience of unfair treatment at work when gender enters the equation of tackling age discrimination. It is therefore clear that age identity, like many others, is not something people 'have' or 'are' but something people 'do' (Holmes 2006; Coupland 2009).

The literature review on both young and older workers in this chapter also suggests that different age groups face different age stigmatisation. Although younger and older workers are not substitutes in employment, there is evidence suggesting employers encourage older workers to leave the labour force to free up job opportunities for young workers. This is a mistake: not only would this be ineffective in alleviating the problem of high and persistent unemployment, but also very expensive for the public purse (OECD 2006). A recent call for more research on additional work examining both disparate treatment towards and disparate impact on younger workers in order to understand the nature of age discrimination towards this age group and develop measures to improve their employment experience (Fisher et al. 2016).

Beyond the fact of increasing political concern with ageism, the literature review also reveals that there is a need for theoretical development to facilitate a better understanding of how an organisation would benefit from preparing a HR deployment that comprises a wide range of age groups, in addition to the principle of democracy. Current literature largely points to a business case argument by drawing upon human capital theory—pay for productivity or productivity-related experience. Given increasing evidence that there is no significant difference in productivity between young and old workers, human capital theory only finds its roots in the pay-for-experience scenario (Börsch-Supan and

Weiss 2016). Human capital theory may also backfire when HR practitioners design workplace training schemes: training is more productivity effective among younger or less experienced workers, whereas older workers are assumed experienced enough and hence no need for further training. It is therefore not surprising that older workers are unlikely to receive training compared to their younger peers, which is broadly viewed as a form of age discrimination towards older workers in workplaces.

Contrasting to human capital theory, both career development theory and labour market segmentation theory appear to more closely mirror how age discrimination can be tackled in workplaces through HR planning. Stressing work motivation and resultant performance at various age-related stages in the human life cycle (Super 1990), career development theory suggests an organisation could develop specific HR practices targeting different age groups within the workforce. For example, employers provide skill-building training and stabilisation through work experience for younger workers, career advancement planning to support mid-aged workers to naturalise the stock of skills and experience, and design jobs to elicit intrinsic motivation from older workers and allow their experience to benefit their organisations. According to labour market segmentation theory, employers develop their primary labour market through developing and retaining firm-specific skills, establishing loyalty by focusing not only on experienced (likely older) workers but also on younger people with a lookout for long-term employment relationship and succession, while at the same time, employers can develop secondary market by creating atypical forms of employment which are not necessarily marginal jobs requiring lower skills. In fact, often highly skilled work relies heavily upon experience so that candidates from various age groups would be considered mainly on the grounds of the skills and/or experience they have.

Findings in this chapter indeed suggest that robust regulations and legal frameworks are brought into force across the world to protect individuals from being discriminated against because of their characteristics. However, evidence also indicates that these principles are often violated in practice due to the hidden nature of age discrimination detected from various stages in organisational operation. Hence the limit that legislation can do in order to improve equality in workplaces points to the

importance of identifying possible patterns of age discrimination and understanding how human 'designed' inequalities are hidden in management policies and practices, and areas where the implementation of certain policies and practices could have gone astray.

The literature review also points to the importance of researching cultural effects and/or institutional effects on age perceptions and stereotypes. North and Fiske's (2015) study reveals that cultural individualism significantly predicts respect for elders within rapidly ageing societies, whereas collectivist traditions may backfire. Their findings submit the importance of demographic challenges in shaping modern attitudes towards older workers. Similar to other research on ageism, there is a dearth of literature on cultural effects on age discrimination towards young workers.

Finally, an important note to take forward both in academic study and in practice is the intersectional approach in investigating hidden inequalities as a result of interactions between age and other differentiators. The review of age-related gender inequality, in particular, reveals that the concept of postfeminism, for example, may well mask the reality that gender equality has yet been achieved (Coppock et al. 1995; McRobbie 2008), given age discrimination experienced varies between men and women (Kelan 2014). It is therefore important to bring the shaping power of gender back into the spotlight (Lewis 2006) in order to unfold the disguised and systemic nature of discrimination at play (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000; Nash 2008).

Turning to managerial implications, employers should pursue a strategy that will lead to adopt a more active stance in managing an age-diverse workforce. The strategy includes (a) growth-enhancing structural reforms (e.g. organisational structure supported by job designs that blend in a diverse range of individual characteristics, career paths and experience) that have the potential to benefit both internal and external labour market outcomes of both young and old workers; (b) targeted active career development policies to help young and older workers with specific problems of finding or staying in employment; and (c) installing HR policies and practices that embrace age diversity to shape a positive age climate and an age-friendly organisational culture. Previous research has shown that intergenerational contact may be able to facilitate positive

views towards older people at work (Henry et al. 2015; Iweins et al. 2013). In workplaces, regular and high-quality exchanges among decision-makers from different age groups and job design emphasising teamwork may therefore be effective in transforming negative attitudes into positive views towards individuals either too young or too old.

References

- Abrams, D., P.S. Russell, M. Vauclair, and H.J. Swift. 2011. *Ageism in Europe: Findings from the European social survey*. London: Age UK.
- Abrams, D., H.J. Swift, and L. Drury. 2016. Old and unemployable? How age-based stereotypes affect willingness to hire job candidates. *Journal of Social Issues* 72: 105–121.
- Acas. 2014. *Age and the workplace: A guide for employers and employees*. London: Acas.
- . 2017. *Equality and discrimination: Understand the basics*. London: Acas.
- Ainsworth, S. 2002. The “feminine advantage”: A discursive analysis of the invisibility of older women workers. *Gender, Work and Organization* 9: 579–601.
- Ainsworth, S., and C. Hardy. 2007. The construction of the older worker: Privilege, paradox and policy. *Discourse & Communication* 1: 267–285.
- Anderson, P. 2009. Intermediate occupations and the conceptual and empirical limitations of the hourglass economy thesis. *Work, Employment and Society* 23: 169–180.
- Anderson, A., and L. Smith. 2010. Dynamic matching and evolving reputations. *The Review of Economic Studies* 77: 3–29.
- Andrews, T., C. Rowley, K. Nimanandh, and R. Banomyong. 2018. Age negotiation at the Asian corporate subsidiary: Challenges of managerial ‘youth’ in Thai-based subsidiaries of Western multinationals. *Asia Pacific Business Review* 24: 330–350.
- Angouri, J. 2012. “The older I get the less I trust people” constructing age identities in the workplace. *Pragmatics*. Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatics Association 22: 255–277.
- Arnett, J.J. 2000. Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist* 55: 469–480.
- . 2004. *Emerging adulthood: The winding road through the late teens and twenties*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Arrowsmith, J., and A.E. McGoldrick. 1997. A flexible future for older workers? *Personnel Review* 26: 258–273.
- Ashton, D., M. Maguire, and M. Spilsbury. 1990. *Restructuring the labour market: The implications for youth*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Aubert, P., and B. Crépon. 2006. Age, wage and productivity: Firm-level evidence. <http://www.crest.fr/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Pageperso/crepon/Age%20Wage%20and%20Productivity.pdf>. Accessed 16 May 2018.
- Bertolino, M., D.M. Truxillo, and F. Fraccaroli. 2011. Age as moderator of the relationship of proactive personality with training motivation, perceived career development from training, and training behavioral intentions. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 32: 248–263.
- Bertrand, M., C. Goldin, and L.F. Katz. 2010. Dynamics of the gender gap for young professionals in the financial and corporate sectors. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 2: 228–255.
- Blanchflower, D.G., and R.B. Freeman. 1999. The declining economic status of young workers in OECD countries. <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~blnchflr/papers/DecliningYouth.pdf>. Accessed 30 May 2018.
- Blau, F.D., and L.M. Kahn. 2007. The gender pay gap: Have women gone as far as they can? *Academy of Management Perspectives* 21: 7–23.
- Börsch-Supan, A., and M. Weiss. 2016. Productivity and age: Evidence from work teams at the assembly line. *The Journal of the Economics of Ageing* 7: 30–42.
- Bratt, C., D. Abrams, and H.J. Swift. 2018. Perceived age discrimination across. Age in Europe: From an ageing society to a society for all ages. *Developmental Psychology* 54: 167–180.
- Broadbridge, A., and R. Simpson. 2011. 25 years on: Reflecting on the past and looking to the future in gender and management research. *British Journal of Management* 22: 470–483.
- Butler, R.N. 1995. Ageism. In *Encyclopedia of aging*, ed. G. Maddox, 38–39. New York: Springer.
- . 2005. Ageism: Looking back over my shoulder. *Generations* 3: 84–86.
- . 2009. Combating ageism. *International Psychogeriatrics* 21: 221.
- Cappelli, P., and B. Novelli. 2010. *Managing the older worker: How to prepare for the new organizational order*. Boston: Harvard Business Press.
- Cardoso, A.R., P. Guimarães, and J. Varejão. 2011. Are older workers worthy of their pay? An empirical investigation of age-productivity and age-wage nexuses. *De Economist* 159: 95.
- Chiu, C.K.W., A.W. Chan, E. Snape, and T. Redman. 2001. Age stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes towards older workers: An east-west comparison. *Human Relations* 54: 629–661.

- Cho, S., K.W. Crenshaw, and L. McCall. 2013. Toward a field of intersectionality studies: Theory, applications, and praxis. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 38: 785–810.
- Chou, K.L., and N.W. Chow. 2005. To retire or not to retire: Is there an option for older workers in Hong Kong? *Social Policy and Administration* 39: 233–246.
- CIPD. 2015. *Zero-hours and short-hours contracts in the UK: Employer and employee perspectives*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- Clarke, S., and C. D'Arcy. 2016. *Low pay Britain 2016*. London: Resolution Foundation.
- Coppock, V., D. Haydon, and I. Richter. 1995. *The illusions of 'post-feminism'—new women, old myths*. London: Routledge.
- Council Directive 2000/78/EC on Employment Equality Framework Directive.
- Coupland, J. 2009. Discourse, identity and change in mid-to-late life: Interdisciplinary perspectives on language and ageing. *Ageing and Society* 29: 849–861.
- Derous, E., A.M. Ryan, and H. Nguyen. 2012. Multiple categorization in resume screening: Examining effects on hiring discrimination against Arab applicants in field and lab settings. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 33: 544–570.
- Dijkstra, M., and A.C. Homan. 2016. Engaging in rather than disengaging from stress: Effective coping and perceived control. *Frontiers in Psychology* 7: 1415.
- Duncan, C., and W. Loretto. 2004. Never the right age? Gender and age-based discrimination in employment. *Gender, Work and Organization* 11: 95–115.
- Eisenhart, M.A., and E. Finkel. 1998. *Women's science: Learning and succeeding from the margins*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Finkelstein, L.M., E.B. King, and E.C. Voyles. 2015. Age metastereotyping and cross-age workplace interactions: A meta view of age stereotypes at work. *Work, Aging and Retirement* 1: 26–40.
- Fisher, G.G., D.S. Chaffee, and A. Sonnega. 2016. Retirement timing: A review and recommendations for future research. *Work, Aging and Retirement* 2: 230–261.
- Fortin, N.M. 2008. The gender wage gap among young adults in the United States the importance of money versus people. *Journal of Human Resources* 43: 884–918.
- Furlong, A., and P. Kelly. 2005. The Brazilianisation of youth transitions in Australia and the UK? *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 40: 207–225.

- Garstka, T.A., M.T. Schmitt, N.R. Branscombe, and M.L. Hummert. 2004. How young and older adults differ in their responses to perceived age discrimination. *Psychology and Aging* 19: 326–335.
- Gill, R. 2002. Cool, creative and egalitarian? Exploring gender in project-based new media work in Euro. *Information, Communication and Society* 5: 70–89.
- Gill, R., and C. Scharff. 2013. *New femininities: Postfeminism, neoliberalism and subjectivity*. New York: Springer.
- Göbel, C., and Zwick, T. 2009. *Age and productivity—Evidence from linked employer employee data*. Discussion Paper 09-020. Centre for European Economic Research.
- Goos, M., and A. Manning. 2007. Lousy and lovely jobs: The rising polarization of work in Britain. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 89: 118–133.
- Gregg, P., and L. Gardiner. 2015. *A steady job? The UK's record on labour market security and stability since the millennium*. London: Resolution Foundation.
- Grimshaw, D. 2014. *At work but earning less: Trends in decent pay and minimum wages for young people*. Employment Policy Department EMPLOYMENT Working Paper No. 162. International Labour Office, Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch. Geneva: ILO.
- Gutek, B.A., A.G. Cohen, and A. Tsui. 1996. Reactions to perceived sex discrimination. *Human Relations* 49: 791–813.
- Gwenith, G.F., D.M. Truxillo, L. Finkelstein, and L.E. Wallace. 2017. Age discrimination: Potential for adverse impact and differential prediction related to age. *Human Resource Management Review* 27: 316–327.
- Hægeland, T., and T.J. Klette. 1999. Do higher wages reflect higher productivity? Education, gender and experience premiums in a matched plant-worker data set. In *The creation and analysis of employer–employee matched data*, ed. J.C. Haltiwanger, J. Lane, J. Theeuwes, and K. Troske, 231–259. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Harris, K., S. Krygsman, J. Waschenko, and D.L. Rudman. 2018. Ageism and the older worker: A scoping review. *The Gerontologist* 5: e1–e14.
- Henry, H., H. Zacher, and D. Desmette. 2015. Reducing age bias and turnover intentions by enhancing intergenerational contact quality in the workplace: The role of opportunities for generativity and development. *Work, Aging and Retirement* 1: 243–253.
- Holmes, J. 2006. Workplace narratives, professional identity and relational practice. *Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics* 23: 166.
- Iversen, T.N., L. Larsen, and P.E. Solem. 2009. A conceptual analysis of ageism. *Nordic Psychology* 61: 4–22.

- Iweins, C., D. Desmette, V. Yzerbyt, and F. Stinglhamber. 2013. Ageism at work: The impact of intergenerational contact and organizational multi-age perspective. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 22: 331–346.
- Johnson, R., and D. Neumark. 1997. Age discrimination, job separations and employment status of older workers. *Journal of Human Resources* 32: 779–811.
- Kelan, E.K. 2014. From biological clocks to unspeakable inequalities: The intersectional positioning of young professionals. *British Journal of Management* 25: 790–804.
- Kelan, E.K., and R.D. Jones. 2010. Gender and the MBA. *The Academy of Management Learning and Education* 9: 26–43.
- Kite, M.E., G.D. Stockdale, B.E. Whitley, and B.T. Johnson. 2005. Attitudes toward younger and older adults: An updated meta-analytic review. *Journal of Social Issues* 61: 241–266.
- Kotlikoff, L.J., and J. Gokhale. 1992. Estimating a firm's age-productivity profile using the present value of workers' earnings. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 107: 1215–1242.
- Krings, F., S. Sczesny, and A. Kluge. 2011. Stereotypical inferences as mediators of age discrimination: The role of competence and warmth. *British Journal of Management* 22: 187–201.
- Lawrence, B.S. 1987. An organizational theory of age. In *Research in the sociology of organizations*, ed. S. Bacharach and N. DiTomaso, 37–71. Greenwich: JAI Press.
- . 1988. New wrinkles in the theory of age: Demography, norms, and performance ratings. *Academy of Management Journal* 31: 309–337.
- Lazear, E. 1976. Age, experience and wage growth. *The American Economic Review* 66 (4): 548–558.
- . 1979. Why is there mandatory retirement? *Journal of Political Economy* 87: 1261–1284.
- Lewis, J. 2006. Work/family reconciliation, equal opportunities and social policies: The interpretation of policy trajectories at the EU level and the meaning of gender equality. *Journal of European Public Policy* 13: 420–437.
- Loretto, W., and P. White. 2006. Employers' attitudes, practices and policies towards older workers. *Human Resource Management Journal* 16: 313–330.
- Mahlberg, B., I. Freund, and A. Prskawetz. 2009. Firm productivity, workforce age and vocational training in Austria. In *Labour markets and demographic change*, ed. M. Kuhn and C. Ochsens, 58–84. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.
- Mahlberg, B., I. Freund, J.C. Cuaresma, and A. Prskawetz. 2013. Ageing, productivity and wages in Austria. *Labour Economics* 22: 5–15.

- Manning, A., and J. Swaffield. 2005. *The gender pay gap in early career wage growth*. CEP Discussion Paper No. 700.
- McEvoy, G., and W. Cascio. 1989. Cumulative evidence of the relationship between employee age and job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 74: 11–17.
- McGregor, J., and L. Gray. 2003. *Older worker employment transition*. Palmerstone North: Massey University.
- McRobbie, A. 2008. *Gender culture and social change: In the aftermath of feminism*. London: Sage Publication Ltd.
- Medoff, J.L., and K.G. Abraham. 1980. Experience, performance and earnings. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 95: 703–736.
- Meyerson, D.E., and J.K. Fletcher. 2000. A modest manifesto for shattering the glass ceiling. *Harvard Business Review* 78: 126–136.
- Moore, S. 2009. No matter what I did I would still end up in the same position' age as a factor defining older women's experience of labour market participation. *Work, Employment and Society* 23: 655–671.
- Nash, J.C. 2008. Re-thinking intersectionality. *Feminist Review* 89: 1–15.
- North, M.S., and S.T. Fiske. 2012. An inconvenienced youth? Ageism and its potential intergenerational roots. *Psychological Bulletin* 138: 982–997.
- . 2015. Modern attitudes toward older adults in the aging world: A cross-cultural meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin* 141: 993–1021.
- O'Higgins, N. 2001. *Youth unemployment and employment policy: A global perspective*. Geneva: International Labour Office.
- OECD. 2006. *Live longer, work longer—Ageing and employment policies*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- . 2017. OECD Employment Outlook 2017. https://doi.org/10.1787/empl_outlook-2017-en. Accessed 18 May 2018.
- . 2018. *Temporary employment (indicator)*. Paris: OECD.
- Oliveira, E., and Carlos Cabral Cardoso. 2018. Stereotype threat and older worker's attitudes: A mediation model. *Personnel Review* 47: 187–205.
- Palmore, E.B. 1990. *Ageism: Negative or positive?* New York: Springer.
- . 1999. *Ageism: Negative and positive?* 2nd ed. New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- Posthuma, R.A., and M.A. Campion. 2009. Age stereotypes in the workplace: Common stereotypes, moderators, and future research directions. *Journal of Management* 35: 158–188.
- Principi, A., P. Fabbietti, and G. Lamura. 2015. Perceived qualities of older workers and age management in companies: Does the age of HR managers matter? *Personnel Review* 44: 801–820.

- Reinecke, G., and D. Grimshaw. 2015. Labour market inequality between youth and adults: A special case? In *Labour markets, institutions and inequality: Building just societies in the 21st century*, ed. J. Berg, 361–398. New York: International Labour Office.
- Riach, P.A., and J. Rich. 2010. An experimental investigation of age discrimination in the English labor market. *Annals of Economics and Statistics/Annales d'Économie et de Statistique* 99/100: 169–185.
- Roberts, K. 2009. Opportunity structures then and now. *Journal of Education and Work* 22: 355–368.
- Roche, K. 2017. Millennials and the gender wage gap in the US: A cross-cohort comparison of young workers born in the 1960s and the 1980s. *Atlantic Economic Journal* 45: 333–350.
- Sargeant, M. 2001. Lifelong learning and age discrimination in employment. *Education and the Law* 13: 141–154.
- . 2006. The employment equality (age) regulations 2006: A legitimization of age discrimination in employment. *Industrial Law Journal* 35: 209–244.
- Scharff, C. 2011. Disarticulating feminism: Individualization, neoliberalism and the othering of ‘Muslim women’. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 18: 119–134.
- Schermuly, C.C., V. Büsch, and C. Graßmann. 2017. Psychological empowerment, psychological and physical strain and the desired retirement age. *Personnel Review* 46: 950–969.
- Shen, G., and B. Kleiner. 2001. Age discrimination in hiring. *Equal Opportunities International* 20: 25–32.
- Smeaton, D., and M. White. 2018. Britain's older employees in decline, 1990–2006: A panel analysis of pay. *Work, Employment and Society* 32: 93–113.
- Snape, E., and T. Redman. 2003. Too old or too young? The impact of perceived age discrimination. *Human Resource Management Journal* 13: 78–89.
- Streb, C.K., S.C. Voelpel, and M. Leibold. 2008. Managing the ageing workforce: Status quo and implications of the advancement of theory and practice. *European Management Journal* 26: 1–10.
- Sukarieh, M., and S. Tannock. 2014. *Youth rising? The politics of youth in the global economy*. London: Routledge.
- Super, D.E. 1990. A life-span, life-space approach to career development. In *The Jossey-Bass management series and the Jossey-Bass social and behavioral science series. Career choice and development: Applying contemporary theories to practice*, ed. D. Brown and L. Brooks, 197–261. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Tajfel, H., and J.C. Turner. 1986. The social identity of intergroup behaviour. In *Psychology of intergroup relations*, ed. S. Worchel and W.G. Austin, 7–24. Chicago: Nelson Hall.
- Taylor, P., and P. Bain. 1999. An assembly line in the head?: Work and employee relations in the call Centre. *Industrial Relations Journal* 30: 101–117.
- Taylor, P.E., and A. Walker. 1994. The ageing workforce: Employers' attitudes towards older people. *Work, Employment and Society* 8: 569–591.
- Tijssen, J. 1992. A model for adult training in flexible organizations: Towards an experience concentration theory. *Journal of European Industrial Training* 16: 5–15.
- Tikkanen, T. 2011. From managing a problem to capitalizing on talent and experience of older workers. *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 22: 1217–1220.
- Trades Union Congress (TUC). 2014. More than two-thirds of agency workers aged under 30 are looking for permanent jobs. <https://www.tuc.org.uk/economic-issues/labour-market-and-economic-reports/labour-market/economic-analysis/more-two-thirds>. Accessed 1 June 2018.
- Truxillo, D.M., E.A. McCune, M. Bertolino, and F. Fraccaroli. 2012. Perceptions of older versus younger workers in terms of big five facets, proactive personality, cognitive ability, and job performance. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 42: 2607–2639.
- UK Commission for Employment and Skills. 2012. *The youth employment challenge*. London: UKCES.
- United Nations. 1992. *Statistical charts and indicators on the situation of youth, 1970–1990*. New York: United Nations.
- Urwin, P. 2004. *Age matters: A review of existing survey evidence*. Employment relations, Research series 24. London: Department of Trade and Industry.
- . 2006. Age discrimination: Legislation and human capital accumulation. *Employee Relations* 28: 87–97.
- van Den Berg, P.T. 2011. Characteristics of the work environment related to older employees' willingness to continue working: Intrinsic motivation as a mediator. *Psychological Reports* 109: 174–186.
- Vauclair, C.M., M.L. Lima, D. Abrams, H.J. Swift, and C. Bratt. 2016. What do older people think that others think of them, and does it matter? The role of meta-perceptions and social norms in the prediction of perceived age discrimination. *Psychology and Aging* 31: 699.
- Vauclair, C.M., K. Hanke, L.L. Huang, and D. Abrams. 2017. Are Asian cultures really less ageist than Western ones? It depends on the questions asked. *International Journal of Psychology* 52: 136–144.

- Walker, A. 2005. The emergence of age management in Europe. *International Journal of Organisational Behaviour* 10: 685–697.
- Warr, P. 1994. Age and employment. In *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology*, ed. H.C. Triandis, M.D. Dunnette, and L.M. Hough, 485–550. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- White, M. 2012. Older employees under pressure? Theorizing reasons for declining commitment. *Work, Employment and Society* 26: 447–463.
- White, M., and D. Smeaton. 2016. Older British employees' declining attitudes over 20 years and across classes. *Human Relations* 69: 1619–1641.
- Wood, G., G. Wilkinson, and M. Harcourt. 2009. Age discrimination and working life: Perspectives and contestations—A review of the contemporary literature. *International Journal of Management Reviews* 10: 425–442.
- Wu, N. 2018. Flexible working: Are we ready for this? In *Hidden inequalities in the workplace*, ed. V. Caven and S. Nachmias, 127–154. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Yates, E. 2017. Reproducing low-wage labour: Capital accumulation, labour markets and young workers. *Industrial Relations Journal* 48: 463–481.