



Retiring Later: Impacts on wellbeing for tertiary education workers

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Outline



1. What is an ageing worker
2. The Work Ability model
3. What's happening in Europe
4. Local applications



The Ageing Population: Australia in crisis!



- Who is the ageing worker?
 - Workers aged from 45 years to the age of eligibility for aged pension (ABS, 1996).
- By 2050 the median age in Australia is predicted to rise from 36.6 to 43.6 and one quarter of the population will be over 65.
- Nearly half (46 %) of people in the 50-64 age group are unemployed and 33 % rely on some form of social security payment.



Ageing and well-being

- People who lack job security or who are unemployed consistently report the lowest levels of self-rated health and subjective wellbeing.



Ageing and families

- In 2001, of the 12.6 million persons who lived as a couple family with or without children, 3.1 million (24%) were mature age persons.
- Prolonging work life may also be necessary for maintaining and enhancing the wellbeing of families as the age of parents also progressively increases.



Our ageing workforce: Higher Education

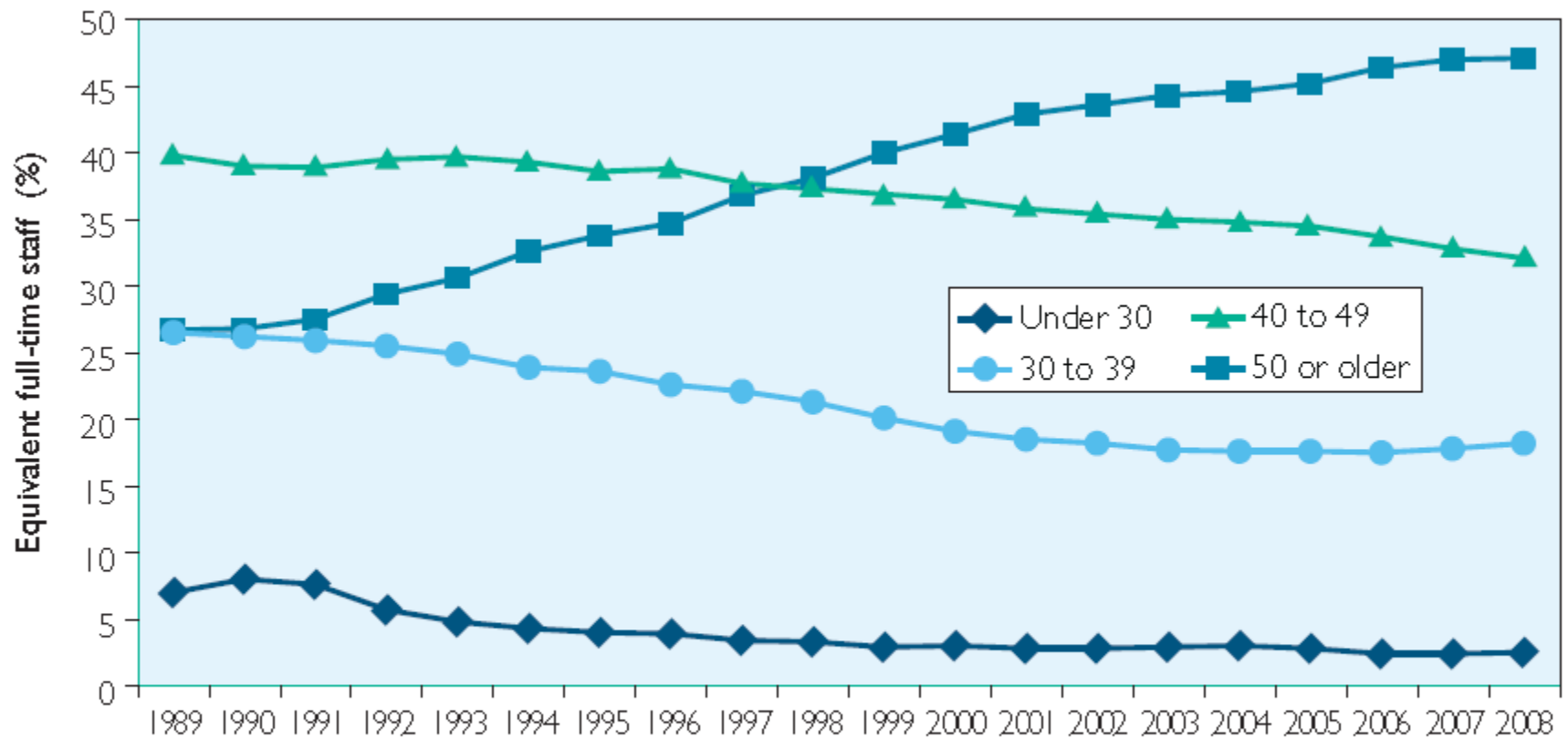


Figure 2 Teaching staff by age group (full time and fractional full time staff only)

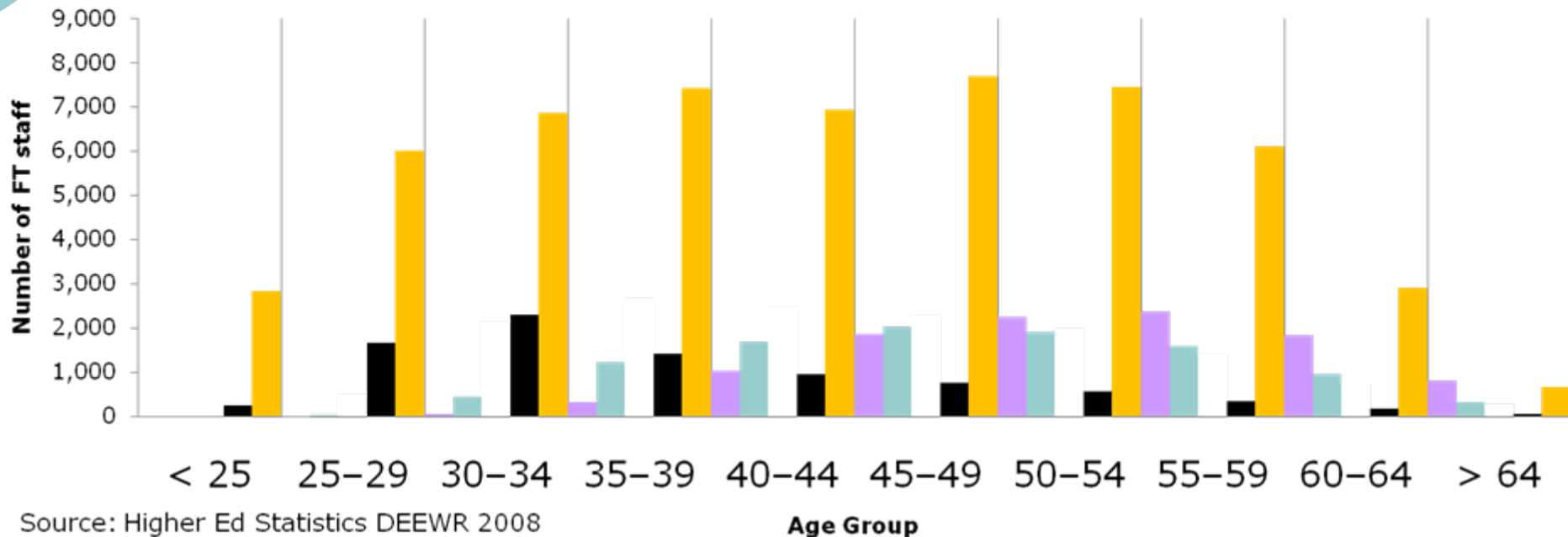
Source: Coates, H., Dobson, I., Edwards E., Friedman, Geodegebuure, L., Meek, L. (2009)

Full Time Staff by age group and category



Number of FTE staff by age group 2008

- Above Senior Lecturer
- Senior Lecturer (Level C)
- Lecturer (Level B)
- Below Lecturer (Level A)
- Non-Academic Classifications

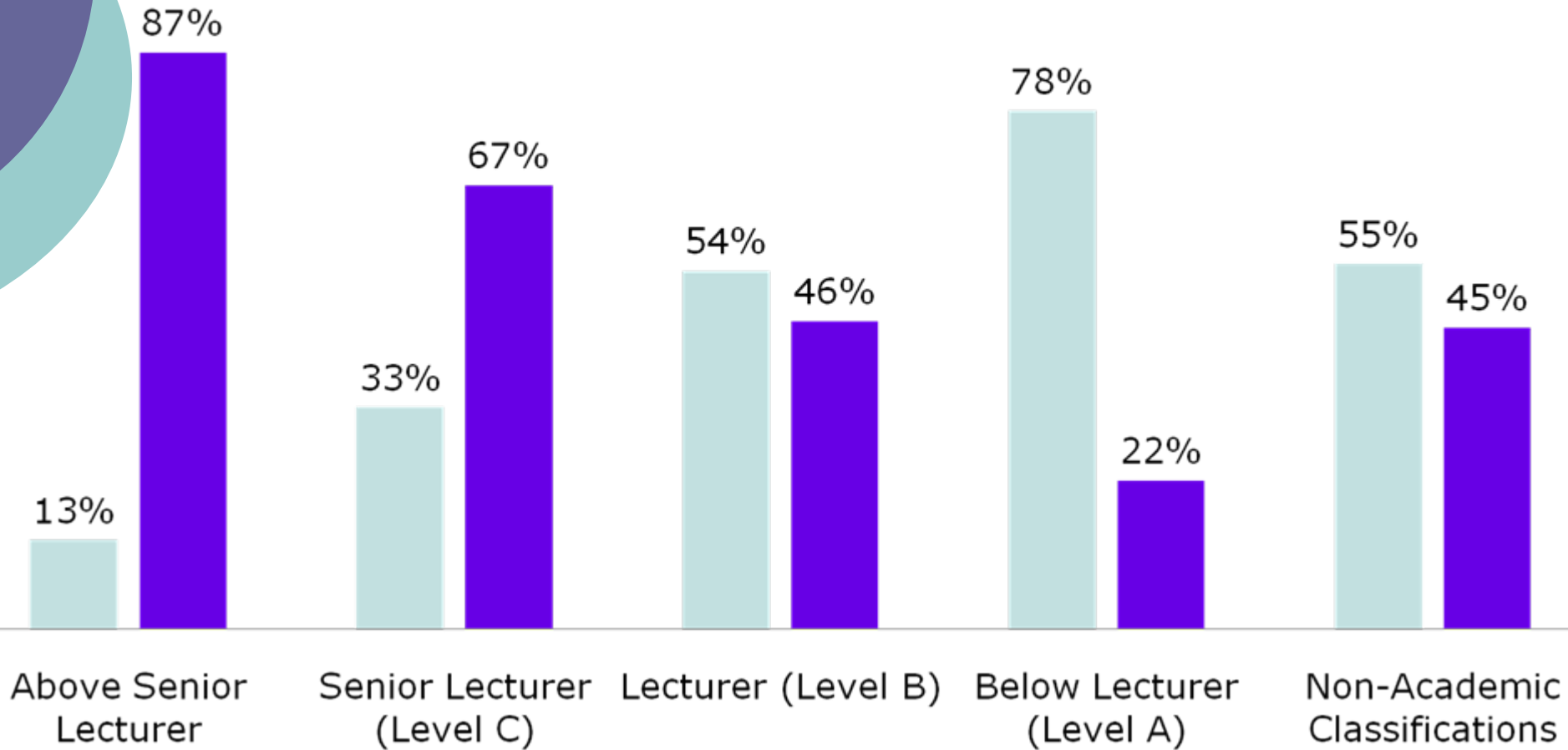


Source: Higher Ed Statistics DEEWR 2008



Percentage of full time equivalent staff in HE 2008

■ % 44 years and under ■ % 44 years and over



Attractiveness of the Academy?



- **Job security**
- **Remuneration**
- **Job Satisfaction**
- **Propensity for job change**
- **Satisfaction with management**



Source: Coates, H., Dobson, I., Edwards E., Friedman, Geodegebuure, L., Meek, L. (2009), **Changing Academic Professions**

Why Work Ability?

- What is work ability?
 - One's subjective or objective assessment of the ability to do the work that needs to be done.
 - It is a measure of one's mental and physical capacity to work
- There is evidence that improving work ability in older workers can help to keep workers in the workplace and reduce levels of early retirement.



de Boer, van Beek, Durinck, Verbeek & van Dijk, 2004; Pohjonen 2001; Tuomi, Huuhtanen, Nykyri & Ilmarinen, 2001)

Prior research on work ability



- Work ability has been significantly related to:
 - **Physical demands** (Bugajska, Makowiec-Dabrowska, Jegier & Marszalek, 2005)
 - **Mental demands** (Lusa, Punakallio & Luukkonen, 2006)
 - **Job demands** (Camerino et al., 2004)
 - **Work satisfaction** (Palermo, Webber, Smith, & Khor, 2009)
 - **Stress** (Wu, Li, Wang, Wang & Li, 2006)
 - **Organisational Culture** (Knauth, Karl & Braedel-Kuhner, 2005)
 - **Socio-demographic factors** (Fischer et al, 2006)



Rate Your Own Workability



- Q.** Assume that your mental and physical ability to work at its best had a value of 10 points.
- How many points would you give your current ability to do your job?

1 = work ability at its worst
10 = work ability at its best



What impacts on work ability?



- Individual factors
- Organisational factors
- Policy / social factors



Individual factors

- Psychological age
- Socio economic status
- Physical and mental health
- Psychological health (- stress + resilience factors)
- Organisational commitment
- Job satisfaction / meaning



Organisational factors

- Positive Climate free of discrimination
- Committed management
- Active ageing policies and practices
- Life course approach to active ageing management
- Culture and values recognise the value of older workers



Societal factors

- Industrial relations
- Industrial and economic climate
- Attitudes towards work and retirement
- Stories about ageing in our society





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EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES IN EUROPE

Background

- Age – employment paradox
- Need to maintain sustainability of social security systems.
- Active ageing policy platform e.g. Pension reform
- Targets set for 50% employment participation



Reports

- Taylor (2006). *Employment initiatives for an ageing workforce in the EU15*
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef0639.htm>

- Villosio et.al. (2008). *Working conditions in an ageing workforce*
<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef0817.htm>



Initiatives: Lessons from Europe



Changes to pension reform have proved difficult to negotiate

- Discrimination legislation is not adequately incorporating an age dimension
- Early retirement culture persists
- May disadvantage some workers
- Requires buy in from all stakeholders



Initiatives: Lessons from Europe



Awareness raising initiatives are critical, e.g.

- Age Positive website (UK)
- Guidelines for employers on the employment of older workers (Germany)



Initiatives: Lessons from Europe



In France a national intersectoral agreement established 'employment of seniors' providing:

- Easier access of vocational training tools by older workers.
- Employees with more than 20 years' work experience, and all workers aged over 45 years, after one year's service now have a right to a skills audit.





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WORKING CONDITIONS AND WORK ABILITY

Working conditions: Europe



"low participation of older people in the labour market is the result of a combination of wage conditions, rigidity in workplace organisation, inadequate skills and competencies and poor health status, rather than the wish to retire early" (p. 4)



Working Conditions: Europe



Four factors appear to be key :

- Ensuring career development and employment security.
- Maintaining and promoting the health and well-being of workers.
- Developing skills and competencies.
- Reconciling working and non-working life.



Report Recommendations



- Increased uptake of part time work creates more phased transition to retirement while also enhancing employability.
- Flexible working time arrangements may encourage prolonged participation in work for workers with caring duties



Report

Recommendations



- Promote a more widespread involvement of older workers in High Performance Work Organisation.
- HPWO - a form of work organisation characterised by horizontal hierarchical structures, task rotation, teamwork and active involvement of the workers in decision-making processes.



Report Recommendations



- Monitor the level of exposure to physical risks of workers approaching retirement age (45 to 54 years), as well as that of younger workers, to ascertain the possible risk of future deterioration of work capacity.



Report Recommendations

- Older people should have the same opportunities for training as younger workers, and it should be ensured that their experience is preserved and passed on to younger colleagues.





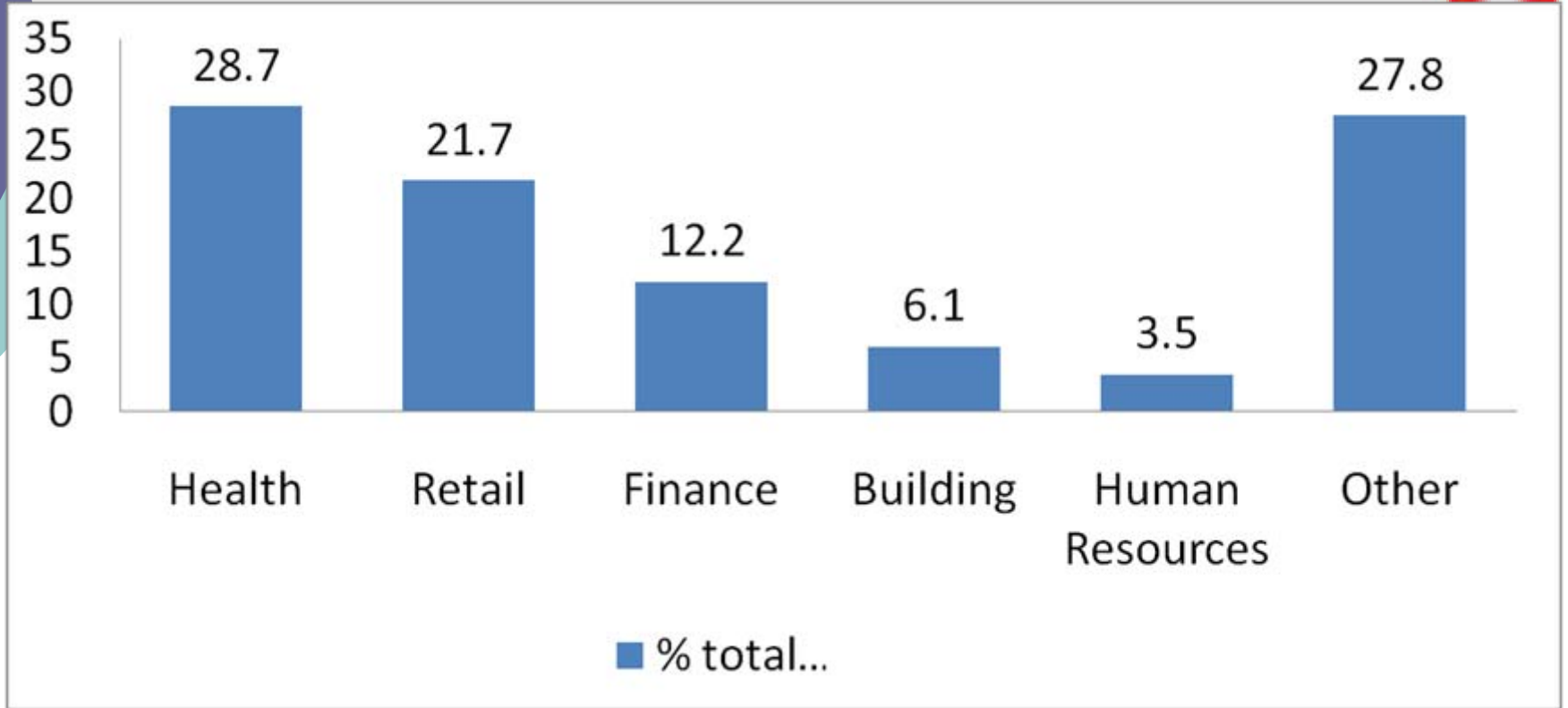
Applying lessons to an Australian context

LOCAL STORIES



Municipal Council Workers - Victoria

STUDY 1: REASONS TO STAY



Aust sample – reasons to stay

Younger
group

- Better pay
- Opportunities for promotion / career / training
- Better work environment
- More flexibility / autonomy
- Better mgt / better teams
- More resources
- More acknowledgement / respect
- Less stress, more balance



Aust sample – reasons to stay



Older group

PLUS...

- Less physically demanding work
- Other qualified people to bounce off / learn from
- New, younger staff
- Improved systems
- “If I was younger” ...





Broad Industry Sample

STUDY 2: WORK LIFE BALANCE

Proposed Analysis

- Organisational Leadership Culture
- Occupational stress
- Job Satisfaction
- Health

**Work
Life
Balance**

**Work
Ability**



Predictors of Work ability

○ $R^2 = .48$



	Predictors	St Beta	sr
1	Psychological Age	-.26*	-.256
	Negative Work to Family Spillover	-.29*	-.272
	Job Satisfaction	.21*	.198
2	Psychological Age	-.30*	-.287
	<i>Negative Work to Family Spillover</i>	-.13	-.103
	<i>Job Satisfaction</i>	.08	.071
	Stress - Vocational Strain	-.35*	-.258
3	Psychological Age	-.22*	-.215
	<i>Negative Work to Family Spillover</i>	.06	.044
	<i>Job Satisfaction</i>	.02	.013
	Stress - Vocational Strain	-.20*	-.139
	Mental Health	.49*	.344
	Physical Health	.31*	.300

Implications

- **Workability** increases when:
 - You feel younger.
 - You manage vocational strain (stress).
 - You are healthy (mentally / physically).
 - You avoid work life interfering with family and have high job satisfaction (especially if you cant manage vocational stress).



Predictors of Stress

○ $R^2 = .49$



	Predictors	St Beta	sr
1	Negative Work to Family Spillover	.25*	.20
	Negative Family to Work Spillover	.33*	.27
	Positive Work to Family Spillover	-.23*	-.22
	Organisational Culture – Transactional	.18*	.16
2	Negative Work to Family Spillover	.25*	.19
	Negative Family to Work Spillover	.27*	.21
	Positive Work to Family Spillover	-.15*	-.13
	<i>Organisational Culture – Transactional</i>	.13	.11
	Job Satisfaction	-.26*	-.23
3	Negative Work to Family Spillover	.18*	.13
	Negative Family to Work Spillover	.26*	.20
	Positive Work to Family Spillover	-.14*	-.13
	<i>Organisational Culture – Contingent Rewards</i>	.12	.11
	Job Satisfaction	-.22*	-.19
	Workability	-.22*	-.19

Implications

○ Vocational Strain (Stress)

decreases when:

- You have less negative interference between domains of family and work.
- Your work life enriches your family life.
- You have high workability.
- You work within a leadership culture that is not focussed on transactions (especially if you have low job satisfaction).



Organisational policies

- Family friendly policies
- Health and exercise
- Part time work option
- Mentoring as workers age



Organisational policies

- Factors enabling utilisation of policies:
 - Managerial acceptance/support
 - Existence of clear processes
- Factors that deter utilisation of policies:
 - Lack of managerial support
 - Work commitments
 - Stigmatisation of utilising policies



Concluding Comments

- Workplaces need to view their employees as “whole people”
- Interventions that include changing organisational culture are more likely to have successful outcomes
- Workability across the lifecourse



If you would like to know more



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