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# Income, Scheduling Flexibility, and Diversity Policies: An Experimental Investigation of Recruiting Older Workers

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INCOME, SCHEDULING FLEXIBILITY, AND DIVERSITY  
POLICIES: AN EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION  
OF RECRUITING OLDER WORKERS

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate School of  
Clemson University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science  
Applied Psychology

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by  
Holly Ann Geldhauser  
May 2007

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Accepted by:  
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## ABSTRACT

A number of surveys have tapped the interests of older employees as a way to understand the factors that encourage extended employment (Bass, 1995; Sterns, 1998). The current research has two purposes. The first is an applied goal; to determine the organizational factors that are most attractive to older workers seeking employment. The second purpose is to investigate the predictive strength of these variables through a controlled experimental design rather than using survey methodology. We chose to examine the importance of pay, work flexibility, and diversity policies as determinants of interest in the return to work among white collar employees. While pay and flexibility have emerged in past research as factors that influence the interest of older employees, the impact of diversity policies has not been well-researched, so this represents an extension of past research. Two levels of each of these three variables were used in the current study, creating a 2 (pay level) X 2 (flexibility) X 2 (diversity policy) experimental design. Results of the current study suggest that overall interest in the return to work among white-collar retirees is quite modest ( $M = 2.45$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ), and that flexibility emerged as an important factor in determining return to work. An interaction emerged between diversity policy and pay; the presence of a diversity policy was important only under favorable pay conditions.

A post-hoc analysis of those with moderate-to-high interest in returning to work revealed that the presence of a diversity policy emerged as a significant factor in the attraction of this group to the organization; pay and flexibility were non-

significant. These findings should contribute to our understanding of how these factors impact the interest level of retirees in returning to the workplace, and should help practitioners design more effective tailored recruiting programs.

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to several very important people. First, I'd like to dedicate this to Mary Anne Taylor, PhD; without her inspiration, guidance, and confidence, this would have not been possible. Next, I'd like to dedicate this work to the family at Clemson University's Psychology department; the creativity and support from each one of you has helped me to achieve my dreams (Go Tigers!). Finally, I dedicate this work to my parents, who have always supported all of my desires and aspirations, even if they don't fully understand what they may be.



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## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

America is aging- 2005 estimates of older workers in the United States were at 18.4 million, a figure that represents over 13% of our nation's labor force (Noonan, 2005). Fifty percent of the federal work force will be eligible to retire in 2006, and the oldest baby boomers will be age 65 in the year 2011 (United States General Accountability Office, 2001). The US Census Bureau (2000) predicts that between 2000 and 2040, the number of Americans aged 65 and older will double to more than 77 million, while the number of working adults between the ages of 25-54 will increase by only 12 percent. The imbalance between the number of older Americans and the number of organizations- including the US Government- that can finance retirement benefits for older employees makes an outnumbered economy seem inevitable. Regardless, the tidal wave of Boomers is about to break on shores of America's organizations and employers need to be prepared in order to stay afloat in the sea of significant change.

In this study, we will examine the predictive strength of three variables that may be important determinants of success in recruiting older workers: level of pay, work schedule flexibility, and a diversity policy favorable to older workers. We believed that evaluating these three factors was important to study because they are likely to impact the interest level of retirees in returning to the workplace. Thus, research in this direction is useful for practical applications in HR development and for theory development.

## Demographic Trends and Their Impact on the Labor Pool

Current projections of retirement trends reveal that retirements are expected to increase with 31.9 million older workers, or 20% of the current labor force, expected to be actively working in 2015 (United States General Accountability Office, 2001). Demographic surveys that examine workplace changes of the past several decades have highlighted the growing number of older workers, often referred to as the leading edge Baby Boom generation. As the Baby-Boom generation nears retirement age, the prospect of these workers leaving the workforce has the potential to dramatically exacerbate workforce shortages (Russell, 2006). Despite acknowledgement that the work trajectory of mature workers is changing, we know little about the work-related experiences and preferences of those over 55 years of age (Sterns & Gray, 1999).

Survey data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Bureau of the Census data (2000) tells us that the majority (61.7%) of workers aged 55-64 were employed in white collar jobs. Adding those employees aged 65-74 brings the total of older workers to 62.4% of the distribution of occupational groups within all age groups. Clearly, older workers in America are more likely to be employed in white collar, rather than blue-collar jobs. Given their strong representation in these jobs and the upcoming increase in retirements among baby boomers, understanding the factors that may lead them to continue work is an important goal.

Yeatts, Folts, and Knapp (2000) reviewed how older workers adapt to workplace changes such as training and personnel policies. Their results suggested that older workers may wish to continue working longer in white collar professions, in comparison to their blue collar cohorts, because jobs with high levels of manual



stress or physical responsibility may cause workers to experience a decline in their ability and skill that perpetuates an exit from the work force. Despite this longer retention rate in white collar jobs (Berman, 2001, Riggs, 2004), the overrepresentation of older workers in white collar jobs coupled with a trend toward earlier retirement has led to a prediction of labor shortages in this type of work.

Acknowledging that the ability and skill needed to perform specific white-collar jobs varies, which of these jobs are at the greatest risk for experiencing a potential retirement boom? Dohm (2000), whose research has focused on potential employee replacement needs, examined the occupations likely to be most affected by the retiring boomers. His study revealed the administrative, managerial, and executive occupations as most vulnerable. He projects that 42% of the workforce may leave these occupations, resulting in roughly 3 million job openings by 2008- the year when the oldest baby boomers will be age 62. One occupation that will be particularly affected by the boomer retirement wave is educational services, followed closely by the transportation and healthcare industries.

Clearly, white-collar jobs, as the occupational group in which most older American workers are employed, are at a great risk for personnel loss in the upcoming 2 to 24 years if organizations do not adequately address the preferences of the older population. Unfortunately, traditional retention and recruiting strategies are often targeted at younger workers, leaving a gap in the research pertaining to older employees (Doverspike & Tuel, 2000). The older portion of the population has work related desires, motivations and preferences that have yet to be sufficiently addressed by traditional human resource methods.

If there were enough experienced younger workers to take the place of the aging baby boomers, there would be no need for organizations to strongly consider the impacts of long-term workforce planning. However, this is not the case. After the baby boom- where America's young-adult population increased at the fastest rate in recorded history- there was a drastic drop in subsequent birth rates. The national small-child population had actually declined by one-sixth. This phenomenon has been referred to as the "Baby Bust" (Hedge, Borman & Lammlein, 2006; Dunn, 1993). This bust resulted in fewer entry-level workers after the mid-1990s, leaving older workers to form a significantly larger labor pool whose appeal to employers should increase. Thus, the aging workforce coupled with the decrease in a qualified labor pool of younger workers places firms in a position where recruitment of older workers may become a priority. As part of this process, we need to understand the unique work-related preferences of older employees.

#### Interest of Older People in Employment Past Normal Retirement Age

In the previous segment, we discussed the demographic changes in the labor force. Retirement patterns have also changed. Employees today regard retirement differently than previous generations, especially as many Americans "retire" but still continue to work (Wiatrowski, 2001). Complete, long-term retirement from the workforce is a relatively new phenomenon and a topic we still know relatively little about. The constant state of change that employment positions and workers have undergone during the past several decades have left the concept of "retirement" to be more of a reference point in work history than its definitive end.

Labor force statistics from the US Department of Labor (2006) tell us that there has been a large decline in mean retirement ages of older workers. In 1950, the average age for retirement for men was 68.7 compared to a mean age of 63.7 in 1989, a difference of 5 years. Women were found to have a similar pattern, decreasing by an average of 4 years (68.0 in 1950 to 63.4 in 1989). Statistics also tell us that the desire to retire at an age as young as 65 is a recent phenomenon, as participation in employment by men of this age dropped to 17% in 1999- a 29% difference from the participation rates recorded in 1950. Again, a similar trend was found among women although the difference was not as great (Purcell, 2000).

Although the baby boom retirement wave seems large enough to wash away a knowledgeable labor pool, another trend has been emerging. Over the past decade, we have learned a great deal about older workers' transitions within the workplace through research focusing on attitudes toward retirement and attitudes of older employees (Kosloski, Ekerdt & DeViney, 2001). In particular, we have developed a deeper appreciation and understanding of the complexity of the retirement process and its financial and social components. Even with evidence that many older workers are engaged with the retirement process, it is not unusual for older workers to consider working past the retirement age. For example, 69% of all baby boomers surveyed in a recent American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) study indicated their desires to remain in the workforce past traditional retirement age and perhaps even into their 70's or 80's (AARP, 2006). In line with this result, a 2005 survey from Reynolds, Ridley, and Van Horn report that nearly 7 out of 10 of all workers surveyed expect to continue working full-time or part-time following their retirement.

The proportion of older white collar workers is expected to increase, so understanding the factors that predict return to work in this particular subpopulation is critical. Bovbjerg, Jeszeck, and Peterson (2001) reported that white collar workers age 55 and older are likely to increase by nearly 20% between 2000 and 2008, compared to a 9% increase for blue collar older workers. The United States General Accountability Office (2001) reports that older employees age 65 to 74 represent about 64% of white collar occupations, while blue collar workers the same age account for 23%. One factor that may account for the change in the composition of the labor force for older workers may be due to differential retirement rates or pension plans. For example, occupations in the education industry indicate that teachers older than age 55 are expected to increase from 13% in 2000 to 19% of older worker occupations by 2008 (United States General Accountability Office, 2001). This tendency may be explained by acknowledging that nearly all of the occupations that make up the education industry have pension coverage that begins after 30 years of service (Hedge, Borman & Lammlein, 2006). A move into occupations that are less physically demanding and less risky to the health of older workers among those in blue collar work is another factor that contributes to the higher number of older workers in white collar as opposed to blue-collar jobs (Riggs, 2004). Therefore, while blue collar jobs are likely to be somewhat understaffed as boomers retire, losses of workers in white collar jobs will probably be much more severe, and recruiting this population of workers will increase in importance.

The statistics reviewed suggest that retirement rates are increasing, but there is reason to believe that workers in upper-level jobs may be interested in non-traditional work options. Whether this interest translates into continued employment

may depend in part on the aggressiveness of the recruiting techniques used by companies. Although research has shown that, in general, older employees actually tend to express interest in staying part time at their current employer, this trend has been declining (Cohen, 2003). The fact is that many older workers are leaving their current employers in their 50s only to start working for another organization, often using job skills similar to those used in their past work, after “retiring.” This popular transfer is often referred to as “bridge employment” (Feldman & Kim, 2000). Bridge employment has become popular because it allows for older workers to stay socially involved while gradually reducing their workload.

Statistics have shown that bridge employment will become an increasingly popular choice for older workers age 65, with as many as 70 million or 20% of the population choosing to participate in bridge employment opportunities by 2030 (Adams & Rau, 2004). Bridge employment can also be valuable for organizations because older workers provide a wealth of experience and knowledge that make them useful mentors and guides, especially during organizational transitions (Feldman & Kim, 2000). Although researchers have sufficiently studied the outcomes of bridge employment, little attention has been focused on the individual differences of older workers in regards to responses to bridge employment opportunities.

While our discussion has focused on changes in retirement and retirees as a whole, demographic factors other than just the type of work performed cannot be ignored when studying retirement. Women, in particular, may be more inclined to work past traditionally set retirement ages. Women who may have had to take a leave of absence from work to start or raise a family not only make less than men on

average but also live on average longer than men. In fact, women aged 65 and older make only slightly more than one-half that of men their same age. Women who reach age 65 today are also projected to live another 19 years, or about 3 years longer than men their same age (AARP, 2005). A similar trend has also been seen in racial minorities groups (Williamson & McNamara, 2001). Thus, any study of retirement behavior should incorporate these demographic variables. While race and sex differences are not the focus of the present study, these factors will be incorporated into our research as potential control variables.

Research in this direction can be useful for organizations interested in the current expectations and preferences of older workers. In fact, given the potential loss of skills and the expected slower growth in the labor supply, older workers may become an increasingly important resource for employers (United States Government Accountability Office, 2005). Despite this pressing need, many firms do not take any lengths to retain or recruit knowledgeable older workers. A recent survey by the Society of Human Resource Management (2002) found that 59% of organizations do not actively recruit older workers at all. In fact, the federal government has not even made attempts to retain or recruit older employees (United States Government Accountability Office, 2005).

In summary, given the upcoming labor shortages discussed thus far and the mixed results regarding interest of older workers in continued employment, the need to increase our understanding of the factors that increase an organization's attractiveness to an older person is clear. We know very little about the variables that would lead an older white-collar worker to be attracted to work. Since companies need to understand these factors in order to design effective retention programs and

recruitment programs, there are both applied and academic reasons for increasing our knowledge of those that choose to return to work.

Thus, researching older workers serves an important applied goal in that it allows us to design more effective recruiting tools. In addition, we need stronger models of the factors that determine workforce reentry of older workers to improve our academic understanding of this dynamic. In the next segment, we explore the distinctive aspects of recruiting older workers, followed by a discussion of the importance of pay, work flexibility, and diversity policies in recruitment.

#### Need for Models Tailored to Older Individuals

Research suggests that recruitment and retention models based on entry-level employees are inappropriate for understanding the decisions made by retirees (Cohen, 2003). Organizations have been making bold assumptions when using identical hiring models for both younger and older workers. There are simply too many differences between these two demographic groups. For example, Robertson, Collins and Oreg (2005) found that attractiveness and fit perceptions were not shown to influence application intentions of older workers. However, this finding may not come as a surprise when reading the implicit recruitment message used in the study, typical of many interventions targeting young, entry level employees. It includes a description of “competitive compensation”, a “broad range of benefits and programs to help you achieve a healthy and balanced life”, “convenient job-related training”, and “endless possibilities” (Robertson, Collins & Oreg, 2005, pp.328). Therefore, this study may have utilized organizational characteristics that are not as relevant to older job applicants.

Additional research indicates that older workers have different preferences than younger workers in regards to compensation and benefits (Hale, 1990). Recent evidence suggests that many white-collar older workers are interested in continuing or returning to work after retirement not for income or for “endless possibilities”, but for an opportunity to maintain a healthy social life. A survey by the AARP (Montenegro, Fisher, & Remez, 2002) reported that 84% of their respondents would consider continuing work even if they were financially set for life.

While finances are important, they may not be the sole or even the most important motivation for returning to work. This is true especially for higher income older workers (AARP, 2006). Finances emerge as less critical in the decisions of college educated, high-income workers than in lower-income older workers with less education (Williamson & McNamara, 2001). In summary, while it is important to investigate the relevance of pay in the decision of those retired from white-collar professions to return to work; it is equally important to realize that other factors may come into play as well.

Ken Shultz (2003) and his colleagues at the University of California have found that flexibility with work arrangements are an increasingly important option to attract older workers to organizations. Flexibility of hours and days worked often emerges as a significant predictor in surveys capturing interest in the return to part time work. Similarly, Rau and Adams (2005) believe that flexibility with work hours are likely to be attractive to older workers because they allow older workers to pursue leisure activities while maintaining structured employment, provide a way to supplement retirement income, and reduce the stress that is experienced between



role conflicts of work and other roles. Thus, flexibility is an important second variable to consider when recruiting older people.

Finally, diversity policies may be an important factor in attracting older employees. Initial research suggests that successful recruiting is dependent on providing a very attractive and age-friendly organizational environment.

Organizations may attract employees to bridge employment positions by providing respectful social interactions and by using equal employment opportunity language targeted at older workers (Rau & Adams, 2005). Diversity policies will be examined as the third factor of interest in the present study. This particular variable has not been empirically examined in the past so its inclusion in the present study contributes to our current understanding of the return to work among older employees.

It is also important to understand that there may be occupation-specific characteristics that differentiate interests of older employees. Organizations need to recognize that job-seeking older workers may be unique depending on the type of job that they are looking for and may then require different recruitment models. Older workers seeking to become reemployed in their previously employed field are more likely to be interested in higher level job positions that allow them to restore their organizational status. In contrast, older workers from intellectually stimulating jobs who want to return to the workforce may be more interested in an employment position that will allow for social interaction and a chance to stay productive (Adams & Rau, 2004). Those in blue-collar work are more likely to weigh financial incentives heavily than their white-collar counterparts.

In the current study, we chose to focus on white-collar occupations. Our planned sample was drawn from an educational organization. Such white-collar professions have been identified as benefiting from research aimed at recruiting older workers. The U.S. Department of Education reports that over the next ten years, more than two million teaching positions may be vacant due to boomers retiring (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Other highly skilled white collar jobs may also suffer from workforce shortages, as noted earlier.

Organizations that focus on white-collar occupations may need to carefully evaluate their recruitment practices and strategies in order to ensure that they are prepared to meet the demands of a unique up-and-coming labor force. Knowledge of the factors that shape these former employees' decision to return to work can clearly benefit these organizations. Since prior work experience influences the degree of attraction and expectation in post-retirement jobs, organizations need to pay special attention to specific organizational characteristics (flexible income policies, flexible work policies, and diversity policies) that previous survey-based research has recognized as factors that may attract older workers to organizations. Research in this direction can also allow organizations with similarly involving, intellectually engaging work to design more effective recruiting and retention interventions. Thus, a major goal of the study was to identify the incentives that predicted interest in the return to work among a set of white collar employees.

#### Income Policies

Many variables may play a role in the retirement decision, including finances. A recent study by Rutgers University and the University of Connecticut found that finances are one of the biggest concerns for all workers nearing retirement age

(United States Government Accountability Office, 2005). In fact, 54% of older workers surveyed by **Work Trends** reported that they went back to work after retirement because they needed income (Reynolds, Ridley, & Van Horn, 2005). However, this finding is based on all retirees and may be more characteristic of blue collar than white-collar workers.

Another qualification is that older workers may not prefer to take a job that confines them to the same work parameters and policies as entry-level workers. Offering flexibility in compensation and benefits, such as the ability to have a choice in the type of benefit (up to a specified amount) may be more desirable to older workers than the net amount of money earned.

Of course, while income may not be as important in the employment decisions of retirees as in new job applicants, this does not mean that income is ignored or irrelevant in their decisions while at work.

Previous research has demonstrated that there are factors other than pay that are important, such as flexibility of work hours. This flexibility may be as significant as income in predicting the desire of older workers to participate in employment. Time off, schedule changes, and assistance in skill development have been mentioned as compensation alternatives that may be attractive (Wellner, 2002). Thus, employers who wish to successfully recruit older workers need to examine the joint effects of pay and flexible work options for older full-time workers. Phased retirement is defined as a transition from work to retirement, allowing older employees to work fewer hours per week (Penner, Perun, & Steuerle, 2003). Simply, employers who provide flexible and financially attractive incentives for older employees to continue work may be the organizations that are most likely to

maintain a competitive advantage well into year 2011- when the oldest baby boomers will be 65 years old. The research on income and the relatively low importance of money for white collar workers highlights the fact that hiring older workers may not be as costly as employers have perceived in recent surveys (United States General Accounting Office, 2001).

In summary, while compensation is certainly still important to older workers, other factors may take precedence in their decision to return to work, such as flexibility of scheduling (Wellner, 2002). Despite the acknowledgement that flexible scheduling policies are attractive to older workers, research that jointly manipulates viable levels of income for older workers along with factors such as flexibility of hours would benefit our understanding of whether these factors have simple effects on organizational attraction, or interactive effects. Specifically, a pay rate commensurate with what an older employee earned at their last job or higher may be an important factor in determining the attractiveness of applying for a position. However, this variable should be considered in concert with other predictors. In the current research we wish to investigate the predictive strength of pay along with other variables, since research suggests that money is only one of many factors that might entice a retiree to return to work. We also believe that income may interact with a second variable, flexible work policy, in predicting interest in the return to work.

#### Flexible Work Policies

Providing flexible employment opportunities has emerged as a second factor that may increase the number of older employees actively engaged in the workforce (Greller & Stroh, 2003). Hedge, Borman, and Lammlein (2006) mentioned flexible

work policies as a simple organizational method for keeping older workers motivated, productive, and engaged at work. However, research on flexible work policies has mainly focused on how alternative schedules have been useful for retention, rather than recruitment strategies. It is arguable that employers who are trying to recruit older workers by offering participation in flexible work policies (e.g., partial retirement, part-time, job-sharing, telecommuting, seasonal work) might provide the necessary balance in making job opportunities attractive.

While experimental research on the importance of flexible policies in recruitment is limited, many surveys suggest that this could be a critical factor in increasing organizational attraction. Overall, the majority of employer representatives from the United States Government Accountability Office survey reported schedule flexibility as an essential policy necessary for the recruitment and retention of older workers (2005). Seventy-six percent of AARP (2006) respondents also reported that an ideal job would be one that would allow for a flexible work schedule.

In this study, we will focus on one central aspect of flexibility: flexible hours. Flexible hours, in regards to flexible work policies, are described by giving employees the flexibility to set schedules in units of time in order to provide them with the balance between completing work tasks and other daily or special needs. The flexible units or blocks of time should be long enough to complete projects but short enough to create a variety of length in workdays (Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006).

Certainly, flexible work policies can be used as an organizational tool that can guide more experienced, financially comfortable workers into a satisfying employment opportunity, perhaps even one that they create themselves. In the

context of the current study, a 59 year old professor utilizing a flexible work hour policy would be able to choose the hours of classes they taught, enabling them to accomplish professional and personal goals that are desirable at an older age. Flexible hours seem a logical choice as a recruiting tool in education. Previous research especially supports the implementation of flexible work hours in white-collar jobs because the independence of one employee in a white collar job such as teaching will not affect company productivity the way it would in a more blue collar firm with independent tasks, such as a manufacturing facility (Ronene, 1991).

Not only are flexible work policies desirable for older workers, but research data shows that flexible employment arrangements are in many ways equally beneficial for employers. Using meta-analytic techniques, Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, and Neuman (1999) conducted a meta-analysis in order to determine the effects of flexible workweek schedules on work-related criteria such as productivity, performance, and job satisfaction. This article discussed the outcomes and organizational consequences of using flexible work policies and presents implications for using alternative work schedules as a factor that may be attractive for employers. Perhaps the most significant finding of their research revealed how flexible work hours have a significant effect on attendance and/or retention. Specifically, employers experienced increased productivity and reduced absenteeism, while employees reported more job satisfaction, and satisfaction with their schedule.

Addressing alternatives to typical work structures seems imperative for organizations to maintain a competitive edge, especially in regards to the aging baby boomers. Despite previous research that has provided the information needed to explain how flexible work hours may be effective for organizations, the perceived

negative costs associated with implementation or change prevents many employers from encouraging modification. The American Association of Retired People's (AARP) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) estimated in 2002 that only 2 percent of employers offer flexible work arrangements to older workers. Flexible work policies are even less likely to be utilized in private companies (United States General Accountability Office, 2001).

Beyond the problem of too few employers implementing flexible work policies, too few researchers have investigated which flexible work policies, such as flexible hours, are most attractive to recruit older workers (Reynolds, Ridley, & Van Horn, 2005; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985; Sparks, Faragher, & Cooper, 2001). Finally, much of the literature on flexible work policies and older workers is non-experimental in nature and does not adequately investigate the preferences of flexible work schedules in combination with other organizational strategies for recruiting older workers. The current study will experimentally test factors associated with flexible work policies found in previous research along with income as well as diversity policies. In the case of the current study, manipulating flexible work hours within an experimental design along with income may reveal even more about the characteristics of the most attractive jobs for recruiting older workers into white-collar settings. Therefore we propose the following hypothesis:

#### Hypothesis 1a

Pay is more important under high flexibility conditions than low flexibility conditions. So, the effect of pay on organizational attraction will be lower in the low-flexibility than in the high-flexibility condition. In other words, when flexibility is not at a desirable level, the impact of pay is less relevant. When flexibility is high, the

effects of pay will be stronger. This is consistent with past research that suggests that flexibility may be a more important factor in the return to work than pay (within reasonable limits) among white collar workers.

#### Hypothesis 1b

Similarly, the effect of pay on intent to apply to the organization will be lower in the low-flexibility conditions than in the high flexibility condition. This suggests that pay will have a stronger impact under high flexibility conditions than low flexibility conditions. When flexibility is not present, pay will not have a strong impact on the interest of retirees in returning to work.

#### Diversity Policies

While younger employees may be focused on developing their work related skills and experience, older workers are often concerned about discrimination at the workplace and how other workers (especially those younger than themselves) may perceive their abilities. Organizations that utilize targeted recruiting methods for older workers by focusing on equal employment opportunity statements may portray an environment that has reduced conflicts regarding age discrimination, compared to those organizations that chose not to target older workers in a diversity policy. For example, organizations that successfully recruit older employees focus on the workers' positive characteristics, which include viewing aging workers as generally more productive, more stable, and less likely to contribute to workplace turnover (AARP, 2006).

Recent research lead by Cohen (2003) for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) suggests that perceptions of older workers are mixed. Four



hundred and twenty-eight human resources professionals responded to a survey involving perceptions of older workers. Regarding the perceptions of their effectiveness in the workplace, participants reported older workers as beneficial to firms because they are more willing to work different schedules, serve as mentors, and provide experience (72%). Contrasting with these findings, the largest perceived disadvantage of older workers is that they have a hard time keeping up with technology (53%), followed by causing expenses to rise (36%). While 19% reported that older workers have no disadvantages, only 1% perceived older workers as having no advantage. Furthermore, the SHRM study found that older employees are aware of these beliefs, and it could be the case that a diversity policy could counter some of these negative effects. By incorporating a statement that specifically encourages older employees to apply for work, a company may present a more positive image to older applicants and this may attract older employees considering the return to work.

Additional research on stereotypes of older individuals in general provides additional evidence of the negative perceptions surrounding this group. Research completed on the elderly has consistently revealed common perceptions of older workers as having less potential for development, less capacity for performance, more resistance to change, and more susceptibility to illness and accidents (Weiss & Maurer, 2005). Social psychological research suggests that older populations are perceived as high on warmth but low on competence (Cuddy, Norton, & Fiske, 2005). In a similar vein, negative findings regarding stereotypes of older people were reported in a study by Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu (2002). They measured American respondents on stereotypes of 24 social groups including the elderly. Shockingly, the

group identified as “elderly” was consistently rated as similar to the competence levels of disabled and mentally challenged social groups- 78% below other groups.

This research, in particular, demonstrates the challenging stereotypes older workers face when returning to work, thus demonstrating the need for organizations to create positive impressions of their firm’s climate. Employers should be sensitive to the presence of negative beliefs regarding the abilities of older individuals in their firm. Hale (1990) recommended that organizations administer self-assessments that measure misconceptions and biases of aging and older workers. Thus, age-friendly environments may be an important factor in recruiting this group. This emphasizes that the use of a variety of techniques and interventions that emphasize the positive aspects of older workers may be important in creating an environment that attracts this population (Taylor, Shultz, and Doverspike, 2005).

In a chapter by Hedge, Borman, and Lammlein (2006), unique considerations for recruiting this particular demographic of workers was discussed, given perceptions of their capabilities and shortcomings. They found that older workers are more attracted to organizations that allow older workers to enhance their talents and abilities. Personnel policies should be reviewed to ensure that they are not discriminatory in order to encourage older applicants to consider employment with the company (Taylor, Shultz, & Doverspike, 2005).

Acknowledging that older workers may be more difficult to attract than younger entry level workers, Doverspike and Tuel (2000) suggested that creating positive initial organizational impressions with older applicants is a key signal displayed to older potential employees. Communication of this positive first signal to older employees can be accomplished by a number of ways including radio,

television, newspapers, and less traditional methods such as journals, professional societies, and senior citizen centers (Malatest, 2003).

Regardless of the medium, employers must identify and understand the content of advertisements and other recruitment methods to ensure they capture the desires of the diverse older population. Portraying boomers as vibrant, strong, more educated, and healthier than previous generations is important to highlight in marketing strategies (Taylor, Shultz, & Doverspike, 2005; AARP, 2000a). For example, job descriptions and postings should be worded using positive terms such as “mature” and be phrased to make it clear to older workers that the job would be suitable for them (Lefkovich, 1992).

The research reported thus far suggests that some negative stereotypes regarding older workers exist, and that older employees are well aware of these stereotypes. Thus, it is not surprising that when older workers return to work, a major source of stress may come from the potential threat of age discrimination. Negative attitudes toward older employees can translate into hiring policies that may exclude this age group, and older workers are aware of this (Cohen, 2003). Research in legal aspects of employment suggests that age discrimination concerns are still a central factor in litigation. About 23% of all discrimination charges in 2004 had an age component, compared to 18% of all charges in 1999 (Gould, 2005). Academic research provides the link between negative beliefs about older workers by showing that they translate into reluctance to hire members of this group (AARP, 2000b).

Result of a recent survey indicated that 48% of HR professionals believe that their organizations are not at all resistant to hiring older employees compared with 38% of hiring managers, suggesting that a sizable proportion of managers directly

responsible for selection are somewhat reluctant to hire older employees (Cohen, 2003). Furthermore, when asked to identify the retention practices most commonly used to keep older workers, 65% of the respondents said that they were doing “nothing specific” to directly target them.

In summary, while there are clear practical, ethical, and legal benefits for equitable treatment of older workers, there appears to be resistance to hiring older workers and the potentially beneficial impact of an age-friendly diversity policy has not been investigated in prior research (Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006; Ostroff & Atwater, 2003). Given the negative beliefs regarding older employees and the awareness of older people that these negative beliefs exist, a pro-older worker policy may make an impact on the willingness of older individuals to apply to jobs.

The absence of a diversity policy can dissuade older workers from applying to a position. Older workers often cite perceptions about the workplace as a reason for leaving work in the first place. Many older workers are not made aware of the opportunities to continue working after retirement for their current employers, and many believe that the organization may not be interested in hiring them because of their age (AARP, 2004). Despite the general findings that age-friendly organizations are more competitive in business, most employers have yet to engage in the active recruitment of older employees utilizing a specialized diversity policy. Adding or improving a diversity policy is a simple and inexpensive way to improve the outcome of recruiting older workers.

In the current study, we examined the impact of a diversity policy on older workers intentions to apply and on organizational attraction. It seems likely that employers who offer a descriptive and fair diversity policy that encourages the

participation of senior workers would theoretically increase the value of that job to older job seekers (Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006). Diversity policies are expected to have a strong main effect on organizational attraction and the intention to apply for jobs for these white collar workers. Past research in this area is extremely limited and does not make a strong case for anticipating interactions with the other predictors, although exploratory analyses of these interactions will be incorporated in this study. Given this, we hypothesize:

#### Hypothesis 2a

There will be a main effect of a diversity policy that is targeted to older workers on applicants' organizational attraction. Attraction to a firm was hypothesized to be higher when a policy was present than when no diversity policy was present.

#### Hypothesis 2b

There will be a main effect of a diversity policy that is targeted to older workers on intent to apply. The intention to apply to the firm was expected to be stronger when a targeted diversity policy was offered than when no diversity policy was offered.

#### Summary

Many companies are reluctant to change existing policies, even given the upcoming workforce shortages. Although results from current surveys have provided us with an understanding of the factors that may inhibit or encourage older workers from being recruited, little is currently known about the most attractive or effective recruitment methods for older workers. Organizations not only pay little attention to recruiting this group of workers, but older workers have not been motivated to apply

to jobs that lack the incentives, flexibility, and equality they view as attractive. This calls for more research examining the effects of pay, flexibility, and a targeted diversity policy on attraction to a firm and the intention to return to work.

Our review of the older employee literature revealed several deficiencies. First, the vast majority of the research has been conducted using survey methods. Thus, much of the existing literature is non-experimental by nature, a characteristic that limits our ability to make causal statements regarding the importance of factors in predicting interest in the return to work. The existing literature is not without debate either, as researchers have not always agreed on the outcomes of organizational policies like flexible income/benefits and flexible work arrangements.

The aging of the American workforce has clearly become “one of the most important social phenomena of the next half century” (Preston & Martin, 1994, pp.3). As the pattern of work changes, organizations will have to include older workers in their workforce and must understand how the needs and motivations of older workers are unique from their younger counterparts in order to maintain a competitive advantage in today’s ever-evolving Human Resource landscape (Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006).

Given the fact that the future will likely carry a pressing need for recruiting and retaining older workers, the first goal of the present study is to contribute to the literature by examining factors that increase organizational attraction and intention to apply among older employees. Second, we found no studies that have examined the presence or absence of a diversity policy as a factor that could influence the recruitment of older workers. Thus, investigating the impact of a diversity policy on organizational attraction and the intention to apply added to previous research.

## CHAPTER TWO METHOD

### Participants

The Emeritus College at a medium sized southern university hosted an “Emeritus Day” for professors at the university in which participants could volunteer to participate in the study. A total of 120 individuals attended the Emeritus Day and 61 participants were obtained from this sample (80% male and 20% female), resulting in a response rate of 50.8 % for this sample. Their ages ranged from 51 to 90 ( $M = 71.12$ ;  $SD = 6.95$ ). The majority of participants (77%) worked in the education or teaching industry before retirement; 9.8% were engineers or architects; 3.3% were in business or sales. About five percent of respondents reported working in an “other” industry or work-field. The majority of participants (98.1%) in this sample identified themselves as Caucasian; 1.6 % responded as African American and 1.6% as Asian.

We also contacted additional potential respondents through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the same university. The 1,049 potential respondents were contacted via e-mail, which provided a URL link for the online survey. The sample obtained from web-based participants consisted of 100 total respondents (48.8% male and 51.6% female), resulting in a response rate of 9.5%. Their ages ranged from 41 to 84 ( $M = 65.02$ ;  $SD = 8.50$ ). The majority of respondents (36.2%) worked in the education or teaching industry prior to retirement; 14% worked in business or sales; 10% worked in an office or with administration; 7% worked in the healthcare industry and 6% as an engineer or architect. The majority of participants

(93%) in this sample identified themselves as Caucasian; 7% of participants chose to not respond.

Overall, this study utilizes a total of 161 participants (60.8% male and 39.2% female) whose ages range from 41 to 90 ( $M = 67.40$ ;  $SD = 8.45$ ). The majority of respondents (52.6%) were employed in the education or teaching industry before retirement; 10.4% worked in business or sales; 7.8% as an engineer or architect; 7.1% in an office or with administration and 4.5% in healthcare. The majority of all participants (92.5%) identified themselves as Caucasian; one participant identified themselves as African American and one as Asian.

### Materials

The 2 (income) x 2 (flexibility) x 2 (targeted diversity policy) design resulted in eight versions of one paragraph job scenarios. Therefore, each participant received either a booklet or a URL link with one of 8 job scenarios. Each scenario was kept approximately the same length because research has shown that the amount of information provided can have an impact of applicant responses (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Rau & Adams, 2005).

Each booklet also contained an instruction form, a consent form, a demographic questionnaire, and a debriefing statement. The debriefing statement clarified that the purpose of the research was to learn about the factors that influenced employee attraction and application to organizations. Contact information of the principle investigator was included if participants had any question or concerns about the survey.



## Job Scenarios

The two levels of each variable (same versus higher salary; flexible versus inflexible hours; presence versus absence of diversity policy) resulted in 8 combinations of the factors, thus 8 different scenarios were constructed (See Appendix A). We developed and refined the job scenarios to focus on an organization that provides an intellectually stimulating and enriching environment because previous research has determined the social/intellectual environment of work to be an important determinate of interest in return to work for white collar older workers (Taylor, Shultz, & Doverspike, 2005; Geldhauser, O'Connor, Taylor & Smathers, 2007; AARP, 2000b). For instance, Shultz (2003) found that offering older workers a chance to apply their previous skills and abilities in a similarly stimulating job after retirement to be particularly important for older white-collar workers. Using a job with low intellectual stimulation is not externally valid in the study of the return to work of those with formerly stimulating jobs; research suggests that this type of work is not appealing to white collar workers.

We adapted the scenarios described by Rau and Adams (2005) by prompting participants to assume that the work they were considering used the skill set they had prior to retiring, and that the work involved their area of interest. This prevented a perceived mismatch between the applicant's abilities and the employment opportunity from becoming a consideration in the decision. In the scenarios provided in Appendix A, the 'low' conditions are in bold; the 'high' conditions are in italics.

## Control Variables

Age, gender, health, age at retirement, number of years since retirement, pre-retirement and current occupation (if applicable), marital status, number and ages of dependents, ethnicity, education, income, flexibility at last job, and financial comfort was recorded and the effect of these variables on the dependent variables of interest was assessed (see Appendix B for measures). If these factors had an impact on the dependent variables they were treated as control variables in subsequent analyses.

## Dependent Measures

### Organizational Attraction

Participant attraction to the organization was measured using Turban and Keon's (1993) five item measure ( $\alpha = .95$ ). Items were rated using a 5-point scale with 5 indicating high attraction; 1 indicating low attraction. The five items asked the participants to report the extent to which they would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company, were interested in pursuing their application with the company, would like to work for the company, would accept a job offer, and to report their interest in accepting a job interview for the company, if invited. These items are presented in Appendix C.

### Interest in Application

Participant's interest in application was measured by adapting items utilized by Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar's (2003). To measure the second dependent variable, we included 6 items designed to measure participant's interest/intentions to pursue application with the organization (see Appendix C). Items were rated using a 5-point scale with 5 indicating high interest; 1 indicating low interest. The six items

asked the participants to report if they thought the work climate at the firm was positive, if the firm would provide fulfilling work opportunities, if the company seems to value all its workers, if they thought that they would enjoy working in a company like this one, if the firm seems to be a good place for older employees to work, and to report the likelihood that this firm would offer a supportive environment for older workers.

### Procedure

Participants that were identified through the Emeritus College at the university were handed a survey booklet during the “Emeritus Day” which was hosted by the university. After completing the survey, all participants received a written debriefing.

Participants that were recruited through e-mail received a cover letter requesting their participation and provided a URL for the online survey. Once participants had finished the online survey, they received a written debriefing.

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board and all participants gave informed consent before completing the survey; we maintained confidentiality of responses to the survey at all times.



## CHAPTER THREE RESULTS

### Overview of Analyses

As a first step in the analyses, reliability coefficients were computed for the dependent measures to ensure that internal consistency met professional standards. This allowed us to ensure that no revisions to items comprising the scale were necessary before proceeding with the next steps. As a second step in the analyses, descriptive statistics were examined for the control variables and the dependent measures to check for potential range restriction.

Subsequently, the simple Pearson's correlation between the control variables and each dependent measure was examined to determine which, if any, of the control variables were significantly related to interest in applying and organizational attraction. When a significant relationship between a control variable on a dependent measure was discovered, the direction of the effect was examined further and the significant control variable was entered as a covariate in the tests of the hypotheses.

Next, the intercorrelation between the dependent variables was examined to determine if treating them as relatively independent measures was appropriate. The final set of analyses involved tests of the major hypotheses.

### Reliability Statistics

Reliability statistics for the two dependent measures and descriptive data for the individual items are shown in Table 1. Results of the internal consistency reliability analysis show that all items of the organizational attraction measure were

significantly related to the total score. The item-total correlations for organizational attraction ranged from .617 to .756. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the measure was .966.

Internal consistency for interest in application met professional standards for internal consistency reliability as well. The item-total correlations for interest in application ranged from .890 to .933. Cronbach's alpha for the measure was .870.

Table 1. Descriptive item statistics and scale reliability statistics for dependent measures: Organizational attraction and interest in application.

Organizational Attraction	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Accept offer	2.35	1.260	160
Exert effort to work for co.	2.57	1.390	160
Like to work for this company	2.44	1.282	160
Interest in pursuing an application	2.31	1.269	160
Accepting a job interview with company	2.59	1.357	160
Cronbach's Alpha	.996		
<b>Interest in Application</b>			
Work climate is probably positive	3.90	.780	156
Provide fulfilling work opportunities	3.38	1.038	156
Seems to value all its workers	3.55	.932	156
Think I would enjoy working in a company like this	3.50	1.110	156
Seems good for older workers to work	3.57	.910	156
Likelihood would offer a supportive environment	3.48	.974	156
Cronbach's Alpha	.870		

Responses to individual items on the organizational attraction scale ranged from 1 to 5, with a higher number indicating a more favorable level of attraction.

### Descriptive Statistics for Control Variables

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations of the potential control variables. The variables include ethnicity (1 = Caucasian./White, 2 = African American/Black, 3 = American Indian, 4 = Asian, 5 = Hispanic, 6 = other), age, age at retirement, if not yet retired- age you wish to retire at, was retirement due to the TERI program (1 = yes, 2 = no), still involved with the TERI program (1 = yes, 2 = no), date of retirement, marital status (1 = married, 2 = single, 3 = divorced, 4 = widowed), number of dependents, ages of dependents, pre-retirement occupation (1 = education/teaching, 2 = business/sales/management, 3 = office/administrator, 4 = engineering/architect, 5 = legal profession, 6 = healthcare practitioner, 7 = construction, 8 = transportation, 9 = other), current occupation (if any), highest education completed (1 = 11<sup>th</sup> grade or lower, 2 = High School or GED, 3 = Some college, associate's degree, 4 = Bachelor's, 5 = Master's, 6 = PhD/EDD/JD/MD or highest possible, 7 = other degree), household income before taxes (1 = \$40-49k, 2 = \$50-59k, 3 = \$60-69k, 4 = \$70-79k, 5 = \$80-89k, 6 = \$90-100k, 7 = \$100-124,999, 8 = \$125k-149k, 9 = 150k or more), overall level of health (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent), caring for someone in poor health (1 = yes, 2 = no), whether this prevented the respondent from working full time (1 = yes, 2 = no), perceived adequacy of income post-retirement (1 = not at all adequate, 2 = somewhat adequate, 3 = moderately adequate, 4 = very adequate, 5 = extremely adequate), and whether prior work was flexible (1 = yes, 2 = no). Reports of the frequencies for each control variable are also reported as a way to include more information about the sample utilized for the current study (See Appendix D).



Specifically, the ages of our overall sample ranged from 41 to 90 years of age, with the majority (12.3%) being 65 years old. The age at which most of our participants (16.3%) retired was at age 62. Several participants ( $N = 74$ ) also reported being involved in a post-retirement occupation. Of these participants, the majority (20.3%) are currently employed in the education industry. Furthermore, most of our sample (87.6%) is married. Regarding the number of dependents, 24.1% of the current sample population reported one dependent, 5.8% reported two dependents and 1.5% of the sample population reported three dependents. Interestingly, the ages of the dependents range from 13 to 81, indicating that dependents are children, spouses, or other adults.

Table 2. Descriptive information for demographic and control variables.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ethnicity	1.03	0.257
Age	67.4	8.459
Age at Retirement	60.67	6.414
If not yet retired, age you wish to retire	67.88	13.66
Did you retire because of TERI program	1.89	0.316
Currently a part of TERI	2	0
Date you retired	1998	5.998
Marital status	1.27	0.78
Number of dependents	0.4	0.669
Age of dependent 1	60.97	17.244
Age of dependent 2	39.45	18.234
Pre-retirement occupation	3.04	2.897
Current occupation, if any	6.14	3.406
Highest education completed	4.91	1.138
Household income before taxes	5.1	2.389
Overall level of health	4.21	0.816
Caring for someone in poor health?	1.9	0.301
If yes, would this prevent you from working part-time	1.58	0.501
Perceived adequacy of your income post-retirement	3.68	0.769
Belief in financial status after retirement	3.76	0.767
Was post-retirement work flexible	1.44	0.498

### Descriptive Statistics for Dependent Variables

Table 3 presents the descriptive information for the dependent variables. Responses for both measures ranged from 1 to 5, and higher numbers indicated more attraction or more interest, respectively. Even though participants reported being moderately to very attracted to the organization ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = .750$ ), they were only modestly interested in actually applying for a job ( $M = 2.45$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ).

Table 3. Descriptive information for organizational attraction and intent to apply.

Dependent variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organizational attraction	156	2	5	3.56	.750
Interest in Application	160	1	5	2.45	1.23

Intercorrelations Between Control Variables and  
Dependent Variables

An inspection of the simple correlations between the control variables and organizational attraction revealed that there were no significant relationships between any of the control variables and organizational attraction. Therefore, no control variable was used as a covariate in the subsequent analysis (See Table 4).

An inspection of the simple correlations between the control variables and interest in application revealed several significant relationships (See Table 4). Therefore, highest education completed ( $r = .245, p < .01$ ), perceived adequacy of post-retirement income ( $r = .188, p < .05$ ), belief in financial status after retirement ( $r = .188, p < .05$ ), and flexibility of work prior to retirement ( $r = .191, p < .05$ ) were used as covariates in subsequent analyses of interest in applying for the job.

Table 4. Intercorrelation between control variables and organizational attraction.

Control Variable	Org. Attraction	Interest in Application
Gender	0.065	0.127
Ethnicity	-0.016	-0.095
Age	-0.056	-0.122
Age at Retirement	-0.109	-0.018
If not yet retired, age you wish to retire	0.079	0.282
Did you retire because of TERI program	-0.033	0.116
Currently a part of TERI	--	--
Date you retired	0.013	0.112
Marital status	-0.096	0.01
Number of dependents	0.004	-0.074
Age of dependent 1	-0.269	-0.335
Age of dependent 2	0.232	-0.406
Pre-retirement occupation	0.038	0.139
Current occupation, if any	0.009	-0.145
Highest education completed	-0.131	-0.245**
Household income before taxes	0.075	0.029
Overall level of health	0.065	0.053
Caring for someone in poor health?	0.07	-0.027
If yes, would this prevent you from working part-time	0.124	-0.078
Perceived adequacy of your income post-retirement	0.002	-0.188*
Belief in financial status after retirement	-0.06	-0.188*
Was post-retirement work flexible	0.126	0.191*

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

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

An independent samples t-test was conducted in order to investigate possible differences between the sources of data collection (the Emeritus college versus the more diverse Osher Center participants). The 99 participants in the Osher group ( $M = 2.60$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ) and the 61 participants in the Emeritus College group ( $M = 2.22$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ), demonstrated a significant difference in the amount of interest in return to work ( $t[158] = 1.90$ ,  $p = .05$ ). Therefore, the source of collection was used as a covariate for all subsequent analyses involving interest in return to work in order to

control for its effects. No difference between the groups was found for the dependent measure of organizational attraction.

#### Intercorrelation Between Dependent Variables

Next, the intercorrelation of the dependent measures was examined. Results of the intercorrelation revealed that the two dependent measures are significantly related ( $r=.56$ ) but we believed this level of relationship was not strong enough to the items as measures of the same construct. While the correlation of .56 is moderate and statistically significant, this correlation indicates that only 31% of the variability in the two measures is shared. Furthermore, attraction to a firm and the actual intention to apply are quite different constructs. Evidence for this can be seen by the responses of our participants. While participants reported being moderately to very attracted to the organization ( $M = 3.56, SD = .750$ ), they were only modestly interested in actually applying for the job ( $M = 2.45, SD = 1.23$ ). This difference highlights the distinction between attraction or desirability towards an organization and the behavioral components that correspond with the act of application, and led us to treat the dependent variables as separate measures.

#### Tests of Hypotheses

The test of H1a and H1b involves entering pay, flexibility, and the pay X flexibility interaction as predictors of the dependent measures. We included the full model of all predictors (i.e.; all possible two and three way interaction) in our ANOVA to ensure that the higher order interaction between pay, diversity policy, and flexibility was not significant, and it was not ( $F=.06, p >.05$ ). The ANOVA showed that when the interactions and main effects involving the two variables of

pay and flexibility were examined, flexibility was the only significant predictor of interest in application  $F(1,130) = 5.36, p < .05$  (see Table 5). Specifically, only a main effect was revealed for flexibility on interest in applying to the firm. When flexible work options were offered, the average interest in application was 2.69 ( $SD = 1.20$ ). When no flexibility was offered, the average interest in applying was 2.23 ( $SD = 1.22$ ).

The results for pay were not significant  $F(1,130) = 2.45, p = .12$  (See Table 5). Specifically, when the level of pay was high, the average interest in application was 2.57 ( $SD = 1.19$ ), which was not significantly different than the average response when the level of pay was low ( $M = 2.31, SD = 1.26$ ). This result is consistent with previous research which suggests that flexibility may be a more important factor in the return to work than pay among white collar workers.

Table 5. ANOVA with predictors and interest in application.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	40.871(a)	12	3.406	2.634	.004	.213
Intercept	30.336	1	30.336	23.459	.000	.167
Source	1.636	1	1.636	1.265	.263	.011
Education	1.066	1	1.066	.824	.366	.007
Adequacy	.305	1	.305	.236	.628	.002
FinStatus	.257	1	.257	.199	.657	.002
Flexible	4.221	1	4.221	3.264	.073	.027
Pay	3.167	1	3.167	2.449	.120	.021
Flexibility	6.940	1	6.940	5.366	.022	.044
Diversity	.719	1	.719	.556	.458	.005
pay * flexibility	3.582	1	3.582	2.770	.099	.023
pay * diversity	5.810	1	5.810	4.493	.036	.037
flexibility * diversity	.221	1	.221	.171	.680	.001
pay * flexibility * diversity	.078	1	.078	.061	.806	.001
Error	151.297	117	1.293			
Total	965.160	130				
Corrected Total	192.168	129				

Dependent Variable: INTEREST

a Computed using alpha = .05

b R Squared = .065 (Adjusted R Squared = .022)

Additionally, we explored the possibility of a three way interaction between pay, diversity policy and flexibility to ensure that we did not overlook a higher order interaction. This was not significant ( $F=.014, p>.05$ ). When we examined the variables involved in the proposed two way interaction, we did not find differences for levels of pay,  $F(1,156) = .002, p = .96$  or the hypothesized pay X flexibility interaction for organizational attraction,  $F(1,156) = 1.40, p = .23$  (see Table 6). When the level of pay offered was relatively high, the average organizational attraction was 3.55 ( $SD = .76$ ), whereas when the level of pay was low, the average of

organizational attraction was 3.57 (**SD** = .74). Furthermore, flexibility was not significant ( $p > .05$ ) for organizational attraction,  $F(1,156) = .187$ ,  $p = .66$ . When levels of flexibility were high, the average level of organizational attraction was 3.58 (**SD** = .76). This was not significantly different than when levels of flexibility were low ( $M = 3.55$ , **SD** = .73).

No significant main effects for pay and flexibility or interactions were found for organizational attraction (See Table 6). Although popular research emphasizes the importance of pay in attraction to organizations and return to work, our results demonstrate that pay may not be the most attractive incentive for older white collar workers (Reynolds, Ridley, & Van Horn, 2005).

Table 6. ANOVA with predictors and organizational attraction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	2.967(b)	7	.424	.745	.634	.034
Intercept	1908.812	1	1908.812	3356.361	.000	.958
Pay	.001	1	.001	.002	.966	.000
Flexibility	.106	1	.106	.187	.666	.001
Diversity	1.388	1	1.388	2.441	.120	.016
pay * flexibility	.796	1	.796	1.400	.239	.009
pay * diversity	.166	1	.166	.292	.590	.002
flexibility * diversity	.429	1	.429	.754	.387	.005
pay * flexibility * diversity	.008	1	.008	.014	.907	.000
Error	84.170	148	.569			
Total	2068.778	156				
Corrected Total	87.137	155				

Dependent Variable: ATTRACT

a Computed using alpha = .05

b R Squared = .034 (Adjusted R Squared = -.012)



The test of H2a and H2b involves the simple main effect of diversity policy. We did not find any main effects ( $p > .05$ ) for levels of a diversity policy for either organizational attraction or interest in application. The inclusion of a diversity policy did not have a significant effect on participant's level of organizational attraction ( $M = 3.47, SD = .82$ ) or interest in application ( $M = 2.52, SD = 1.27$ ) because responses did not significantly differ for either organizational attraction ( $M = 3.67, SD = .65$ ) or interest in application ( $M = 2.38, SD = 1.19$ ) when no diversity policy was presented.

However, when we examined the full model for prediction in interest in applying to the firm, there was a significant interaction between pay and diversity on interest in application,  $F(1,130) = 4.49, p < .05$ . Table 5 reveals that this interaction accounted for approximately 4% of the variance in interest in applying. Table 7 provides additional information on the interaction along with the control variables used in this analysis. Figure 1 displays this interaction. In order to examine this interaction more fully, mean differences between interest in applying as a joint function of pay and diversity policy were analyzed.

Table 7. Pay and diversity with interest in application post-hoc.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	29.844(a)	8	3.730	2.781	.007	.155
Intercept	28.820	1	28.820	21.483	.000	.151
Source	1.703	1	1.703	1.269	.262	.010
Education	1.335	1	1.335	.995	.320	.008
Adequacy	.445	1	.445	.332	.566	.003
FinStatus	.068	1	.068	.051	.822	.000
Flexible	4.395	1	4.395	3.276	.073	.026
diversity	1.304	1	1.304	.972	.326	.008
pay	3.710	1	3.710	2.766	.099	.022
diversity * pay	5.355	1	5.355	3.992	.048	.032
Error	162.324	121	1.342			
Total	965.160	130				
Corrected Total	192.168	129				

Dependent Variable: INTEREST

a R Squared = .155 (Adjusted R Squared = .099)

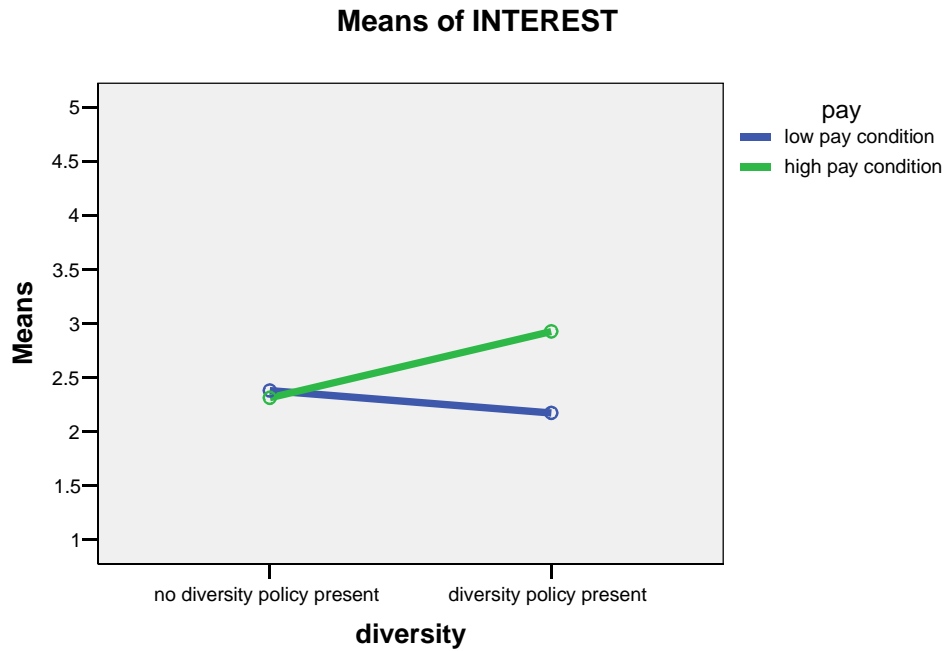


Figure 1. Interaction of pay and diversity with interest in application.

Table 8 displays a test of mean differences in interest in applying as a function of the presence or absence of a diversity policy in the low pay condition. This one-way ANOVA incorporates diversity as the predictor and interest in applying as the dependent measure. When respondents were asked to assume that pay was the same in their previous job, there was no significant difference between the interest when a diversity policy was presented ( $M = 2.23$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ) versus when no policy was present ( $M = 2.41$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ).

Table 8. Interest in applying in the low pay condition: Effects of diversity policy.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	12.525(a)	6	2.087	0.246	0.127
Intercept	12.774	1	12.774	0.006	0.13
Source	1.852	1	1.852	0.276	0.021
Education	0.086	1	0.086	0.813	0.001
Adequacy	0.37	1	0.37	0.625	0.004
FinStatus	2.155	1	2.155	0.241	0.024
Flexibility	2.524	1	2.524	0.205	0.029
Diversity	0.489	1	0.489	0.574	0.006
Error	85.829	56	1.533		
Total	438.56	63			
Corrected Total	98.354	62			

Dependent Variable: INTEREST

a R Squared = .127 (Adjusted R Squared = .034)

Table 9 displays the test of significance of mean differences in interest in applying as a function of the presence or absence of a diversity policy in the high pay condition. There was a significant difference between the mean response when a diversity policy was presented ( $M = 2.87$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ) versus when no policy was present ( $M = 2.29$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ),  $F(1,67) = 5.52$ ,  $p < .05$ . Therefore, the presence of a diversity policy is irrelevant when pay is low, but increased interest in applying when the level of pay was high.

Table 9. Interest in applying in the high pay condition: Effects of diversity policy.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	20.743(a)	6	3.457	0.015	0.225
Intercept	15.532	1	15.532	0.001	0.179
Source	0.571	1	0.571	0.492	0.008
Education	0.888	1	0.888	0.391	0.012
Adequacy	4.011	1	4.011	0.071	0.053
FinStatus	2.542	1	2.542	0.149	0.034
Flexibility	2.054	1	2.054	0.194	0.028
Diversity	6.222	1	6.222	0.026	0.08
Error	71.464	60	1.191		
Total	526.6	67			
Corrected Total	92.207	66			

Dependent Variable: INTEREST

a R Squared = .225 (Adjusted R Squared = .147)

### Analyses of High Interest Respondents

A total of 69 individuals were identified as reporting a moderate-to-high level interest in applying to the organization (38 male and 28 female). Their ages ranged from 46 to 89 ( $M = 66.42$ ;  $SD = 8.74$ ). The majority of participants (43.3%) worked in the education or teaching industry before retirement; 11.9% were engineers or architects. Even though the majority (19.2%) of this sample retired at age 62, 44% reported being currently employed in a post-retirement occupation that was described as “other”. Like the overall sample of participants, this subset also reported dependents that ranged in age from 13 to 75, were highly educated (31.8% had the highest degree possible, and the majority (19.6%) reported an income of \$100,000 or more a year before taxes.

Following the descriptive analysis of this sample subset, a post-hoc analysis was conducted in order to examine the effects of respondents who reported moderate to high levels of interest. For this analysis, only participants who reported an average of 3 or above were included (responses for this measure ranged from 1 to 5; with 1 indicating very low interest and 5 indicating extreme interest).

An inspection of the simple correlations between the control variables and high levels of interest revealed that several significant relationships: source of collection ( $r = -.292, p < .05$ ), gender ( $r = .246, p < .05$ ), age ( $r = .296, p < .05$ ), and flexibility of work prior to retirement ( $r = .293, p < .05$ ). Therefore, these variables were used as covariates in the subsequent analysis.

The three independent variables (pay, flexibility, and diversity) were entered into a post-hoc ANOVA in order to examine the effects of respondents who reported only moderate to high levels of interest in applying to the organization. We included the full model of all predictors (i.e.; all possible two and three way interaction) in our ANOVA to ensure that the higher order interaction between pay, diversity policy, and flexibility was not significant, and it was not ( $F=.26, p > .05$ ). The ANOVA showed that when the interactions and main effects involving the three variables were examined, diversity was the only significant predictor of interest in application  $F(1,60) = 6.64, p = .013$  (see Table 10). Specifically, only a main effect was revealed for diversity on high interest in applying to the firm. When a targeted diversity statement was present, the average interest in application for high interest respondents was 3.92 ( $SD = .53$ ). When no targeted diversity statement existed in the scenario, the average interest in applying by highly interested respondents was 3.60 ( $SD = .40$ ).

The results for pay were not significant  $F(1,60) = 1.73$ ,  $p = .19$  and the results for flexibility were not significant  $F(1,60) = .006$ ,  $p = .938$  (See Table 10).

Table 10. Analysis of high interest respondents.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3.672(a)	11	.334	1.892	.064	.302
Intercept	5.859	1	5.859	33.195	.000	.409
Gender	.009	1	.009	.048	.827	.001
Age	.099	1	.099	.563	.457	.012
Source	.272	1	.272	1.542	.220	.031
Flexible pay	.739	1	.739	4.186	.046	.080
flexibility	.306	1	.306	1.736	.194	.035
diversity	.001	1	.001	.006	.938	.000
pay * flexibility	1.173	1	1.173	6.644	.013	.122
pay * diversity	.001	1	.001	.007	.932	.000
flexibility * diversity	.005	1	.005	.031	.861	.001
pay * flexibility * diversity	.077	1	.077	.437	.512	.009
Error	.046	1	.046	.263	.610	.005
Error	8.472	48	.176			
Total	807.120	60				
Corrected Total	12.144	59				

Dependent Variable: INTEREST

a R Squared = .302 (Adjusted R Squared = .143)





## CHAPTER FOUR DISCUSSION

Results of the current study support the contention that flexibility is clearly an important factor in attracting older white collar workers back to the workforce. This finding is consistent with previous research that has suggested that work flexibility is a factor with promising potential for increasing the number of older workers actively engaged in the workforce (Greller & Stroh, 2003). Hedge, Borman, and Lammlien (2006) mentioned flexible work schedules as a simple organizational method for keeping older workers motivated. In designing flexible hours for workers, managers should give employees the flexibility to set schedules in units of time in order to provide them with the balance between completing work tasks and other daily needs. Flexible work hours may have been important to our sample of older white collar workers because they can allow professional older workers who are satisfied with their financial position to remain engaged in rewarding employment while maintaining the freedom associated with retirement.

Given the significance of this variable, it seems worthwhile to ask what “flexibility” means for this demographic. What do white-collar older workers really look for when they look for a flexible work arrangement? Research has attempted to answer this question by examining different types of retirement (Beehr & Bennett, 2007). For instance, many older workers are interested in transitioning into retirement by entering bridge employment (Shultz, 2003) or a period of partial retirement (Beehr, 1986). Bridge employment and partial retirement allow for older

workers to take employment after they retire from their main career but with a reduction in work hours. Bridge employment is often a popular choice for those individuals who need to keep working for the income or who simply enjoy various aspects of continuing to work. Clearly, there are a number of non-traditional scheduling options that organizations may want to strongly consider in their recruitment and retention efforts.

Results from the current study also suggest that participants may report attraction towards an organization even if they have no intention of pursuing an application with that firm. This highlights the difference between an individual's affective response to a firm that offers attractive employment and their actual behavioral intentions. While the popular literature often states that older white collar workers are attracted by certain organizational policies, it may be the case that this attraction does not always translate into actually applying for work. Thus, empirical or non-empirical work that is based on a premise that older white collar retirees are interested in returning to employment may lead many organizations in the upcoming years to have unrealistic expectations regarding the number of older, experienced applicants that seek employment. This finding also suggests that our academic models of the return to work need to make a clear distinction between attraction to a firm and actual re-entry into the workforce.

Organizations will need to focus on what really matters to older white collar workers in order to entice them back to work, especially because our results show that pay alone may not be enough and that overall interest in the return to work is quite modest. Results from the current study suggest that pay may not be effective in recruiting older workers back to work, especially white collar workers. Even

though finances have been consistently reported as one of the biggest concerns for those at or approaching retirement age (United States Government Accountability Office, 2005), these findings are based on responses from all occupational groups and may not generalize to professional workers.

In our sample, most individuals were satisfied with their level of financial security and this may have been the cause of the modest effects of pay and the relatively low level of interest in the return to work. Organizations that wish to stay on top of the changing demographics of the workforce need to begin to view money as a basic but perhaps not central incentive for financially secure older workers, while still acknowledging other important factors that help determine when older professionals choose between full retirement and workforce reentry.

Like income, targeted diversity statements have also been regarded as a possible strategy to attract older workers back into the workforce. Research surrounding age discrimination and prejudice mention how age prejudice is one of the most socially accepted forms of prejudice in America today (Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006). Whereas most people regard discrimination or prejudice as being composed of race or gender based qualities, age is quickly being used as a method to judge occupational fitness, mental ability, or overall vitality. As noted earlier, older employees are quite aware of these negative stereotypes. Therefore, it is easy to see why organizational policies that recognize age explicitly could have an impact on professional workers' views of the organizational climate. Any employee, regardless of age, wants to be valued and desired because of their personal work accomplishment, abilities, and talents, not demographic differences.

In the current study, we found that the impact of a diversity policy on organizational attraction was moderated by the level of pay associated with work. In the condition where pay was the same level as the last paid employment, the presence of a diversity policy did not significantly impact interest in applying to the firm. On the other hand, when pay was 10% higher than previous employment, the presence of a diversity policy had a positive, significant impact on interest in applying to the firm. It may be the case that the presence of a diversity policy interacts with more basic organizational characteristics such as pay or benefits, and has the strongest impact when these basic characteristics are favorable.

Our findings strengthen the existing literature by offering an experimental approach that simultaneously supports and challenges the previous findings from survey methods. Results from the current study suggest that while finances and diversity policies have some impact on respondent's interest in pursuing an application with the organization, still overall levels of interest in applying in general are modest at best (2.45 on a 5-point scale). This finding highlights the complexity of retirement and the return to work. Although many studies have found that finances and working for a diverse friendly organization play an important role in retirement decisions in the general population of retirees (Reynolds et al., 2005; United States Government Accountability Office, 2005), preliminary surveys by AARP (2004) suggest that social incentives and intellectual needs may be more important factors for organizations to consider when recruiting older workers.

It is important to recognize the differences between this particular demographic group and entry level applicants with respect to employment decisions. In designing an incentive system to recruit older white collar workers, organizations

need to be aware of how older employees are distinctly different from their younger cohorts. For example, perhaps pay or income is not so important to older white collar workers because a larger proportion of this group has adequate savings for retirement. Results from an AARP (2004) study report that 80% of affluent Baby Boomers are satisfied with their savings.

We should emphasize that this finding cannot be generalized to all occupational groups; not all older workers are satisfied with their savings for retirement. For example, results from Reynolds et al. (2005), reported 54% of older workers feel the need to return to work after retirement because they need the income. Clearly, the discrepancy in the literature surrounding the importance of money is likely to be due to the varying types of work as either blue color or white collar as well as individual differences in the ability to save money for retirement.

Theoretically this is an important distinction because the employment behavior of Baby Boomers may differ as a function of many variables, including their financial status. However, they are often treated as an undifferentiated mass in the popular literature and by some employers when in fact there are many features that separate and divide this large demographic group; “blue-collar” and “white collar” are designations that are probably proxies for underlying psychological and economic variables that drive the differences between these two groups. Additional retirement research needs to be conducted on these two explicitly different economic facets of workers in order to understand the social-psychological and economic incentives that are key in recruiting both, and the factors that contribute to the return to work in both groups. From an applied perspective, it is important for organizations to

recognize these differences in order to design optimal incentive programs in order to successfully compete for given types of employees.

Age is as politically and legally sensitive in employment settings as gender, race, and religion. The results discussed suggest that targeting older workers through an explicit statement of interest in their group in a job advertisement may not be as effective unless coupled with other factors such as favorable levels of pay. This could be due a number of factors, including the interplay of target demographics, labor market realities, and person and job stereotypes, within the broader social context (Goldberg, 2007).

Recruiting older workers poses a number of challenges to employers because of an interplay between labor market realities regarding availability of older applicants and the impact of person and job stereotypes on the availability of job opportunities for older workers (Goldberg, 2007). As organizations begin to feel the effects of reductions in professional workforces due to the aging baby boomers, they will begin to hire individuals into more stereotype-inconsistent jobs, with younger workers or workers of different demographics holding the position formerly populated by boomers and older workers re-introduced into “age-inappropriate” jobs. Over time, the perceptions of the typical age of job incumbents may change. If younger workers are be exposed more and more to effective older professional workers, this could cause a potential positive shift in attitudes toward this group.

One finding that we did not anticipate was older workers reports of low interest in application to the job. Popular research has painted a picture of older workers eager to get back to the grid iron after a year or two of boring retirement. However, our results suggest something very different. The years since retirement

had no impact on interest of workers in returning to work ( $r = .01$  for attraction to the firm;  $r = .11$  for interest in applying). Available research suggests that the vast majority of retirees are quite happy in retirement (Ryff, Kwan, & Singer, 2001). Older white collar workers are skilled workers who have been working for several years in advanced positions and many have been well-paid for it. Although research highlights the number of older workers who fear that their personal finances may not be enough to sustain them through retirement, financially secure older workers do not wrestle with this issue and often report that they are not interested in returning to the workforce. One participant said it best as he handed his survey back: “The [scenario] seems great, but there is nothing anyone can do to get me to go back to work. I’m done.” Despite longer retention rates in white collar jobs (Berman, 2001; Riggs, 2004; Yeatts, Folts & Knapp, 2000), our sample of older workers indicate that once these workers have left employment, they may not be motivated to return. Incentive packages designed to encourage workforce reentry will have to take the specific needs and desires of this population into account.

Although the majority of the participants in this sample reported a relatively low level of interest in application, 42% of our participants responded with a moderate to high level of interest in application. Out of these respondents, diversity statements emerged to be the most important variable. This finding is consistent with previous research (Doverspike & Tuel, 2000; Lefkovich, 1992; Taylor, Shultz, & Doverspike, 2005) and highlights how age-friendly organizations may prove to be more competitive in business. Therefore, if older white collar workers are in fact interested in applying to an organization later in life, they may be most attracted to the inclusion of a diversity policy targeted at valuing older employees. This result has

important implications for organizations that will need effective recruitment strategies in order to attract valuable older workers to apply to their organizations.

For example, the participants in this study that were identified as reporting a moderate-to-high level of interest in applying to the organization displayed several important characteristics that are useful to recognize. Overall, these participants reported being very health, highly educated, and financially well-off. Therefore, these individuals are likely to be attracted to continue work post-retirement because they are physically able to, making a variety of work options possible. Also, these individuals are highly educated, suggesting that they gain stimulation and enrichment from intellectual or engaging environments, such as those found in the workplace. Lastly, these individuals reported feeling good about their financial status after retirement, meaning that money alone is not the motivating factor for these older white collar retirees. When taken together, these demographics can help organizations to recognize the types of older workers that are interested in working and applying for work post-retirement. Recognizing the demographic trends of older workers can help human resource departments tailor their recruitment strategies in order to target this specific, high interest group.

Although most employers have yet to engage in the active recruitment of older employees utilizing a specialized diversity policy, the results of the current study demonstrate the need for organizations to create positive impressions of their firm's climate. Employers should be sensitive to the presence of negative beliefs regarding the abilities of older individuals in their firm, and personnel policies should be reviewed to ensure that they are not discriminatory in order to encourage older applicants to consider employment and application with the company. Lastly, our



study supports the use of diversity policies by acknowledging that adding or improving a diversity policy is a simple and inexpensive way to improve the outcome of recruiting older workers.

Older adults correspond to the largest proportion of society's population. This population is living longer due to healthier lifestyles, and thus, has the capacity to work longer than earlier generations did. However, this is not what is happening. Instead, the increasing life span has occurred alongside decreasing retirement ages (Beehr & Bennett, 2007). This trend toward complete exit from the workforce post-retirement has important implications for predictions of labor shortages in this type of work. If older white collar workers were motivated to return to work after retirement, there would be no need for organizations to strongly consider the impacts of long-term workforce planning. However, this is not the case. To lure older white collar workers back to work, employers must provide very attractive, flexible, psychologically rich work alternatives. Simply put, employers who provide flexible and powerful incentives for older employees to continue work may be the organizations that are most likely to maintain a competitive advantage well into year 2011- when the oldest baby boomers will be 65 years old.



## CHAPTER FIVE LIMITATIONS

Several limitations may have influenced the results we obtained and should be noted. First, the geographic region of the rural southeast may lead to difficulties in generalizing results to other regions- especially since pay was a factor of interest and this study did not take into account the low cost of living in this area in relation to that of other regions. Second, the demographics of the sample have unique characteristics. For example, this sample consisted of only white collar, healthy workers mostly from an educational setting. While this was the targeted sample of the current study, obtaining data only from this group prevents us from making comparisons across other occupations as range restriction may be an issue. However our demographic findings are generally consistent with those reported from other professional settings.

Additionally, many of our participants reported being retired under the age of 60. This leaves room for conclusions about the role that occupation plays in regards to financial security and the ability to save prior to retirement. Also, the majority of our sample used the internet as a source of response. This too highlights the uniqueness of our sample.

Although these limitations may have influenced our results, the current study also has methodological strengths that should be noted. First, given the lack of experimentally based empirical research targeting older applicants, the current study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in this area. The vast majority of

research has typically been conducted using survey methods and the current study adds to the literature by introducing a study that allows us to make causal statements regarding the importance of various factors in prediction the interest in return to work and organizational attraction.

## CHAPTER SIX DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research needs to continue to address the complex nature of retirement. For example, research on retirement may need to begin to address blue collar and white collar older workers as two different demographic groups. The needs, motivations, perceptions, and preferences for these two groups are likely to be very different. Future research needs to address these concerns from both an individual and an organizational perspective.

Research has shown that flexible work hours may be effective for organizations. However, the AARP and SHRM have both estimated that only a small percentage of employers offer flexible work arrangements to employees. Beyond the problem of too few employers implementing flexible work policies, too few researchers have investigated which type of flexible work schedule is optimal for older workers. Future research may want to explicitly address a variety of flexible work arrangement to identify which schedules are viewed as most attractive for older white collar workers interested in returning to work.

Unfortunately, traditional retention and recruiting strategies are often targeted at younger workers, leaving a gap in the research pertaining to older employees (Doverspike & Tuel, 2000). The older portion of the professional work population has work related desires, motivations and preferences that have yet to be sufficiently addressed by traditional human resource methods. Theories of work behavior such as Disengagement Theory (Adams, 2004) and Continuity Theory (Kim

& Feldman, 2000) suggest that even workers who are highly work involved find substitutes for the social and psychological stimulation of work, and disengage from employment as they approach retirement while continuing valued activities that are non-work related. Empirical findings are supportive of this suggestion and show that high commitment to work and high work identification still do not translate into an interest in returning to employment (Taylor, Shultz, Morrison, & Greene, 2007).

The lack of the interest in return to work for older adults, in particular, needs more attention. The suggestion that older white collar workers may simply not be interested in returning to work forces organizations across the country to tackle a new, seemingly more difficult question: What will organizations do if they can't attract and retain the older workers that will leave the workforce in large numbers over the next decade?

## CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study adds to the growing body of literature surrounding America's aging workers and contributes empirical strength. As the baby-boomer population ages, the number of retirees will increase to levels never seen before (Beehr & Bennett, 2007). For example, the US Census Bureau (2000) predicts that between 2000 and 2040, the number of Americans aged 65 and older will double to more than 77 million, while the number of working adults between the ages of 25-54 will increase by only 12 percent. The imbalance between the number of older Americans leaving the workforce and the number of incoming potential employees makes an outnumbered employment demand seem inevitable. Clearly, the wave of Baby Boomers is demanding research to focus more effort towards the impact of retirement on the American workforce.

However, through research, such as the current study, employers can develop a deeper appreciation and understanding of the complexity of the retirement process, its financial, social, and most meaningful components. Clearly, industrial-organizational psychologists and human resource professionals need to invest time and energy in examining more closely the motivations, desires, and interests of this dynamic and complex proportion of the workforce.





## APPENDICES

## Appendix A

### Scenarios

The job scenarios used in this experimental work are listed below.

#### NOW HIRING

JD Corporation has expanded and we are currently seeking outstanding candidates to fill available positions. We are offering once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to qualified individuals in your area of interest/specialty. JD Corporation aims to achieve excellence by challenging employees in a highly engaging and intellectual atmosphere. The Corporation is a well-established organization that encourages creative thinking. Your salary will be **10% lower/10% higher** than that of your previous employer. As an employee of JD Corporation you can look forward to **regularly scheduled hours/flexible scheduling**. JD Corporation is an **equal employment opportunity employer / equal employment opportunity employer and an organization that encourages applications from experienced, retired older workers.**

Appendix B

Demographic Questions and Control Variables

Gender (circle one):            1. Male            2. Female

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Age at Retirement: \_\_\_\_\_

Years since retired: \_\_\_\_\_

If not yet retired, age you wish to retire at: \_\_\_\_\_

Pre- Retirement Occupation (please circle one):

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Education/Teaching        | 5. Legal Occupation        |
| 2. Business/Sales/Management | 6. Healthcare Practitioner |
| 3. Office/Administrator      | 7. Construction            |
| 4. Engineering/Architecture  | 8. Transportation          |
| 5. Legal Occupations         | 9. Other: _____            |

Current Occupation, if any (please circle one):

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Education/Teaching        | 6. Healthcare Practitioner |
| 2. Business/Sales/Management | 7. Construction            |
| 3. Office/Administrator      | 8. Transportation          |
| 4. Engineering/Architecture  | 9. Other: _____            |
| 5. Legal Occupations         |                            |

Marital Status (please circle one):

- Married            Single    Divorced    Widow    Other

Number of dependents: \_\_\_\_\_

Ages of dependents: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Ethnic Identification (please circle one number):

1. Caucasian/White
2. African American/Black
3. American Indian
4. Asian
5. Hispanic
6. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Education (please circle the highest grade or degree that you completed):

1. 11<sup>th</sup> grade or lower
2. High School Diploma or GED
3. Some College / Associate's Degree
4. Bachelor's Degree
5. Master's Degree
6. PhD / EDD / JD / MD or Highest Degree Possible
7. Other degree (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_

What was your personal income before taxes this past year? (please circle one)

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. \$10,000 – 19,000 | 7. \$70,000 – 80,000    |
| 2. \$20,000 – 29,000 | 8. \$80,000 – 90,000    |
| 3. \$30,000 – 39,000 | 9. \$90,000 – 100,000   |
| 4. \$40,000 – 49,000 | 10. \$100,000 – 124,999 |
| 5. \$50,000 – 59,000 | 11. \$125,000 – 149,000 |
| 6. \$60,000 - 70,000 | 12. \$150,000 – Or More |

If your car is broken, how do you get around (please circle one):

- |                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Bus                         | 5. Spouse      |
| 2. Other public transportation | 6. Walk        |
| 3. Cab                         | 7. Other _____ |
| 4. Friend                      |                |

How far did you commute to your last job? \_\_\_\_\_miles, or \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

Do you live in a rural or an urban area? (please circle one):

1. Rural
2. Urban

If you could no longer drive, how significant of an impact do you think that would make on your current lifestyle? (circle one):

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Significant	Somewhat Significant	Moderately Significant	Very Significant	Extremely Significant

If you could no longer drive, how do you think you would get around?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Please rate the level of your health:

Poor                  fair                  averagegood                  excellent

My pension will be adequate to meet my financial needs after retirement (circle one):

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Adequate	Somewhat Adequate	Moderately Adequate	Very Adequate	Extremely Adequate

I believe that I will be financially comfortable after retirement (circle one):

1	2	3	4	5
Poor Financial	Fair Financial	Average Financial	Good Financial	Great Financial

Appendix C

Dependent Variables

Organizational Attraction:

For the following questions, please circle one response:

1. What is the extent to which you would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company?

1	2	3	4	5
No Effort	Some Effort	Moderate Effort	Good Effort	Extreme Effort

2. Indicate your interest in pursuing an application with the company:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Interested	Somewhat Interested	Moderately Interested	Very Interested	Extremely Interested

3. Please indicate how much you would like to work for this company:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely

4. Please indicate how likely you would be to accept a job offer from this company:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Likely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Very Likely	Extremely Likely

5. Please indicate your interest in accepting a job interview for this company, if invited:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Interested	Somewhat Interested	Moderately Interested	Very Interested	Extremely Interested

Interest in Application:

For the following questions, please circle one response:

1. The work climate at this firm is probably positive:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree

2. This firm would provide fulfilling work opportunities for me:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree

3. This company seems to value all its workers:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree

4. I think I would enjoy working in a company like this one:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree

5. This firm seems to be a good place for older employees to work:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree

6. What is the likelihood that this firm would offer a supportive environment for older workers?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Likely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Very Likely	Extremely Likely

Appendix D

Frequency Tables for Control Variables

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	93	57.8	60.8	60.8
	female	60	37.3	39.2	100.0
	Total	153	95.0	100.0	
Missing	System	8	5.0		
Total		161	100.0		

Ethnicity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Caucasian/White	149	92.5	98.7	98.7
	African American/Black	1	.6	.7	99.3
	Asian	1	.6	.7	100.0
	Total	151	93.8	100.0	
	Missing	System	10	6.2	
Total		161	100.0		

Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	married	134	83.2	87.6	87.6
	single	4	2.5	2.6	90.2
	divorced	7	4.3	4.6	94.8
	widow	8	5.0	5.2	100.0
	Total	153	95.0	100.0	
Missing	System	8	5.0		
Total		161	100.0		



Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	41	1	.6	.6	.6
	44	1	.6	.6	1.3
	46	2	1.2	1.3	2.6
	50	1	.6	.6	3.2
	51	1	.6	.6	3.9
	52	1	.6	.6	4.5
	54	1	.6	.6	5.2
	55	3	1.9	1.9	7.1
	56	2	1.2	1.3	8.4
	57	2	1.2	1.3	9.7
	58	3	1.9	1.9	11.7
	59	4	2.5	2.6	14.3
	60	6	3.7	3.9	18.2
	61	5	3.1	3.2	21.4
	62	3	1.9	1.9	23.4
	63	5	3.1	3.2	26.6
	64	9	5.6	5.8	32.5
	65	19	11.8	12.3	44.8
	66	7	4.3	4.5	49.4
	67	4	2.5	2.6	51.9
	68	4	2.5	2.6	54.5
	69	5	3.1	3.2	57.8
	70	13	8.1	8.4	66.2
	71	7	4.3	4.5	70.8
	72	10	6.2	6.5	77.3
	73	3	1.9	1.9	79.2
	74	5	3.1	3.2	82.5
	75	4	2.5	2.6	85.1
	76	4	2.5	2.6	87.7
	77	2	1.2	1.3	89.0
	78	4	2.5	2.6	91.6
	79	1	.6	.6	92.2
	80	3	1.9	1.9	94.2
	81	1	.6	.6	94.8
	82	1	.6	.6	95.5
	83	2	1.2	1.3	96.8
	84	2	1.2	1.3	98.1
	89	2	1.2	1.3	99.4
	90	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	154	95.7	100.0	
Missing	System	7	4.3		
Total		161	100.0		

Age at Retirement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30	1	.6	.7	.7
	39	1	.6	.7	1.5
	44	1	.6	.7	2.2
	49	2	1.2	1.5	3.7
	50	1	.6	.7	4.4
	51	2	1.2	1.5	5.9
	52	5	3.1	3.7	9.6
	53	3	1.9	2.2	11.9
	54	3	1.9	2.2	14.1
	55	8	5.0	5.9	20.0
	56	5	3.1	3.7	23.7
	57	5	3.1	3.7	27.4
	58	5	3.1	3.7	31.1
	59	8	5.0	5.9	37.0
	60	6	3.7	4.4	41.5
	61	4	2.5	3.0	44.4
	62	22	13.7	16.3	60.7
	63	6	3.7	4.4	65.2
	64	11	6.8	8.1	73.3
	65	10	6.2	7.4	80.7
	66	6	3.7	4.4	85.2
	67	6	3.7	4.4	89.6
	68	3	1.9	2.2	91.9
	69	3	1.9	2.2	94.1
	70	4	2.5	3.0	97.0
	72	2	1.2	1.5	98.5
	73	2	1.2	1.5	100.0
	Total	135	83.9	100.0	
Missing	System	26	16.1		
Total		161	100.0		

Date You Retired

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1983	1	.6	.8	.8
	1985	1	.6	.8	1.5
	1986	1	.6	.8	2.3
	1987	7	4.3	5.3	7.6
	1988	1	.6	.8	8.3
	1989	3	1.9	2.3	10.6
	1990	4	2.5	3.0	13.6
	1991	4	2.5	3.0	16.7
	1992	3	1.9	2.3	18.9
	1993	4	2.5	3.0	22.0
	1994	7	4.3	5.3	27.3
	1995	2	1.2	1.5	28.8
	1996	2	1.2	1.5	30.3
	1997	12	7.5	9.1	39.4
	1998	4	2.5	3.0	42.4
	1999	6	3.7	4.5	47.0
	2000	5	3.1	3.8	50.8
	2001	12	7.5	9.1	59.8
	2002	10	6.2	7.6	67.4
	2003	10	6.2	7.6	75.0
2004	11	6.8	8.3	83.3	
2005	10	6.2	7.6	90.9	
2006	11	6.8	8.3	99.2	
2007	1	.6	.8	100.0	
	Total	132	82.0	100.0	
Missing	System	29	18.0		
Total		161	100.0		

Did you leave as part of the TERI program?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	14	8.7	11.1	11.1
	no	112	69.6	88.9	100.0
	Total	126	78.3	100.0	
Missing	System	35	21.7		
Total		161	100.0		

Currently a part of the TERI program?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no	136	84.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	25	15.5		
Total		161	100.0		

If not yet, age you wish to retire?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	50	1	.6	5.9	5.9
	53	1	.6	5.9	11.8
	57	1	.6	5.9	17.6
	59	1	.6	5.9	23.5
	60	1	.6	5.9	29.4
	62	1	.6	5.9	35.3
	63	1	.6	5.9	41.2
	65	3	1.9	17.6	58.8
	67	1	.6	5.9	64.7
	70	1	.6	5.9	70.6
	72	2	1.2	11.8	82.4
	75	1	.6	5.9	88.2
	99	1	.6	5.9	94.1
	100	1	.6	5.9	100.0
	Total	17	10.6	100.0	
Missing	System	144	89.4		
Total		161	100.0		

Pre-retirement Occupation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	education/teaching	81	50.3	52.6	52.6
	buisness/sales	16	9.9	10.4	63.0
	office/administrator	11	6.8	7.1	70.1
	engineer/arch	12	7.5	7.8	77.9
	legal occ	1	.6	.6	78.6
	healthcare	7	4.3	4.5	83.1
	construction	3	1.9	1.9	85.1
	transportation	1	.6	.6	85.7
	other	22	13.7	14.3	100.0
	Total	154	95.7	100.0	
Missing	System	7	4.3		
Total		161	100.0		

Current Occupation, if any

		Frequenc y	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	education/teaching	15	9.3	20.3	20.3
	buisness/sales	5	3.1	6.8	27.0
	office/administrator	4	2.5	5.4	32.4
	engineering/arch	2	1.2	2.7	35.1
	healthcare	3	1.9	4.1	39.2
	construction	7	4.3	9.5	48.6
	other	38	23.6	51.4	100.0
	Total	74	46.0	100.0	
Missing	System	87	54.0		
Total		161	100.0		

Number of Dependents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	94	58.4	68.6	68.6
	1	33	20.5	24.1	92.7
	2	8	5.0	5.8	98.5
	3	2	1.2	1.5	100.0
	Total	137	85.1	100.0	
Missing	System	24	14.9		
Total		161	100.0		

Age of First Dependent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	1	.6	3.0	3.0
	18	1	.6	3.0	6.1
	21	1	.6	3.0	9.1
	34	1	.6	3.0	12.1
	43	1	.6	3.0	15.2
	49	1	.6	3.0	18.2
	50	1	.6	3.0	21.2
	60	2	1.2	6.1	27.3
	62	3	1.9	9.1	36.4
	64	4	2.5	12.1	48.5
	65	2	1.2	6.1	54.5
	67	2	1.2	6.1	60.6
	68	1	.6	3.0	63.6
	69	1	.6	3.0	66.7
	70	2	1.2	6.1	72.7
	71	2	1.2	6.1	78.8
	74	1	.6	3.0	81.8
	75	1	.6	3.0	84.8
	76	1	.6	3.0	87.9
	77	1	.6	3.0	90.9
	78	2	1.2	6.1	97.0
	81	1	.6	3.0	100.0
	Total	33	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	128	79.5		
Total		161	100.0		

Age of Second Dependent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16	1	.6	9.1	9.1
	21	1	.6	9.1	18.2
	22	1	.6	9.1	27.3
	28	1	.6	9.1	36.4
	31	1	.6	9.1	45.5
	36	1	.6	9.1	54.5
	40	1	.6	9.1	63.6
	47	1	.6	9.1	72.7
	64	2	1.2	18.2	90.9
	65	1	.6	9.1	100.0
Total		11	6.8	100.0	
Missing	System	150	93.2		
Total		161	100.0		

Highest Education Completed

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	high school or GED	1	.6	.7	.7
	Some college	24	14.9	15.7	16.3
	Bachelor's	27	16.8	17.6	34.0
	Master's degree	38	23.6	24.8	58.8
	PhD,EED,JD,MD or highest	62	38.5	40.5	99.3
	other	1	.6	.7	100.0
	Total	153	95.0	100.0	
Missing	System	8	5.0		
Total		161	100.0		

Household Income Before Taxes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	40-49k	11	6.8	8.8	8.8
	50-59k	11	6.8	8.8	17.6
	60-70k	14	8.7	11.2	28.8
	70-80k	14	8.7	11.2	40.0
	80-90k	16	9.9	12.8	52.8
	90-100k	17	10.6	13.6	66.4
	100-124,999k	23	14.3	18.4	84.8
	125-149k	7	4.3	5.6	90.4
	150k or more	12	7.5	9.6	100.0
	Total	125	77.6	100.0	
	Missing	System	36	22.4	
Total		161	100.0		

Rate Your Overall Level of Health

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	poor	1	.6	.7	.7
	fair	7	4.3	4.7	5.4
	average	10	6.2	6.7	12.1
	good	73	45.3	49.0	61.1
	excellent	58	36.0	38.9	100.0
	Total	149	92.5	100.0	
Missing	System	12	7.5		
Total		161	100.0		

Are you caring for someone in poor health?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	14	8.7	10.0	10.0
	no	126	78.3	90.0	100.0
	Total	140	87.0	100.0	
Missing	System	21	13.0		
Total		161	100.0		



If yes, would this prevent you from working part-time?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	17	10.6	42.5	42.5
	no	23	14.3	57.5	100.0
	Total	40	24.8	100.0	
Missing	System	121	75.2		
Total		161	100.0		

Rate the perceived adequacy of your income post-retirement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not at all	2	1.2	1.3	1.3
	somewhat	7	4.3	4.6	5.9
	moderately	44	27.3	28.9	34.9
	very	84	52.2	55.3	90.1
	extremely	15	9.3	9.9	100.0
	Total	152	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	9	5.6		
Total		161	100.0		

I believe that my financial status after retirement will be...

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	poor	2	1.2	1.4	1.4
	fair	7	4.3	5.0	6.5
	average	28	17.4	20.1	26.6
	good	87	54.0	62.6	89.2
	great	15	9.3	10.8	100.0
	Total	139	86.3	100.0	
Missing	System	22	13.7		
Total		161	100.0		

Was your work prior to retirement flexible in terms of hours you kept?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	83	51.6	56.5	56.5
	no	64	39.8	43.5	100.0
	Total	147	91.3	100.0	
Missing	System	14	8.7		
Total		161	100.0		

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