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ALL DIFFERENT BUT ALL EQUAL? THE ROLE OF AGE ON THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN HR PRACTICES AND TURNOVER INTENTION AND EMPLOYEE WELL-
BEING

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Acknowledgments

Run to the rescue with love and peace will follow.

River Phoenix

My father always taught me that the best way to live is to live freely. And in order to live freely we must excel in the things we are passionate about, promptly giving our best in all situations, being resilient and hardworking. This was a year-long work, a hard and passionate research project that not only enlightened me about what we can do better to improve our organizations but also about resiliency, perseverance and focus.

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Acronyms

HR – Human Resources

HRM – Human Resource Management

HRDP – Human Resources Development Practices

HRMP – Human Resources Maintenance Practices

FWP – Flexible Work Practices

Abstract

In recent decades there has been a global aging phenomenon, resulting in a more age diverse workforce. This phenomenon represents a challenge for organizations, which have the need to attract and retain the best talents through Human Resource Management (HRM). Prior research has shown inconsistencies on the study of the impact of age in the relation between human resources (HR) practices and work-related outcomes. Drawing on Social Exchange, Signaling and Conservation of Resources theories, this research aims to examine the role of chronological age and life stage in the relationship between HR practices and individual (i.e. well-being) and organizational outcomes (i.e. turnover intention). A sample of 365 employees participated in this time-lagged study, by answering to two questionnaires. Three bundles of HR practices were studied. Development Practices (HRDP), Maintenance Practices (HRMP) and Flexible Practices (FWP) showed a negative impact on turnover intention. However, only HRDP positively influenced well-being. Further, nor age nor life stage moderated the relation between HR practices and the studied outcomes. Findings suggest that to retain employees and promote their well-being, organizations should provide HRDP, HRMP and FWP to all employees, regardless of age or life stage. This research contributes to the HRM literature, by showing that age does not moderate the impact of these practices on individual and organizational outcomes, and that professional development is an important part of well-being.

Keywords: Human resources practices, age, life stage, turnover intention, well-being

JELL Classification: M12 (Personnel Management)

Resumo

Nas últimas décadas tem-se observado um fenómeno de envelhecimento global, resultando numa força de trabalho mais etariamente diversa. Este fenómeno representa um desafio para as organizações, que necessitam de atrair e reter o melhor talento através da Gestão de Recursos Humanos (GRH). Investigação anterior mostra inconsistências no estudo do impacto da idade na relação entre as Práticas de Recursos Humanos (PRH) e as variáveis relacionadas com o trabalho. Tendo em conta as teorias da Troca Social, da Sinalização e da Conservação de Recursos, esta investigação pretende examinar o papel da idade cronológica e da fase de vida na relação entre as PRH e variáveis individuais (i.e., bem-estar) e organizacionais (i.e., intenção de saída). Uma amostra de 365 trabalhadores participaram neste estudo *time-lagged*, respondendo a dois questionários. Foram estudados três conjuntos de PRH. As Práticas de Desenvolvimento (HRDP), Práticas de Manutenção (HRMP) e Práticas Flexíveis (FWP) mostraram um impacto negativo na intenção de turnover. No entanto, apenas as HRDP mostraram um impacto positivo no bem-estar. Além disso, nem a idade nem a fase de vida moderaram a relação entre as PRH e as variáveis estudadas. Os resultados sugerem que, para reter os trabalhadores e promover o seu bem-estar, as organizações devem providenciar HRDP, HRMP e FWP a todos, independentemente da sua idade ou fase de vida. Esta investigação contribui para a literatura sobre a GRH, mostrando que a idade não modera o efeito destas práticas nas variáveis individuais e organizacionais e, que o desenvolvimento profissional é uma parte importante do bem-estar.

Palavras-chave: Práticas de recursos humanos, idade, fase de vida, intenção de turnover, bem-estar.

Classificação JELL: M12 (Gestão de Pessoal)

Introduction

In the beginning of the 21st century, some authors previewed that it would be characterized by a shortage of highly qualified workers and a consequential *war for talent* (Michaels, Handfield-Jones & Axelrod, 2001; Burke & Ng, 2006). An increase in life expectancy and a decrease in mortality and birth rates are contributing to a world aging phenomenon, which is consequently promoting a shortage of available qualified workers. In countries such as Portugal, in which some sectors are growing, for example Hospitality and IT, there is an urgent need to increase the number of available highly qualified individuals (INE, 2018; Atomico, 2018). Portugal in specific is characterized by a population that is aging fast. With an Aging Index of 161.3%, which means that per 100 young people, there are 161 elders (PORDATA, 2019), low mortality and birth rates (PORDATA, 2019) and an increase of the retirement age, which as of 2019 was 66.5 years old (Banco de Portugal, 2019), there is a need to increase the number of available highly qualified individuals in Portugal and attract them to the organizations.

The lack of young people entering the workforce, and the increase of the retirement ages around the world, which results in a higher number of older workers, has been stimulating individuals to stay in their organizations until they are older, creating an extremely age-diverse workforce and longer working lives.

As older people are becoming a great portion of the workforce, there is a need to study how people age and which changes happen throughout one's life. The process of aging involves both losses and gains (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004), and authors state that it is important for all individuals to be able to increase or maintain their functioning levels while managing this aging process or even manage functioning at lower levels (Baltes, Staudinger & Lindenberger, 1999). Not only this, but according to the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), throughout life individuals have the goal to obtain, retain, promote and protect key resources, which help them manage the demands of different domains of their lives (e.g., work and non-work). When individuals fail to do so, even if there is a significant amount of effort put in this process, stress levels are likely to increase (Hobfoll, 1989; Allen, Johnson Kiburz & Shockley, 2013). Some authors point out that the need that an individual has for specific resources might change throughout life. According to Cartensen's (1992) Social-Emotional Selectivity Theory, the needs and motives of people change throughout their lives. Accordingly, older people tend to focus more on emotional, present-time oriented goals, since they perceive they have less time left than younger people, who focus more in future-time oriented goals (Cartensen, 2006).

Following the underlying principle of Cartensen's theory, as motives change, the demands faced by each individual and the resources needed to balance these demands, also change with age. Consequently, the preference for some HR practices, which work as a way of providing different resources to employees, in detriment of others, might also change throughout one's life.

Organizations play an important part, both in establishing the right strategies to recruit and attract the best talent, and in finding ways to maintain their age-diverse workers in the organization, while contributing to an increase of their employees' resources. A way to increase working individuals' resources is through Human Resources (HR) practices (Veth, Korzilius, Van der Heijden, Emans & de Lange, 2017). HR practices are key tools that help organizations develop and manage their people's careers, through changes in their behaviors, while also increasing individual and organizational performance (Pinto, Ramos & Nunes, 2015). These practices also work as a signal to employees that the organization is willing to invest in their development and that it cares about them (Innocenti, Profilli & Sammarra, 2013; Blau, 1964; Casper & Harris, 2008). This perception reinforces a psychological contract between the employee and the employer, with balanced social exchanges between the two parties – the implementation of HR practices from the organization side and performance and organizational commitment from the employee side (Guest, 2002) –, creating in employees a need to retribute the concern showed by the company with positive attitudes, such as higher levels of engagement and lower turnover intention (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Lee, Sohn, Kim, Kwon & Park, 2018).

HR Practices can be seen from a lot of different points of view. Some authors define High-Performance HR Practices (Kehoe & Wright, 2010), while others define HR Development and HR Maintenance Practices (Kooij, Guest, Clinton, Knight, Jansen & Dikkers, 2012). Kooij and colleagues (2012) define two bundles of HR practices, practices that enhance individual development (HRDP), such as learning opportunities at work, and practices that allow individuals to maintain their functioning levels at work (HRMP), such as fair performance appraisal processes. These bundles of practices seem to have a positive influence on variables such as work satisfaction, affective commitment, and well-being (Kooij et al., 2012; Innocenti et al., 2013). However, these bundles lack practices related with flexible work arrangements, which can also provide a way for individuals to obtain time-related resources. Flexible work practices (FWP) allow employees to choose when (flextime), where (flexspace) or for how long they want to

work (Hill, Jacob, Shannon, Brennan, Blanchard & Martinengo, 2008) and studies have been reaching the conclusion that flexible work arrangements also signal a concern from the organization towards the employee (Blau, 1964; Casper & Harris, 2008), resulting in higher loyalty towards the organization, as well as better health (Halpern, 2005) and lower levels of stress (Grzywacz, Carlson & Schulkin, 2008).

As mentioned before, age is a characteristic that seems particularly relevant within the current workforce aging phenomenon. As societies age, due to low fertility rates and higher life expectancy, as well as to a general increase in the retirement age, some individuals need to continue working until they are older. This promotes a highly age diverse workforce, and organizations have an urgency in finding out how to provide employees with resources that contribute to longer and happier working lives.

Following this reasoning, some authors have been investigating the relationship between HR practices and outcomes, for both the employee and the organization, considering employees' age. However, findings in the literature are mixed and unclear regarding this subject. Some authors found a moderating influence of chronological age in the relation between HRDP and HRMP, and organizational and individual outcomes, such as well-being, affective commitment, work satisfaction and intention to leave (Kooij et al., 2012; Innocenti et al., 2013), while others have not found any type of moderating effect of chronological age (Veth et al., 2017; Pinto et al., 2015) on this relationship.

In order to try to clarify the literature, regarding the relationship between HR practices and different organizational and employee outcomes and age, one of the goals of this dissertation is to examine whether chronological age can be considered a moderator in the relationship between the perception of specific types of HR practices and outcomes such as turnover intention (i.e., organizational outcome) and well-being (i.e., individual outcome).

Some authors suggest that the mixed results found in the literature regarding the part that age plays in the abovementioned relationship, might be explained by the diverse changes that are experienced throughout one's life course, which are not always accurately reflected by one's chronological age (Veth et al., 2017; Kooij, Jansen, Dijkers & de Lange, 2014). These authors suggest that age is studied from a different perspective, for example from the perspective of aging through the lifespan (i.e., life stage). Besides chronological age, this study also focuses on examining aging at work from a life stage point of view.

Studying aging from a lifespan perspective becomes particularly important, because besides the aging phenomenon that has been seen in Portugal, there have also been some interesting biopsychosocial changes that might promote diversity within the workforce and are worth examining. Since 1984, the age of a mother when her first child is born has been increasing, from 23.5 years old in 1984 to 30.5 years old in 2019 (PORDATA, 2019). Also, according to Eurostat (2018), in Portugal young people have been showing a tendency to leave their parents house's later, with most leaving at 29 years old, which is above the EU mean of 26 years old. Besides, in 2018, 45.6% of Portuguese people aged 25-34 years old still lived in their parents' house (Eurostat, 2018), meaning that the transition to adulthood today is very different than what it looked like 10 years ago. In 2019, people aged 20 to 30 years old were very likely to still be living in their parents' house and have no kids at all. The focus of these young adults revolves around starting a career and developing themselves, while preparing for the future ahead. However, for young adults from 10 years ago, the focus revolved around finding a significant other and starting a family, while providing for it. Therefore, the demands upon most young adults today are different from the ones upon young adults from years ago.

Not only are the young adults today different than what they were before, but also the middle-aged adults face, nowadays, different challenges than before. With the increase of both the age of an adult when their first child is born and the increase of life expectancy, together with the overall demographic aging, middle aged adults are what some authors now call the "sandwich generation" (Miller, 1981). This term refers to adults who are "sandwiched" between their aging parents – who are expected to live beyond their sixties –, and their own children, who are more dependent until later in their lives (Hämäläinen & Tanskanen, 2019). These middle-aged adults usually experience more demands, such as caring for others and dealing with their own aging process, than resources, which can trigger stressful situations (Miller, 1981). It seems important to provide these adults with resources to face these challenging demands.

According to Levinson (1978), human's life can be divided into a few life eras (i.e., life stage), each consisting of different tasks and challenges, with transition periods between them, characterized by change and growth. Levinson elaborated on four eras – preadulthood, early adulthood, middle adulthood and late adulthood. Even though Levinson's conceptual model is quite complete, it is solely based on the individual's chronological age, and some authors state that life stage can also be characterized based

on family status (de Lange, Taris, Jansen, Smulders, Houtman & Kompier, 2006). Carter and McGoldrick (1988) proposed a family lifecycle model, divided into six stages, each comprising emotional transitions and changes in the state of families. On the other hand, Hill and colleagues (2008) proposed a life stage model based on one's chronological age and one's children's chronological age, creating five life stages. We believe it is important to draw on these conceptualizations to establish what is a life stage.

Even though some authors (e.g., Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004) recommend that research does not only focus on age from a chronological point of view, the studies relating life stage, and taking into account caregiving responsibilities and extended social networks, with HR practices and organizational and individual outcomes, are still scarce. Thus, this study additionally explores if life stage can play a part in the relationship between HR practices put in place in an organization and individual (i.e., well-being) and organizational (i.e., turnover intention) outcomes, acting as a moderator.

Since the workforce is getting more diverse day by day, there is an arising need to investigate and clarify how chronological age and life stage influence individuals' perceptions of the HR practices used in their workplace, and how these perceptions relate to both organizational and individual outcomes. Ultimately, when organizations provide the best suited practices to their employees, they are directly contributing to a more engaged and happier workforce, as well as to longer and better working lives. The question is: do different employees really prefer specific sets of practices? And if so, which group prefers which practices?

To address the issues regarding the role of age in the relationship mentioned above, this study explores the relation between HRDP, HRMP and FWP, and well-being as well as turnover intention. Also, this study examines, not only the role of chronological age, but also the role of life stage in the moderation of the abovementioned relationship.

Literature Review

Age and aging at work

In recent decades there has been a phenomenon of global aging, not only caused by the advancements in science and health, which allow for an increase in life expectancy – from 77.6 years in 2002, to 81.0 years in 2018 (PORDATA, 2020) –, but also by the decrease in birth rates all over the world. In Portugal specifically, the birth rate has been decreasing over the years, from 11.7% in 2000, to 8.4% in 2019 and people are having less children (PORDATA, 2020). The aging phenomenon can be seen through the Aging Index, which as of 2019 was 161.3%, meaning that per 100 young people there were 161.3 old people in Portugal. All these phenomena promote an increase in the retirement age and an extremely age diverse workforce. This poses a challenge for companies and societies, who have the need to attract and recruit people from all age groups and provide them with the resources they need to be a part of the workforce for longer and feel good throughout their working lives.

Even though societies are going through an aging process, age is usually seen as a synonym of loss, associated with decline in physical and in mental health (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). However, some authors look at age from a different perspective (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004), suggesting that, instead of a dichotomy of decline or growth, aging is seen as a four-staged process of loss, growth, reorganization and change, assuming that aging is not only characterized by the loss of some capabilities (e.g. fluid intelligence), but also involves some gains (e.g. crystalized intelligence) (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004; Truxillo, Cadiz & Hammer, 2015).

In fact, research points out that the aging process encompasses gains and losses, which may co-exist (Heckhausen, Dixon & Baltes, 1989). According to the study by Heckhausen and colleagues (1989), individuals consider a higher percentage of gains throughout their lives – until late old age – than of losses. This supports the assumption that chronological age is not the only important variable for understanding adult development and the work capability of an individual (Kooij, de Lange, Jansen & Dikkers, 2008), and that aging should be viewed as a multidirectional process, constituted by gains, such as increases in affective well-being, and losses, such as longer psychological recovery from various stressors (Truxillo et al., 2015). Therefore, some literature suggests that it is best to not only look at chronological age, but also psychosocial age, age from a lifespan perspective and even career stage (Veth et al., 2007), when examining the process of aging at work.

In their study, Kooij and colleagues (2008) define different age constructs, namely psychosocial age, based on the social perception of age that one has of himself; functional or performance-based age, which is based on the employee's performance; organizational age, referring to the process of aging within organizations and job roles; and age from a lifespan perspective. According to Sterns and Doverspike (1989), age from a lifespan perspective is based on the changes that happen throughout life, which might be determined by either chronological age, environment, cohort, life or career changes. This approach to age is usually characterized based on life stage or family status (de Lange et al., 2006; Sterns & Miklos, 1995).

In order to contribute to the lifespan perspective of aging, Levinson (1978) conceived the human lifecycle as a sequence of partially overlapping eras (i.e. life stages), each with its own characteristics and challenges. According to Levinson (1978), the human development starts with preadulthood (from conception to 22 years old), the life stage in which biopsychosocial growth happens rapidly, being characterized by a strong process of individualization. The second stage described by the author is early adulthood (17-45 years old), a stage characterized by being the peak of the lifecycle, in which high levels of energy can be observed, as the adult pursues aspirations, establishes him/herself in society and raises his/her family. The early adulthood stage also involves high levels of stress, as the adult does not only has work responsibilities, focusing on developing a career, but also family responsibilities and a high amount of impactful long-term decisions to make. The third stage described, middle adulthood (40-65 years old), encompasses the start of small age-related losses, and adults in this stage bear the responsibility of coaching others in their work lives, but also of developing and raising the next generation of young adults. Finally, the last stage defined by Levinson is late adulthood (60-65 years old).

Besides establishing lifecycle eras, Levinson (1978) combined these life stages with periods of change. The first transition period is between preadulthood and early adulthood – the early adulthood transition (17-22 years old) –, which is characterized by a self-establishment in the adult world. The second transition period is the age-30 transition. Between the second and the third life stage we encounter the middle life transition (40-45 years old), in which individuals start a new process of individualization and a period of self-development and self-knowledge. Finally, between the middle and the late adulthood, there is the late adulthood transition (60-65 years old).

As de Lange and colleagues (2006) mention, in order to examine age from a lifespan perspective, one can also look at the family status. Carter and McGoldrick (1988) defined the family lifecycle into six stages, each comprising certain emotional transitions and changes in the family status. The stages are as follows: leaving home – single young adults; the joining of families through marriage – the new couple; families with young children; families with adolescents; leaving children and moving on; and families in later life. Each stage, described below, has its challenges and specific changes and tasks, which should be taken into account, as the non-completion of these might lead to developmental problems for oneself and one's family system (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988).

As the authors describe, in the first stage, one should be able to come to terms with the family of origin, while formulating personal goals and a self-concept, before joining another individual and forming a new family subsystem. Then, in the second stage, individuals are expected to form a marital system, committing to it and realigning extended relationships and goals in common. When couples start having children, in the third stage of the family lifecycle, they should be able to adjust the marital system to include their children and take shared responsibility regarding household and family related tasks. After this, at the fourth stage, when children start growing up, the couple may refocus on the marital system and career issues, while starting to take care of the older generation. At this stage, flexibility of the family boundaries should be increased in order to include the children's independence. As families move to launch children into their own family subsystems, at stage five, the couple should be able to return to the original dyadic system, developing an adult to adult relationship with their children. At this stage, adults might also be dealing with disabilities and death from parents, and therefore, they should come to terms with the variety of exits and entries into the family system. Lastly, as families reach later life, individuals should explore new social and familial roles, while making efforts to maintain themselves and the couple functioning, in face of decline (i.e., physical and psychological) or of loss (e.g., spouse, siblings). This is the stage where individuals should accept the shift in generational roles (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988). These stages encompass a variety of emotional transitions, gains and losses, that should be considered in the process of aging and in defining one's strains and available resources at each stage of life.

Hill and colleagues (2008) also had the need to define different life stages. In their study, life stage's categorization was based on the individual's chronological age and on the existence of children and the chronological age of these children. Hill and colleagues

(2008) defined five life stages: emerging adulthood (i.e., people are aged until 35 years old and do not have any children); young adulthood (i.e., people have children with ages from zero to 5 years old); middle adulthood (i.e., people have children aged zero to 5 years old and aged 6 to 17 years old); late adulthood (i.e., people have children aged 6 to 17 years old) and, lastly, old age (i.e., people are aged 45 years old or over and with do not have any children younger than 18 years old). However, as mentioned before, the life stage definition can also take into account variables other than the age of the individual or of his/her children. Looking at the family status (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988), which involves changes such as turning financially and housing independent or building one's own family system, is also important when trying to categorize individuals into life stages (de Lange et al., 2006; Kooij et al., 2008).

An individual goes through a variety of changes and challenges throughout life, either psychological or physical – as a result of aging -, either emotional – as a result of one's own development and its family's. Since one has multiple roles throughout their development (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988), it is important that there are ways and means of providing these individuals with resources to face their life strains and demands (Marshall & Barnett, 1993). Besides being responsible for attracting and recruiting the best fitted individuals, organizations also have an important role in promoting individuals' successful aging by implementing appropriate HR practices that might work as resources and means for individuals to deal with stress and loss, resulting in happier and longer working lives. As previously mentioned, some research has shown that chronological age influences the relation between HR practices and organizational and individual outcomes (Kooij et al., 2012; Innocenti et al., 2013), but as some authors concluded (Pinto et al., 2015; Veth et al., 2017), life stage might also play an important part in this relationship.

Human Resource Practices

Authors have been defining HR practices as tools that can help in the management and orientation of attitudes, behaviors and performance of human resources in order to attain organizational goals and increase competitiveness, productivity and commitment within organizations (Pinto et al., 2015). Other authors (Veth et al., 2017) define HR practices as systems that work to attract, develop, motivate and retain employees, ensuring that the human capital of an organization is promoting and achieving the organizational goals. Therefore, HR practices are the actions an organization takes – such

as recruitment or performance appraisal –, in order to have a motivated, committed and productive workforce, while achieving both individual and organizational goals.

There has been some research examining how to combine HR practices as systems, to take out the most of employees, in terms of positive outcomes. Some authors defined what are called “high-performance HR practices”, i.e., systems of practices aimed at the optimal performance of employees and competitive advantage (Kehoe & Wright, 2010). According to Jiang and colleagues (2012), these practices encompass skill-enhancing practices (e.g., selective staffing and training), motivation-enhancing practices (e.g., performance appraisal and incentives), and participation-enhancing practices (e.g., quality circles and disclosure of company information). These HR systems are related with the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) theory, since that, by enhancing the development of skills, motivation and opportunity to participate, these HR practices can foster an increasing individual performance (Kooij et al., 2012).

Other authors suggest a different categorization of HR practices. Kooij and colleagues (2012) draw on the Selection, Optimization, Compensation (SOC) theory (Baltes et al., 1999) and on the Regulatory Focus theory (Higgins, 1997) to propose two HR bundles (i.e., consistent and interrelated HR practices) (MacDuffie, 1995 *in* Kooij et al., 2012). The SOC theory states that throughout an individual’s life course, one has different life goals, to which one must allocate the available resources, in order to grow – reaching higher levels of functioning –, maintain current levels of functioning, even when facing new challenges, and regulate loss – functioning adequately at lower levels (Kooij et al., 2012). Based on the abovementioned theories, Kooij and colleagues (2012) propose two bundles of practices: development practices (HRDP) and maintenance practices (HRMP). HRDP are related to growth and realization, promoting a higher functioning level for individuals, consisting mainly of learning and developing new skills (e.g., opportunities for enrolling in courses and workshops, resources to develop new skills and knowledge). HRMP are related to security and responsibility, helping the employee maintain or recover his functioning levels (e.g., fair and periodic performance appraisal processes, payment related with an individual’s performance).

In a globalized world, teams are becoming more dispersed in countries and time zones and remote working practices are increasing (Eurostat, 2020). Besides providing employees means to develop themselves and feel safe at work through HRDP and HRMP, organizations should also allow employees to leave the office space and work from anywhere, providing a more flexible work environment. As suggested by the literature,

allowing employees to work from home increases productivity, lowers absenteeism and promotes more autonomous employees (Kurkland & Bailey, 2000; Sardeshmukh, Sharma & Golden, 2012), while also increasing job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Organizations can promote more positive attitudes and behaviors from the employees through flexible working practices (FWP) (Golden, 2012; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). These practices were initially defined as “*work-life balance practices*” (Dickens, 2006), and in 2008, Hill and colleagues defined them as policies that allow employees to choose when (e.g., flexitime), where (e.g., work from home) and for how long (e.g., sabbaticals) they want to be involved with work-related tasks.

As mentioned before, studies have been reaching the conclusion that when organizations provide these flexible possibilities, employees have more positive attitudes towards them (e.g. Golden, 2012). However, some authors also concluded that practices such as remote work might also pose some challenges for companies and employees (Kurkland & Bailey, 2000; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Kurkland and Bailey (2000), for example, concluded that working from home poses challenges related with monitoring of employees, organizational culture and social isolation. Other authors also refer that FWP can create a difficulty in the separation of the work domain from the non-work domain (Kłopotek, 2017). Therefore, in order to clarify the benefits of remote and flexible work, it seems important to also study the impact that this type of practices might have on individual and organizational outcomes, such as turnover intention and well-being.

The relation between HR Practices and the intention of turnover and well-being

Previous research has demonstrated that HR practices have an impact on employee's outcomes that in turn, will impact organizational outcomes (Innocenti et al., 2013). Therefore, it seems important to study how different bundles of practices (i.e., HRDP, HRMP and FWP) impact some organizational (i.e., turnover intention) and individual (i.e., well-being) outcomes, since this will provide some insights on how organizations can foster a more engaged and happier workforce.

Many authors rely on Blau's (1964) social exchange theory and on Casper and Harris' (2008) signaling theory to explain how strategic and organizational practices influence employees' attitudes and behaviors. These theories state that the investments of the organization in employees' careers, mainly in their development, are reciprocated by employees, who show positive attitudes and behaviors. Simultaneously, as the organization repeatedly provides employees with opportunities of development and

participation, it signals employees that it cares for their professional and personal growth and their employability (Innocenti et al., 2013). The organization and the employee create an interdependent interaction, in which each party is positively reciprocal to the other party's actions (Cropanzo & Mitchell, 2005; Innocenti et al., 2013). Therefore, when an organization provides employees with appropriate HR practices, which foster their development and well-being, it can expect positive attitudes and behaviors from workers, such as affective commitment and a lower intention of leaving the organization. If an employee notices a lack of reciprocity by the organization, he/she may respond with decreasing trust, work satisfaction and commitment, restoring the social exchange (Taylor & Tekleab, 2004), which might lead to an increased intention of leaving the organization.

Some authors concluded that, in fact, organizations that provide HR practices to their employees, such as learning opportunities (i.e., HRDP) and fair performance appraisal processes (i.e., HRMP), experience higher levels of commitment and lower intentions of turnover from their workers (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Lee et al., 2018). Also, Batt (2002) concluded that high-involvement practices – systems of practices that encompass the hiring of highly-skilled employees, the design of work that allows collaboration between employees and the availability of HR incentives (Batt, 2002) – positively influence the commitment of employees towards their organization and negatively influence their intention to leave. Nowadays, focusing on strategies to lower turnover rates within organizations is of high importance, since turnover is a variable that highly impacts financial organizational performance (Lee et al., 2018).

Following this reasoning, we can expect that HRDP, HRMP and FWP, by demonstrating a preoccupation from the organizations with their employees and an intent to invest in them and their careers, would be negatively related to the employee intention of leaving the organization. This proposition is corroborated by Boon and colleagues (2011), who concluded that the perception of HR practices is positively related with organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior and satisfaction at work, and negatively related with the intention to leave. In the literature, intention to leave was identified as a proxy of effective turnover (Van Breukelen et al., 2004, *in* Kehoe & Wright, 2013). Hence, the perception of the different HR practices has an impact on the intention to leave the organization. We propose that:

H1a. There is a negative relationship between HRDP and turnover intention.

H1b. There is a negative relationship between HRMP and turnover intention.

H1c. There is a negative relationship between FWP and turnover intention.

Previous research also found that HR practices have a positive influence in psychological well-being (Van de Voorde, Paauwe & Van Veldhoven, 2012). Subjective well-being was first studied by Diener (1984), who referred that subjective well-being consists of a self-evaluation of one's life in general, which encompasses both positive and negative affective reactions. Therefore, originally, subjective well-being encompasses three components, life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect (Diener 1984; Busseri & Sadava, 2011). Subjective well-being has also been defined as a set of phenomena, such as emotional responses, domain satisfactions and global judgements of life satisfactions (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999), being considered an important individual and societal goal (Diener, 2000).

Kooij and colleagues (2012), argue that the changing motives throughout life have an influence in the utility given to HR practices and, consequentially, in the relation between these HR practices and employees' well-being. The authors concluded that there is a relationship between both HRDP and HRMP and well-being (Kooij et al., 2012). Regarding flexible work practices, some authors report that the availability of this type of practices has an impact on employees' positive attitudes regarding their organizations' (e.g., Grover & Crooker, 1995; Batt & Valcour, 2003). A study by Grzywacz, Carlson and Shulkin (2008) concluded that employees who engaged in formal flexible work arrangements showed lower levels of stress and burnout than employees who did not made use of FWP. Drawing on the Social Exchange theory (Blau, 1964), authors have been proposing that flexible work arrangements signal a concern from the organization with its employees' capability of balancing the work and the non-work domains. Employees, in turn, appreciate these flexible settings and the autonomy that arise from them, experiencing more positive attitudes (Allen et al., 2013), such as better health (Halpern, 2005).

According to the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), individuals want to obtain, retain, promote and protect their resources, which include energies that both the work and the non-work domains compete for (Allen et al., 2013). When individuals' resources are threatened with loss, have been lost or when the individual cannot obtain and retain key resources, even when there is a significant amount of effort put in, the stress levels increase. Flexible work arrangements can work as a mechanism to provide employees with the means to obtain the resources they most value, such as time and space, by giving employees the autonomy to decide how they want to organize their work life and the means to balance the work and the non-work domains (Hall, Royle, Brymer,

Perrewé, Ferris, & Hochwarter, 2006). Besides, by providing employees with meaningful training opportunities (i.e., HRDP) and giving them security through fair compensation and evaluation practices (i.e., HRMP), companies are also establishing mechanisms that help employees in obtaining and maintaining their resources and reaching their goals, such as higher levels of subjective well-being (Diener, 2000; Kooij et al., 2012). When organizations support employees resource attainment through HR practices, there is a decrease of stress and an increase of well-being (Halpern, 2005; Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu & Westman, 2018).

Drawing from the assumption that when there are HR practices in the organization that allow people to perceive they are being supported, invested on and given autonomy and resources, they will experience higher levels of well-being, we can propose the following:

H2a. There is a positive relationship between HRDP and well-being.

H2b. There is a positive relationship between HRMP and well-being.

H2c. There is a positive relationship between FWP and well-being.

The moderating role of age and life stage on the relationship between HR Practices, turnover intention and well-being

Drawing on the SOC theory, it is argued that the need for growth decreases with age, since the aging process involves some physical and psychological losses, and that the concern with maintenance and regulation of loss increases (Baltes et al., 1999 *in* Kooij et al., 2012). According to Innocenti and colleagues (2013), the reaction of employees to HR practices is likely to change with age, since motives and goals of each individual also change. Some authors reached the conclusion that older workers place a minor importance in HRDP, while younger employees place a higher importance in this type of practices (Kooij, Jansen, Dikkers & de Lange, 2010). Other authors, such as Veth and colleagues (2017), concluded that neither HRMP have a greater impact on older employees' outcomes, such as work engagement or employability, nor HRDP have a greater impact on younger employees' outcomes. This means that, according to this research, chronological age does not moderate the relationship between HRDP and HRMP and employees' outcomes.

In regards to the turnover intention, Finegold and coworkers (2002) found that satisfaction with opportunities for development (i.e., HRDP) in an organization, were highly related with commitment and intention to remain working in it, and this

relationship was more important for younger employees (less than 30 years old), than for older ones (more than 45 years old). Other authors also suggest that there is a positive influence of HR practices in work satisfaction and affective commitment, especially for younger employees (less than 30 years old) in comparison with older employees (more than 45 years old) (Innocenti et al., 2013).

Other studies focusing on the association between HR practices and well-being, concluded that the relation between HRDP and well-being decreases with age, whereas the relation between HRMP and well-being increases with age (Kooij et al., 2012). Older individuals seem to focus less on promotion and spend less resources on their development and focus more on prevention, spending more resources on the regulation of loss (Baltes et al., 1999).

Although flexible working arrangements seem to have a lot of positive outcomes on employees (e.g. Grover & Crooker, 1995; Batt & Valcour, 2003; Grzywacz et al., 2008), there seems to be a trend to not make these options available for older workers (Loretto, Vickerstaff & White, 2005). A study by Morissette, Schellenberg and Silver (2004) aimed at understanding what factors could make an older worker desire to continue working, pointed out that more than one-quarter of the respondents would have continued working if they could have reduced their work schedule and that about 30% would have continued working if they could have a part-time work arrangement. Other studies (e.g., Loretto et al., 2005) indicate that most of older workers do not seem to have any forms of flexible working available, except for part-time working. Until 2014, in some UK companies, the right to make use of flexible work arrangements was exclusive for employees with caring responsibilities, excluding, most of the time, older workers (Atkinson & Sandiford, 2016). There also seems to exist a lack of research on the impact that FWP might have in older workers. Therefore, it is important to investigate how providing these practices can create better and longer working lives (Kooij et al, 2010).

Considering the aforementioned research, it is essential to examine if chronological age does moderate the relation between HRDP, HRMP and FWP, and employees' and organizational outcomes, such as well-being and turnover intention.

Thus, we propose the following:

H3a. Chronological age moderates the relation between HRDP and turnover intention, such that the effect is stronger for younger workers than for older workers.

H3b. Chronological age moderates the relation between HRDP and well-being, such that the effect is stronger for younger workers than for older workers.

H4a. Chronological age moderates the relation between HRMP and turnover intention, such that the effect is stronger for older workers than for younger workers.

H4b. Chronological age moderates the relation between HRMP and well-being, such that the effect is stronger for older workers than for younger workers.

H5a. Chronological age moderates the relation between FWP and turnover intention, such that the effect is stronger for younger workers than for older workers.

H5b. Chronological age moderates the relation between FWP and well-being, such that the effect is stronger for younger workers than for older workers.

As previously mentioned, chronological age does not always seem to be an accurate predictor of work-related preferences and their impact on work-related outcomes (Veth et al., 2017). In fact, there are several types of age conceptualizations, as Kooij and colleagues (2008) mention in their study, and aging does not always mean loss, decrease of abilities or need for more support at work. Similarly, being young does not always mean a high quantity and quality of capabilities and a lack of need for support. Therefore, we further examine the relation between other types of age constructs, work-related practices and work-related outcomes.

To our knowledge, there is a lack of investigation examining the role of life stage in the relationship between different sets of HR practices and the intention to leave the organization or well-being. However, based on the challenges and goals of each of the life stages (Levinson, 1978), it is possible to expect differences in the effects of HR practices, between employees in different life stages. Thus, we explore this subject further in the next paragraphs.

Aging across the lifespan can be based upon family status (Kooij et al., 2008). The family lifecycle model (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988), explored in previous sections, encompasses several stages, each with its own characteristics and challenges, although it seems that the first few stages need a higher effort regarding development than the last few ones. According to the family lifecycle framework (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988), the first stage involves the development of a self-image and intimate peer relationships. The second stage encompasses the development of a marital system and the third stage the development of tasks related to childrearing, finances and household. However, the last stage (i.e. families in later life), encompasses maintaining the couple functioning, as well as dealing with and regulating loss. It seems that in the first stages of the family

development, individuals might be more concerned with developing skills to face their challenges, and in the later stages, there seems to be a shift from the previous concern to maintaining or recovering the functioning levels after a loss (e.g. of the spouse). This is consonant with the SOC theory (Baltes et al., 1999), which states that throughout one's life the focus in development versus maintenance and recovery, changes. Besides the family status, aging across the lifespan can also be based on the life stages defined by Levinson (1978) – preadulthood, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. According to this conceptualization, most developmental challenges arise in earlier life stages.

Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3c. Life stage moderates the relation between HRDP and turnover intention, such that the effect is stronger for younger¹ adults than for older² adults.

H3d. Life stage moderates the relation between HRDP and well-being, such that the effect is stronger for younger¹ adults than for older² adults.

H4c. Life stage moderates the relation between HRMP and turnover intention, such that the effect is stronger for older² adults than for younger¹ adults.

H4d. Life stage moderates the relation between HRMP and well-being, such that the effect is stronger for older² adults than for younger¹ adults.

Regarding FWP, COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) argues that when employees experience that their resources are insufficient for one of the domains of their life, for example the work domain, they tend to try to change this situation (e.g., by leaving the organization). When an individual moves through life stages, more challenges arise (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988; Levinson, 1978) and the non-work domain increasingly begins competing for the individual's resources. For instance, an employee caring for small children, married or with a wide social network will experience a more demanding non-work domain (i.e., requesting more of his/her resources) than an individual who lives alone, without any children and with a relatively small social network. Therefore, and building upon Kooij and colleagues' (2012) argument that motives change throughout life, the demands of the non-work domain might also change throughout life and, therefore, FWP might impact employees differently, depending on their life stage.

Therefore, we propose that:

H5c. Life stage moderates the relationship between FWP and turnover intention, such that the effect will be stronger for younger¹ adults than for older² adults.

H5d. Life stage moderates the relation between FWP and well-being, such that the effect will be stronger for younger¹ adults than for older² adults.

Figure 1 presents the moderation model and the abovementioned hypotheses. We hypothesize that HR practices have a relationship with organizational (i.e., turnover intention) and individual outcomes (i.e., well-being), and that this relationship is moderated by chronological age and life stage.

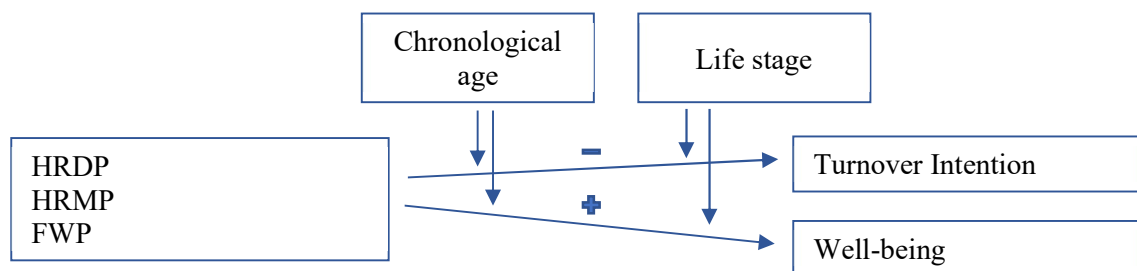


Figure 1 – Proposed Model

¹ Younger adults encompass the following categories: emerging adults, young adults, adults and middle-aged adults.

² Older adults encompass the old adult category.

Methodology

Sample and procedure

The present study is part of a comprehensive research project that investigates the attitudes and preferences of an age-diverse workforce. This project results from the collaboration between master and PhD students. The data was collected with both online and paper and pencil questionnaires, which were disseminated through the professional and personal networks of the researchers.

In order to reduce common method bias, a time-lagged study with two waves was conducted. In the first wave, participants answered the items about HR practices (i.e., HRDP, HRDMP and FWP). The second wave was constituted by well-being and turnover intention scales, as well as by the demographic information of participants, which helped define participants' life stage. Questionnaires were available for three weeks with time lag of three weeks between them. The first wave was shared in October 2019 and the second wave was shared in December 2019.

An informed consent was presented to participants at the beginning of each questionnaire, ensuring that all answers were anonymous. The sampling criteria were being 18 years old or older, being currently employed and speaking Portuguese. In order to pair the answers of the two waves, participants were asked to generate a code consisting of the first letter of the participant's mother's name, the first letter of the participant's father's name, the first letter of the participant's name and their year of birth (e.g. SPS1997).

The sample consists of 365 participants, with ages between 22 and 66 years old ($M=37.68$; $SD=9.90$). About 61% of the respondents were men and 55.9% completed higher education. The most represented industry in the sample is manufacturing (25.5%), followed by the banking sector (21.1%), and most of the respondents (83.6%) worked in a private organization. From the 365 participants, 63% worked for at least 10 years ($M=9.61$; $SD=9.61$), while 72.1% worked in the same organization for at least 10 years ($M=8$; $SD=7.48$). Most of the participants were in the emerging adult life stage (37.3%).

The data analysis was conducted using SPSS 25, and the macro Process, developed by Hayes (2018), was used to test the moderation hypothesis.

Measures

HR Practices. In order to measure the HR practices available in the organizations of the participants, 10 items based on Boon and colleagues (2011) and Kooij and colleagues

(2012) were used. To measure HRDP four items were used, such as “The opportunity to follow training, courses and workshops”. The scale revealed a good internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.88$). Three items were used to measure HRMP, a scale which also revealed good internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.80$). An example item of this scale is “Fair appraisal of my performance”. Finally, to measure FWP, three items were used, such as “The opportunity to work part-time if I needed to.” Work by Boon and colleagues (2011) defines four items to measure FWP, however, in this study, the item related with working parents was excluded, since it would not be suitable for non-parents. The FWP scale also revealed a good internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.76$).

For the purpose of this study, the availability of HR practices was measured by the participants’ point of view. Therefore, participants answered in a 7-point likert scale (1 – Totally disagree to 7 – Totally agree) to the question “To what extent to you consider your organization provides...”.

These scales were originally in English. They were translated to Portuguese using the translation-back translation method (Brislin, 1970; van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996).

Age. Age was measured by asking participants their age (in years).

Life stage. We defined three types of criteria to group participants into life stages: having children and their children’s age (Hill et al., 2008), their own age and their financial and housing dependency. The primary criterion was the existence of children and the age of the participant’s children. When the participant did not fall into these criteria, his/her own age was the chosen criterion to attribute a life stage to the participant. With this in mind, five categories were defined: a) Emerging adult: people with no children or aged from 18 to 26 years old; b) Young adult: people with children who are aged zero years old to 11 years old and no older children, or which own age is comprehend between 27 and 35 years old; c) Adult: people with children who are aged zero to 11 years old and 12 to 18 years old, simultaneously, or which own age is comprehended between 36 and 43 years old; d) Middle-aged adult: people with children who are aged 12 to 18 years old or which own age is comprehended between 44 and 55 years old; e) Old adult: people with no children with 18 years old or less, or which own age is above 56 years old. Regarding the housing and financial independence, we considered that the Emerging Adult would be

the only life stage in which respondents would not be neither housing nor financially independent.

Only six participants did not correspond to their life stage according to the type of housing and financial dependence criteria. However, since there are multiple family arrangements that were not accounted for, we did not excluded these participants and defined their life stage based either on their own or their children's age.

The reason why we chose to adapt the children's age criterion from Hill and colleagues (2008) was the different school cycles, reaching the conclusion that until grade 6 (11 years old) children need a lot more support from parents than after grade 6 (12 years old and above). We believe considering this need for support only until the age children enter primary school (5 years old) would not be adequate in the Portuguese context.

Turnover Intention. Turnover intention was measured with three items based on the exit scale from Rusbult and colleagues (1988). The items chose were "I have recently spent some time looking for another job", "During next year I will probably look for another job outside this company" and "I often think about quitting". Answers to this scale ranged from 1 – Totally disagree to 7 – Totally agree. This scale had a very good internal reliability ($\alpha=0.87$).

Well-being. Well-being was measured with the WHO-5 Well-Being Scale (Topp, Østergaard, Søndergaard & Bech, 2015) (e.g. "I woke up feeling well and rested."). Participants answered in a 6-point scale ranging from 0 (At no time), to 5 (All of the time). This scale showed a very good internal reliability ($\alpha=0.90$).

Results

Table I shows the means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliability of the different measures of the study. Results show that HRDP, HRMP and FWP correlate negatively with turnover intention and positively with well-being. This means that as the availability of HR practices increases, also increases the well-being of employees and decreases their intentions to leave.

An interesting finding is the correlation between HR practices and the different age constructs. For example, chronological age was significantly negatively correlated with HRDP ($r = -0.15, p < 0.01$) and FWP ($r = -0.12, p < 0.05$), but not significantly correlated with HRMP ($r = -0.07, p = 0.16$). Life stage was also significantly negatively associated with HRDP ($r = -0.13, p < 0.05$) and FWP ($r = -0.13, p < 0.05$). Therefore, although older employees/employees in later life stages seem to perceive a lower availability of HRDP and FWP in their organizations than younger employees/employees in earlier life stages, this is a weak relationship.

Table I. Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations and Reliability

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	37.68	9.90	1						
2. Life stage	2.42	1.43	0.89**	1					
3. HRDP	3.99	1.57	-0.15**	-0.13*	(0.88)				
4. HRMP	3.81	1.57	-0.07	-0.06	0.69**	(0.80)			
5. FWP	3.82	1.69	-0.12*	-0.13*	0.56**	0.54**	(0.76)		
6. Well-being	4.78	1.30	0.11*	0.09	0.26**	0.21**	0.16**	(0.90)	
7. Turnover	3.11	1.94	-0.25**	-0.23**	-0.32**	-0.33**	-0.13**	-0.34**	(0.87)

Pearson's r correlation coefficients * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$
Cronbach's alphas are reported between parentheses.

Table II presents the results of the HR practices influence on turnover and well-being. Regarding turnover, Table II shows that all HR practices have an influential relationship with this outcome, explaining 13.5% of its variance. Results show that HR practices are significantly associated with turnover intention ($F(3,361) = 18.81, p < 0.001$) and that the most important HR practice to explain it is HRMP ($t = -3.54, p < 0.01$). Nevertheless, it is important to address that the relation between FWP and turnover is only marginally statistically significant ($t = 2.00, p = 0.046$). This results support hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c.

Regarding well-being, contrary to our expectations, findings show that not all the studied HR practices significantly affect this outcome ($F(3,361) = 8.73, p < 0.001$). In fact, findings suggest that HRDP is the only set of practices with a significant relationship with well-being ($t = 2.91, p < 0.01$). The three bundles of HR Practices predict only 6.8% of well-being's variance. These results only support hypothesis 2a.

Table II. Regression analysis of HR practices on turnover and well-being

	Turnover			Well-being		
	B	Std. Error	t	B	Std. Error	t
HRDP	-0.27	0.09	-3.11*	0.18	0.06	2.91*
HRMP	-0.31	0.09	-3.54*	0.04	0.05	0.70
FWP	0.14	0.07	2.00*	0.01	0.02	0.25
* $p < 0.05$						

Tables III to V present the results of the moderation analysis, in which the moderators age and life stage are included in the relationship between the studied HR practices and the employee and organizational outcomes. Despite not all HR practices predicted well-being, we decided to still test all the hypotheses, since the goal of this study was to contribute to the existent non-clear literature about the moderating role of age-related constructs.

Results of the moderating role of age and life stage on the relationship between HRDP and the outcomes are presented in Table III. Findings show that neither age nor life stage moderate the relationship between HRDP and turnover ($B = 0.02, p = 0.20$; $B = -0.05, p = 0.60$, respectively). The moderation model explains only 0.7% of the variation in turnover ($F(2,359) = 1.55, p = 0.21$). Regarding well-being, age and life stage also do not moderate this relationship ($B = 0.01, p = 0.33$; $B = -0.06, p = 0.33$, respectively). Once again, the model explains only 0.03% of the variation in well-being ($F(2,359) = 0.51, p = 0.60$). Therefore, hypotheses 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d are not supported by the results.

Table III. Coefficients of the moderation analysis of age and life stage in the relation between HRDP and Turnover and Well-being

Variables	Turnover					Well-being				
	B	SE	t	CI95 (lower)	CI95 (upper)	B	SE	t	CI95 (lower)	CI95 (upper)
<i>Independent Variable</i>										
HRDP	-0.44	0.06	-7.43*	-0.56	-0.33	0.24	0.04	5.54*	0.15	0.32
<i>Interaction</i>										
HRDP x Age	0.02	0.01	1.28	-0.01	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.98	-0.01	0.03
HRDP x Life stage	-0.05	0.09	-0.52	-0.21	0.12	-0.06	0.06	-0.98	-0.18	0.06

Table IV illustrates the results of the moderation analysis of age and life stage in the relation between HRMP and the organizational and employee outcomes. Findings show that there is no effect of age or life stage in the relationship between HRMP and turnover ($B = 0.02, p = 0.87$ and $B = 0.03, p = 0.71$, respectively). The moderation model explains 0.2% of the variation in turnover ($F(2,359) = 0.52, p = 0.59$). There is also no moderation effect of age or life stage on the relationship between HRMP and well-being ($B = -0.01, p = 0.81$ and $B = -0.01, p = 0.98$, respectively). This moderation model explains 0.1% of the variation in well-being ($F(2,359) = 0.14, p = 0.88$). These results do not support hypotheses 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d.

Table IV. Coefficients of the moderation analysis of age and life stage in the relation between HRMP and Turnover and Well-being

Variables	Turnover					Well-being				
	B	SE	t	CI95 (lower)	CI95 (upper)	B	SE	t	CI95 (lower)	CI95 (upper)
<i>Independent Variable</i>										
HRMP	-0.43	0.06	-7.20*	-0.55	-0.31	0.18	0.04	4.10*	0.09	0.26
<i>Interaction</i>										
HRMP x Age	0.02	0.01	0.16	-0.02	0.03	-0.01	0.01	-0.25	-0.02	0.02
HRMP x Life stage	0.03	0.09	0.37	-0.14	0.21	-0.01	0.06	-0.02	-0.13	0.12

Table V displays the results of the moderation analysis of age and life stage in the relation between FWP and turnover intention and well-being. Regarding turnover, the results do not reveal a moderation effect from age or life stage on the relation between turnover intention and FWP ($B = 0.01, p = 0.81$ and $B = -0.02, p = 0.79$, respectively). The moderation model does not explain any percentage of the variation in turnover ($F(2,359) = 0.03, p = 0.97$). Regarding well-being, the results also do not show a moderation effect of age or life stage on the relationship between FWP and well-being ($B = 0.01, p = 0.53$ and $B = -0.05, p = 0.47$, respectively). This moderation model explains 0.1% of well-being's variance ($F(2,359) = 0.27, p = 0.77$). These results do not support hypotheses 5a, 5b, 5c and 5d.

Table V. Coefficients of the moderation analysis of age and life stage in the relation between HRMP and Turnover and Well-being

Variables	Turnover					Well-being				
	B	SE	t	CI95 (lower)	CI95 (upper)	B	SE	t	CI95 (lower)	CI95 (upper)
<i>Independent Variable</i>										
FWP	-0.19	0.06	-3.25*	-0.31	-0.08	0.14	0.04	3.44*	0.06	0.22
<i>Interaction</i>										
FWP x Age	0.01	0.01	0.24	-0.02	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.64	-0.01	0.02
FWP x Life stage	-0.02	0.09	-0.26	-0.20	0.16	-0.05	0.06	-0.73	-0.17	0.08

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to explore the moderating role of age and life stage of employees in the relationship between the available HR practices in their companies, and their turnover intention and well-being. Despite great advances in studying these topics, some inconsistencies have been emerging in the literature. For example, there are some studies in which chronological age is pointed out as a moderator of the relation between HR practices and the outcomes for employees and organizations (e.g. Kooij et al., 2012; Innocenti, 2013). However, some other studies reported that there was no moderation of chronological age on this relation (Veth et al., 2017). Also, there is a lack of investigation examining the role of other conceptualizations of age, such as age from a developmental point of view (i.e., life stage) on the abovementioned relationship.

In this study, three studied bundles of HR practices – HRDP, HRMP and FWP - seemed to have an impact in employees' turnover intention. Practices that enrich the career and the personal development of employees (i.e., HRDP), practices which contribute to a better equilibrium of the work-life dimensions (i.e., FWP), and, practices that provide stability (i.e., HRMP), are all meaningful for a decrease in the intention employees have to change jobs, corroborating previous studies (Boon et al., 2011; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2012). This can be explained by Blau's Social Exchange theory (1964) and by Casper and Harris' Signaling theory (2008). As mentioned before, the more the organization invests in employees' development, providing them with learning and participation opportunities, the more it signals to employees a care for their growth and employability and, consequently, the more employees give back in the form of positive attitudes. There is a reciprocal relationship created between the employee and the organization, in which if an organization fosters the development of employees, providing them resources to deal with life demands, through HR practices, employees show more positive behaviors, such as higher commitment and loyalty, and ultimately, they have a stronger will to remain in the organization.

Regarding employees' well-being, from the three bundles of HR practices only HRDP showed a significant effect on this variable. The fact that FWP does not show an effect in well-being is in line with previous research on the challenges and disadvantages that might arise from remote working. Some authors concluded that a flexible work environment and teleworking specifically could contribute to a difficulty in separating the work and the non-work domain (Kłopotek, 2017) and an experience of work intensification (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). As work intensifies and employees feel less

connected to their organization and their colleagues, experiencing a challenge in creating boundaries between the work and the non-work domains, there is a chance that the benefits of FWP cannot be significantly experienced, and an effect of FWP in employees' well-being cannot be found. Other possible explanation is that, in Portugal, FWP are still scarce and, therefore, employees cannot realize the full benefits that these types of practices might bring to the work-life dynamics and how they can contribute to their well-being. According to Eurofound's data from 2015, an average of 2% of Portuguese employees reported being home-based teleworkers, meaning they worked in a completely remote environment, while about 3% of Portuguese employees reported being highly mobile teleworkers and 5% occasional teleworkers (Eurofound, 2018). This means that about 90% of Portuguese workers were not using, in 2015, any form of telework, with Portugal being one of the countries with the lowest rate of teleworkers. However, this is a changing reality. Given the current world situation, many governments are being forced to shift to a fully remote workforce, in private or public companies and in roles in which this is possible. This has been promoting more remote-friendly work arrangements and some CEOs have been assuming to shift their entire global workforce to a remote environment (e.g. Shopify, Twitter; Cheng, 2020) that is supposed to last even after the Covid-19 crisis is over. This is a work-related transformation that will open the doors to the possibilities of remote and flexible work arrangements, which will not only change how employees interact with each other and their companies, recognizing the good and the bad in teleworking, but also how they feel about companies that do not have these types of practices and arrangements in place.

The results also suggest that HRMP do not contribute to employees' well-being, which can mean that employees look for more than security and stability at work. Contrary to previous research (Kooij et al., 2012) rather than maintaining their current functioning levels (to which HRMP contribute to), employees desire to increase their functioning, which can be made through learning experiences and opportunities. Hence, this can explain why HRMP do not contribute to employees' well-being, but HRDP do, showing that professional development might be a relevant part of well-being.

Results also suggest that neither age, nor life stage showed a moderation effect in the relationship between HR practices and the intention to leave the organization and well-being. Regarding chronological age, driving from human development theories (Baltes et al., 1999), we would expect that older employees would be focused on keeping their levels of functioning, in face of age-related losses, preferring HRMP over other

practices. However, as many authors (e.g. Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004) proposed, the process of aging is not only characterized by loss. Therefore, our results showed that all employees, regardless of their age, want to develop their skills, be able to be part of learning and development initiatives, as well as progress in their careers. A reason for this might be that, independently of their chronological age, individuals feel capable of work and excited to learn, or that, even though they experience loss, they do not perceive it as limitative of their work capabilities, and, therefore, they do not feel the need to have practices at work that accommodate loss. As Ackerman and Kanfer (2020) pointed out, based on their previous works from 2004, experience and expertise are more important than age when assessing someone's work capability.

The findings also suggest that all individuals value the existence of practices that allow them to reconcile their different life dimensions – e.g. work, family, friends, hobbies –, and therefore, FWP seem to impact the turnover intention and the well-being of all employees in the same way, independently of their chronological age. Throughout life, people of all ages have different dimensions competing for their resources. Young and middle-aged employees might have their friends or children, needing to balance the time and attention they give to these dimensions with the time and attention they give to the work dimension. For older employees, there is also the possibility of an extended social network and the existence of grandchildren, to whom they also want to provide time and attention to, valuing the existence of flexible work arrangements that allow them to balance these competing dimensions of life (Mooney, Statham & Simon, 2002; Atkinson & Sandiford, 2016). As our results showed, all employees, regardless of their chronological age, seem to want to have time and emotional availability for life dimensions other than work, resources which can be provided by FWP.

Regarding life stage, the conclusion is very similar. All employees, independently of the life stage they are in, value the existence of HRDP, HRMP and FWP. We hypothesized that employees who are in earlier life stages would have a preference for HRDP and FWP, as these life stages are associated with very demanding familial and social responsibilities (e.g. take care of their children, be available for their partner and friends), meaning that these employees would need a lot of resources to deal with these competing dimensions. As such, these people would prefer practices such as the possibility to build a flexible work schedule, to work from home, or to develop certain skills at work. However, it seems that individuals in later life stages, who we assumed would have a preference for HRMP – preferring, for example, practices such as a periodic

evaluation of their performance and a pay that is related to that performance –, also want to be provided resources to aid them in dealing not only with the loss that later life stages encompass (e.g., loss of close family members), but also with competing dimensions: taking care of grandchildren, spending time with partners, spouses and friends, or engaging in hobbies.

Independently of their chronological age or life stage, these employees want to be able to develop their skills, have financial security and stability in their jobs, and have the time and availability needed to juggle their competing priorities and life dimensions.

Theoretical Implications

From the theoretical perspective, the present research contributes to the HRM literature, by showing the importance of HRDP, HRDMP and FWP for individual and organizational outcomes.

This research shows that when HRDP, HRMP and FWP are in place, employees have less intentions of leaving the organization. This is a valuable result for the literature, since it illustrates the well-established relation between these HR practices and turnover intention in the Portuguese context, a topic that had not been comprehensively studied in Portugal. This research also shows that HRDP contribute significantly to employees' well-being. This is an innovative result, since it allows us to take a different look at the impact of HR practices on well-being, showing that giving the employees the ability to develop themselves, either personal or professionally, has a great impact on their well-being at work. These practices should be further researched, specifically their impact in other variables, such as performance and satisfaction at work.

This research also contributes to the current debate on the moderation effect that age might have in the interaction between HR practices and the various outcomes for the employees and their organizations. We found that nor age nor life stage play a moderation role in the interaction between HR practices – either HRDP, HRMP or FWP -, and the intentions of turnover and the well-being of employees. We believe people might experience these practices differently, but that this is not moderated by their chronological age or life stage. We also believe that there is a possibility that age may play some part in the abovementioned relation, but this effect might not be linear or specific for certain age groups. Possible moderator variables should be investigated, as we suggest below.

Practical Implications

In terms of managerial implications, this research contributes to the HR management practitioners' managerial activities. Our results showed that HR practices contribute to lower intentions of turnover. We propose that organizations should consider these practices when looking for possible causes of high turnover rates. By improving the HR practices in place or even expanding the ones already used, while making use of HRDP, HRMP and FWP, organizations can contribute to higher levels of loyalty of employees and of intention to stay in the organization. Therefore, organizations should put in place practices that help employees in their development (i.e., HRDP), such as providing courses and workshops, job rotation initiatives and the elaboration of personal development plans. Organizations can also implement practices that help employees in staying motivated and interested in their work (i.e., HRMP), such as a fair feedback and performance appraisal processes, as well as performance related pay. Finally, organizations can develop practices that help employees in the difficult task of reconciling the work life and the personal life (i.e., FWP), such as the possibility to work from home and a flexible work schedule.

Our results also highlighted the importance of HRDP, which not only impact turnover intentions, but also employees' well-being. While providing employees with the abovementioned practices, focusing on developing them and improving their skills, organizations will also be contributing to their well-being. HRDP are focused in providing employees with learning opportunities, which can lead to feelings of self-fulfillment and self-development, leading to a generalized perception of well-being. As Guest (2017) pointed out, investing in employees, through, for example, learning experiences, is related with the development of employees' self-efficacy and with an increase in their resources, which can increase employees' well-being, as suggested by the COR theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

Another practical implication of this research is related with variables that might moderate the relation between the practices that are put in place and the outcomes that arise from these people management practices. Specifically, our research found that, nor age nor life stage moderate the association between HR practices and employee well-being and turnover intention. This implies that all employees perceive these practices in the same way, i.e., for all of them HRDP, HRMP and FWP are important in regards to their will of leaving the organization and, for all of them HRDP are important in regards to their well-being. Organizations should provide the abovementioned practices (e.g. job

rotation initiatives, fair performance appraisal, work-from-home) to all their employees, regardless of the age they have or the life stage they are in, focusing on age-friendly practices that can be adapted to the needs of the employees throughout time. For example, a 25-year old employee will value having a fair performance appraisal process and the possibility of having his/her performance results impacting his/her pay, as much as a 55-year old employee. Similarly, a 55-year old employee will value the possibility to work from home or have a flexible work schedule and learning opportunities, as much as a 25-year old employee. This principle also applies to life stage.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is the fact that the sample is not representative of the working population, which, therefore, do not allow us to make any generalization of how the studied HR practices and the studied outcomes would behave in the general population. To overcome this limitation, we suggest that future research relies on non-probabilistic sampling by quotas, with aging group segmentation, allowing for results' generalization.

Another limitation of the present research was the length of the questionnaire. This research was part of a research project about different work aspects. Therefore, both questionnaires measured several variables, and each questionnaire was composed by several items. This led to a great percentage of sample attrition from Wave 1 to Wave 2, and consequently a limited sample size. We suggest that in order to tackle this, future research should focus either on using shorter questionnaires or, when applying longer questionnaires, using some visual or intellectual stimuli, such as the use of different types of scales or the inclusion of colored scales, in order to get the attention of the respondents throughout the questionnaire fill out. The fact that two waves of questionnaires was used to measure the studied variables, allowed to decrease the common method bias, which is a methodological advantage.

Future Research

In the present study, chronological age and life stage were proposed as moderators. However, other variables might also have an important role as moderators in the relationship between, for example, FWP and employee outcomes. Shockley and Allen (2007) suggested that some individuals might have more benefits than others in what concerns flexible work arrangements. For example, women might benefit more from this

type of arrangements, since, typically, they detain more responsibility for household tasks than men (Davis, Greenstein & Marks, 2007). Similarly, individuals with a greater family responsibility – i.e., who have children or who are married –, also benefit more from these practices (Allen & Shockley, 2007; Allen et al, 2013). With this in mind, we suggest that variables such as emotional support at home, being a single parent or having dependents that are not children (i.e., parents, grandparents, among others), might also impact how employees perceive flexible HR practices and how they contribute to employees' well-being. These relations and the consequences that arise from them should be studied and carefully look at in the future.

Also, some authors have been discussing how flextime (i.e., flexibility in terms of working schedule) versus flexspace (i.e., flexibility in terms of working space) can impact employees differently (Allen & Shockley, 2009; Allen et al., 2013). Still, research is inconsistent regarding the benefits of flexible working conditions for different employees. Some research also indicates that differences in employees' outcomes might arise from the different ways of measuring FWP. Some research examines the availability of certain practices, i.e., if a specific practice is available for that organization's employees, and other authors examine the usability of certain practices, i.e., if employees actually use the practices that are available in their organization. These differences are justifiable because not every employee who reports a certain practice being available uses or values it (Allen et al., 2013). Therefore, we suggest that future research differentiates between practices directed at flexible time versus flexible space, while we also suggest a differentiation between the practices that are available to employees and the ones that they actually make use of, either they are HRDP, HRMP or FWP.

The operationalization of the age construct might also be a subject of reflection. In the Kooij and colleagues' study (2008), a suggested variable to study the age construct was career stage. A career is a pattern or sequence of work-related experiences (e.g. job positions, job duties, decisions), and activities throughout one's life (Hall, 1976), being more than a simple sequence of work changes that an individual makes (Cron & Slocum, 1986). Many authors (e.g. Cron, 1984; Super 1957) have agreed that a career encompasses four stages: exploration; establishment; maintenance; and disengagement, each one involving different challenges, which must be supported by the organizations employees belong to – by the means of HR practices. Conway (2004) for instance, posits that in earlier career stages, HR practices should be focused on training and development of employees' skills, while at later career stages, individuals value opportunities to

participate and maintain interest in their jobs. Therefore, future research should investigate if junior employees might prefer learning related HR practices – HRDP – and if senior employees might prefer maintenance related HR practices – HRMP. Future investigation should carefully look at career stage as a variable that might moderate the relation between HR practices and individual and organizational outcomes.

Finally, longitudinal studies are required to examine in more depth the role of age and life stage in the relationship between organizational practices and outcomes from a lifespan perspective. As pointed out before, as the needs and priorities seem to change throughout an individual's life (Kooij et al., 2010), affecting the perception these individuals might have of the HR practices in place in their organization, we suggest that future research addresses this using longitudinal research designs. We believe there is a need to accompany the individuals throughout some years of their lives, comparing then which practices had better outcomes at T1 and which practices had better outcomes at T2. This type of research could be really important to reflect if throughout our working lives there is a change in the preferences we have for certain types of HR practices and, if the outcomes of these people management practices – either in terms of performance, well-being, work satisfaction, among others – depend on the age we have or the life stage we are in.

Conclusion

Given the recent global aging phenomenon it is relevant to investigate how organizations can promote longer and better working lives, while giving their employees the needed resources to balance different life domains (e.g., family, social network).

The aim of this study was to contribute to the HRM literature, by clarifying the role of chronological age and life stage on the relationship between HR practices, such as learning and development practices (i.e., HRDP), performance evaluation related practices (i.e., HRMP) and flexible work practices (i.e., FWP), and organizational (i.e., turnover intention) and individual outcomes (i.e., well-being).

We concluded that organizations should consider putting HRDP, HRMP and FWP in place, in order to lower employees' turnover intention, and focus on HRDP in order to increase their well-being. Besides, we concluded that organizations should provide the abovementioned practices to all their employees, independently of their chronological age or life-stage. The solution to the challenge of managing an age diverse workforce can be creating age-friendly practices, that are flexible and adaptable to employees' needs throughout their lives.

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Appendix I – Instruments

Annex A. HR Practices Scale (Adapted from Boon, Hartog, Boselie & Paauwe, 2011)

The organization offers me...

- The opportunity to follow training, courses and workshops.
- The opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge for my current jobs or for possible jobs in the future.
- Support in planning my future development.
- Good career prospects.
- Periodic evaluation of my performance.
- Fair appraisal of my performance.
- Performance-related pay.
- Flexible working hours.
- The opportunity to work part-time if I needed to.
- The opportunity to arrange my work schedule so I can meet my family obligations.

Annex B. Turnover Scale (Rusbult, Farrell, Rogers & Mainous, 1988)

- I have recently spent some time looking for another job.
- During the next year I will probably look for a new job outside this company.
- I often think about quitting.

Annex E. Well-being Scale (Topp, Østergaard, Søndergaard & Bech, 2015)

Over the past two weeks...

- I have felt cheerful and in good spirits.
- I have felt calm and relaxed.
- I have felt active and vigorous.
- I woke up feeling fresh and rested.
- My daily life has been filled with things that interest me.