Exploring managers' attitudes toward older workers and their consequences:

An empirical study in Brazil[1]

Track: *Human Resource Management*

Abstract

We show how five attitudes toward older workers (adaptability; value of older workers' competencies; organizational conscientiousness; social capital/generosity; performance) of 136 Brazilian managers predict their decisions in five scenarios related to HRM practices. The main findings are: (a) although the attitudes are moderately or highly positive, a significant number of managers discriminate against older workers; (b) different managers develop different attitudinal configurations, some of them being associated with discriminating younger, not older, workers (i.e., ageism affects both older and young people).

Keywords: ageing workforce; managers' attitudes toward older workers; age discrimination.

Introduction

The increasing of life expectancy and the decline of birth and fecundity rates has led to the population ageing, including in Latin America. Leeson (2011) argued that "Latin America and the Caribbean, with their own history, culture and traditions, now stand on the brink of their own ageing challenge (…)". This challenge is not only social, economic and political – it is also managerial and organizational. While the labor force is becoming older, many organizations are not being successful in managing older workers and in using and leveraging their capacities. Such an underutilization of older workers capacities lies on several factors, including ageism: "a process of systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this for skin colour and gender" (Butler, 2002, p. 12). Empirical evidence suggests that ageism is common worldwide. In the countries included in the World Values Survey (WVS)[2], most people consider that older people are not respected (Table 1). A significant number of participants on WVS also consider that older people "get more than their fair share from the government", are "a burden on society", and lower the companies' performance. When asked about how likely (0: "not at all likely"; 4: "very likely") most people view older people as friendly, competent, and with respect, the participants on WVS describe the odds as moderate or modest, mainly regarding older workers' competency (Table 1).

Although the situation differs across countries, the data emerging from the WVS show that a significant number of individuals from Latin America and Caribe, including Brazil (Table 1), (a) espouse negative attitudes toward older

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[2] http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp.

people, (b) consider that the companies' performance is negatively affected by employing people of different ages, and (c) have modestly positive representations of how older people are treated and viewed. It is thus important to explore ageism in Latin American workplaces and the possible consequences for how older workers are treated. This study focuses on Brazil, a country where ageism has been found even in top-tier organizations (Vasconcelos, 2012).

Table 1. How older people are represented in the World Values Survey (wave #6, 2015)

	Whole sample (60 countries)	Non Latin America and Caribe countries (51 countries)	Latin America and Caribe countries (9 countries)	Brazil
Percentage of people who agree or strongly agree with the following statements:				
Older people are not respected much these days	59.9% (50586 in 84437)	58.2% (42504 in 73081)	71.2% (8082 in 11356)	71.3% (1048 in 1470)
Older people get more than their fair share from the government	27.7% (22607 in 81515)	29.6% (20860 in 70447)	15.8% (1747 in 11067)	4.6% (67 in 1467)
Older people are a burden on society	18.1% (15129 in 83732)	18.6% (n=13462 in 72485)	14.8% (1667 in 11247)	9.1% (133 in 1471)
Companies that employ young people perform better than those that employ people of different ages	44.4% (35813 in 80673)	46.4% (32456 in 69881)	31.1% (3356 in 10792)	26.2% (368 in 1408)
How likely (0: "not at all likely"; 4: "very likely") most people see older people as friendly, competent, and with respect?				
Are seen as friendly	2.77	2.75	2.93	3.06
Are seen as competent	2.49	2.51	2.38	2.82
Are viewed with respect	3.04	3.06	2.92	2.94

Ageism at work and possible consequences

Ageist biases and stereotypes in workplaces lead to conflicts, misunderstandings, and failures in cooperation and communication between older and younger organizational members. Organizations are also likely to disinvest in older workers' training and discriminate against older workers in selection and promotion processes (Daniel & Heywood, 2007; Gringart et al., 2005; Posthuma, Wagstraff, & Campion, 2012). Through these and other HRM policies and practices, organizations and their managers convey the non-verbal message that older workers are "worthless". Older workers who are the target of these practices and expectations eventually develop lower self-efficacy (Maurer, Barbeite, Weiss, & Lippstreu, 2008), which in turn originates actual lower performance. As a consequence, the earlier (biased) beliefs against older workers are reinforced, older workers feel unable to counter stereotypes (Bendick & Nunes, 2012), and a vicious cycle unfolds. Even when an older worker performs in ways that are inconsistent with the stereotype, his/her high performance level gets discounted and is viewed as merely a reflection of exceptional circumstances (Swim & Sanna, 1996).

Age discrimination is often defended on the grounds of economic rationality. It is often assumed that in liberal market economies, because older workers are more costly and/or perform worse, companies have the right to prefer younger workers over older ones. Such beliefs and justifications are however "mistaken and irrational" (Loretto, Duncan & White 2000, p. 283). As Fineman (2011, p. 64) argued, "there is no consistent effect of age on work

performance. Older workers typically perform as well as younger workers and outstrip them in many areas (…)". Furthermore, the literature (e.g.,Backes-Gellner, Schneider, & Veen, 2011; Cappelli & Novelli, 2010; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004; Schalk et al., 2010) suggests that older workers (a) have high interpersonal and ethical skills; (b) have extensive experience, knowledge, and wisdom with great relevance for organizations; (c) show lower absenteeism; (d) express higher loyalty/engagement towards the organization; (e) and experience fewer accidents at work. Contrary to what is often assumed (that older workers reject change and avoid, or are less motivated for, training), the majority of older workers aim continuing to learn and having opportunities to enhance their skills (Cappelli & Novelli, 2011;Streb, Voelpel, & Leibold, 2008). Finally, older workers may be more able to understand the wishes, problems, and needs of older customers of services organizations (Cappelli & Novelli, 2010; Leibold & Voelpel, 2006).

Negative beliefs and stereotypes toward older workers not only harm the targeted workers and make organizations to lose the potentialities mentioned above, they also engender negative consequences at the social and economic levels. In fact, ageism and negative stereotyping toward older workers give rise to early exits and poor-reentry rates, thus engendering unbalances and pressures upon social security systems, producing damaging effects on economy (Kadefors & Hanse, 2012; Porcellato, Carmichael, Hulme, Ingham, & Prashar, 2010; Vasconcelos, 2012).

Paper aims

In this paper, we focus on consequences of the negative beliefs and stereotypes toward older workers for the organizational functioning. We consider that organizations may be missing opportunities to improve performance because of the ways they see and manage older workers. In an era of labor force ageing, being able to effectively manage, motivate, and attract older workers are major challenges that organizations will have to face, today and in the next decades. Managers' attitudes toward older workers are significant constraints to such a need (Kadefors & Hanse, 2012). We do not focus specifically on ageism; instead, we study one of its possible consequences or manifestations: managers' attitudes toward older workers. We are mainly interested in discussing how those managers' attitudes predict their decisions in five scenarios involving younger versus older workers (Table 3).

The study was carried out in Brazil, a country where the fertility rate has fallen significantly in the last decades[3] (4.1 in 1980; 1.8 in 2013. As the consequence of this trend and the reduction in mortality, the percentage of the population with 65 years or more has increased significantly (4% in 1980; 8% in 2014). Monteiro, Taylor, Iguti, and Cummings (2015) stated that Brazil "is experiencing a marked increase in the aging of is population, with the percentage of those aged 65 and above projected to increase from 6.1% in 2005 to 19.4% in 2050". Although the "ageing challenge" is not so acute in Brazil as in countries like Japan (2014: 26% of population with 65 years and above) and other Western countries, Monteiro et al. (2015) argued that Brazil is converging with Japan, and the

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[3] See the *World Bank indicators* on: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator.

challenge is faced by other Latin American countries. According to Murrugara (2011, p. 4), "while the share of population [in Latin America] aged 60 and over increased from 6 to 9 percent between 1950 and 2000, it will increase to 24 percent in the next 50 years". Jackson, Strauss, and Howe(2009, p. 1) argued that Latin America "is in the midst of a far-reaching demographic transformation", with the number of elderly tripling as a share of the population by 2050. Murrugara (2011, p. 1) argued that "ass Latin American and the Caribbean countries face rapid aging transitions, the economic contribution of older workers would need to be strengthened". Managers' attitudes to older workers may inhibit such a contribution, a topic we explore here for Brazil, an understudied context.

The paper follows the work of Rego, Vitória, Cunha, Tupinambá, and Leal (forthcoming), who developed and validated an instrument for measuring five attitudes (adaptability; value of older workers' competencies; organizational conscientiousness; social capital/generosity; performance) of managers toward older workers. These authors tested how those attitudes predict the managers' decisions in three scenarios involving an older versus a younger candidate/worker. Through a sample of managers from Portugal and Brazil, Rego et al. (forthcoming) found the following: (a) the five attitudes predict how managers select older versus younger workers in hiring and selecting employees to participate in training; (b) in spite of recognizing positive qualities in older workers, managers discriminate against them; (c) managers develop different attitudinal profiles toward older workers, which has consequences for how they make decisions about those workers; (d) the empirical patterns identified in the Portuguese and Brazilian samples are similar.

Our study aims to test if a similar empirical pattern emerges from data collected in Brazil through a different method. Rego et al. (forthcoming) measured the managers' decisions in the scenarios after having measured the managers' attitudes toward older workers. Such a procedure may inflate the relationships between variables (i.e., attitudes and decisions) because the respondents may be influenced by self-consistency bias. In this study we measure the managers' attitudes after measuring their decisions in the scenarios. Although this procedure does not remove the risks of common method variance, it allows testing if different procedures give rise, or not, to a similar empirical pattern. In this paper, we also include two scenarios (#4 and #5, Table 3) not included in the Rego et al.'s (forthcoming) study. One scenario (#4, Table 3) was included to test if ageism is reinforced when the older applicant/worker is described as female (Fineman, 2014). The other scenario (#5) was included to test if the managers' attitudes predict their decisions in a situation where the company, to reduce costs, aims to dismiss an older versus a younger worker (the older being described as having higher performance). This scenario is included because literature has suggested that older workers are discriminated during downsizing (Armstrong-Stassen & Cattaneo, 2010; Quadagno, MacPherson, Keene, & Parham, 2001; Rau & Adams, 2014).

Method

A convenience sample comprising one hundred and thirty six (8.8% working in industry, 91.2% in services; 38.2% female) was collected. Mean age was 44.3 years (*SD*: 10.2) and tenure in the job was 10.6 years (*SD*: 9.2). Individuals performed a wide range of management jobs, from CEO and general manager to functional/departmental manager in fields such as human resources, IT, operations, marketing, engineering, law, customer service, sales, manufacturing, and finance and accounting. Managers described their attitudes toward older workers through twenty seven-point Likert scales (Rego et al., forthcoming f) measuring five dimensions: adaptability, value of older workers' competencies, organizational conscientiousness, social capital/generosity, and performance. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA with LISREL; maximum likelihood estimation method) showed that the five-factor model does not fit the data satisfactorily. After deliberation based on standardized residuals and modification indices, two items (one measuring the attitude of "value of older workers' competencies", the other one measuring the attitude of "organizational conscientiousness") were removed. The final model with eighteen and reasonably satisfactory fit indices (Table 2) was selected for further analysis.

Table 2. Attitudes toward older workers: Confirmatory factor analysis*

Dimensions and items	Lambdas	α	Fit indices
Adaptability		.83	
Older workers are less able to adapt to new situations.	.78		
Older workers take longer to become competent in the performance of a new job.	.71		
Older workers are more resistant to change.	.76		
Older workers are less creative/innovative.	.76		
Older workers are less willing to participate in training	.57		
Value of older workers' competencies to organizations		.61	
Older workers' experience is not very valuable to today's organizations.	.36		
Older workers reason more slowly.	.68		
Older workers are less valuable to today's organizations because they are poorly skilled in new technologies.	.57		
Organizational conscientiousness		.64	
Older workers are less willing to take responsibilities at work.	.56		
Older workers are less willing to make sacrifices on behalf of the organization.	.80		
Older workers are less loyal to their organizations.	.49		
Social capital and generosity		.79	
Older workers are more willing to help coworkers.	.74		
Older workers are able to develop more lasting relationships with other people.	.71		
Older workers are more cooperative.	.89		
Older workers wish to perform jobs more useful to society.	.47		
Performance		.75	
Older workers have poor quality performance.	.56		
Older workers have lower work performance.	.61		
Older workers are less productive.	.78		
Chi-square (degrees of freedom)			217.56 (125)
RMSEA			.07
SRMR			.07
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)			.86
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)			.90
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)			.90

*Completely standardized solution

All Lambdas except three are equal to or greater than .50. Cronbach Alphas are .83, .61, .64, .79 and .75, respectively for adaptability, value of older workers' competencies to organizations, organizational conscientiousness, social capital/generosity, and performance. Some authors consider reliabilities higher than .60 as acceptable (Price & Mueller, 1986). The single-factor model does not fit the data satisfactorily (*RMSEA*: .14; *GFI*: .69; *CFI*: .60; *IFI*: .61). The second-order factor model, with the five first-order factors loading on a single second-order factor, shows unsatisfactory fit indices (e.g., *GFI*: .84; *CFI* and *IFI*: .86) and is significantly poorer than the first-order five factor model ($\Delta\chi^2_{(5)} = 38.51$; $p \leq .001$).

Five scenarios (Table 3) involving younger versus older workers/candidates were presented to managers before having been asked them to report their attitudes. The first scenario referred to selection/hiring, the second related to selecting workers to participate in training, the third involved hiring a young graduate versus the actual job incumbent after retiring, the fourth referred to selection/hiring an older female individual versus a younger male, and the fifth referred to dismissing one older versus an younger employee in a process aimed at reducing costs. We considered (Kite, Stockdale, Whitley, & Johnson, 2005) that the bias against age would be likely weakened when additional information (beyond age) about the target was provided. Thus, while in the first scenario only age differed in the description of the two hypothetical workers/candidates, the second, the third and the fifth scenarios included a characteristic favoring the older worker/candidates profile. The fourth scenario differed from the first one in that the older applicant/worker was described in the fourth scenario as being female (the younger as male). Research shows that people tend to use male as the default category (Kite et al., 2005). Moreover, Fineman (2014, p. 1721) argued that "age is gendered. For women, age is potentially a double jeopardy: they often experience age discrimination at a younger age than men". We also ascribed different ages to the workers/candidates described in the scenarios because (a) we sought to create as much as possible an appearance of verisimilitude in the three scenarios, and (b) the literature is inconsistent about what an older worker is.

Table 3. Scenarios presented to the managers

#1. "Two individuals, with equal education, apply to a job in your organization. One is 28 years old, and the other is 45 years old. Which one would you hire?".
#2. "Your organization is going to select, between two workers, one that will participate in a training program provided by a university. Both employees (one 29 years old, the other 56) show high performance. However, the older worker is more motivated to the training. Which one would you select?"
#3. "A young graduate applies to a job (area: finance). The incumbent employee is about to retire, but agrees to continue in the job, on an independent basis, after retiring. (S)he accepts being rewarded below the wage that would be paid to the young graduate. Would you hire the young graduate or the incumbent?".
#4. Maria and António, whose CVs are very similar, apply to a job vacancy in your organization. Maria is 45 years old, and António is 28 years old. Which one would you hire: António or Maria?
#5. In a company from the food industry, two employees, with similar qualifications, perform administrative tasks. One is 56 years old and shows high performance. The other employee is 25 years old and shows lower performance. Because the company has to reduce costs, only one employee can stay. Which one would you dismiss?

Findings

Table 4 shows means, standard-deviations, and correlations. To facilitate explanation, all items with negative orientation were reverse-coded. Thus, higher scores represent more positive attitudes. Considering the 7-point scale, the mean scores on three attitudes toward older workers are higher than 5 and can thus be considered as moderately high (value: 5.25) or even high (conscientiousness: 5.93; performance: 6.13). The mean scores on the other two attitudes can be considered as moderate. Gender correlates negatively with the attitudes of adaptability and the value of older workers, and with the decisions related to the first and the fourth scenarios: males describe older workers less positively and are less likely to hire them in the two scenarios. Managers' age correlates positively with two attitudes toward older workers: older managers consider older workers as more adaptable and more competent. Older managers are also more likely to hire the older versus the younger worker in the first and the fourth scenarios. Managers' tenure in the job correlates positively with the preference for the older applicant in the first scenario: managers with longer tenure tend to select the older worker more frequently than the younger managers do. Managers from the services sector are more likely to prefer the older worker to the younger one in the same scenario.

Table 4. Means (*M*), standard deviations (*SD*), and correlations

	M	*SD*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*
1. Gender (a)	-	-	-													
2. Age	44.33	10.19	.07	-												
3. Schooling (b)	2.80	.73	-.07	.12	-											
4. Job tenure	10.55	9.19	.11	**.52**	-.05	-										
5. Sector (c)	-	-	-.09	.01	**.24**	-.01	-									
6. Adaptability	4.71	1.29	**-.28**	.12	.01	0.7	-.15	-								
7. Value	5.25	1.18	**-.22**	**.18**	.08	.07	-.04	**.71**	-							
8. Conscientiousness	5.93	1.03	.10	.16	.04	.12	-.11	**.42**	**.33**	-						
9. Social capital	4.84	1.28	.14	.14	.13	-.07	.05	-.09	-.16	.12	-					
10. Performance	6.13	.92	-.10	**.27**	.02	.15	-.05	**.53**	**.63**	**.56**	.01	-				
11. Scenario 1 (d)	-	-	**-.20**	**.36**	.14	**.18**	**.26**	**.24**	**.20**	.13	.13	**.23**	-			
12. Scenario 2 (d)	-	-	-.13	-.02	.04	-.05	.10	**.21**	.14	.10	**-.22**	.06	.09	-		
13. Scenario 3 (d)	-	-	-.16	-.12	.06	-.02	.06	.12	.11	-.10	**-.22**	-.02	-.05	.16	-	
14. Scenario 4 (d)	-	-	**-.18**	**.32**	.04	.14	.12	**.23**	**.21**	.13	.10	**.22**	**.53**	.05	-.02	-
15. Scenario 5 (d)	-	-	.06	.07	.00	-.01	.17	-.02	-.04	.09	**.20**	.04	.09	-.06	.01	-.01

Correlations (in bold) higher or equal to .18, .22, and .27 are significant at the .05, 0.01, and .001 levels, respectively.
(a) 0: female; 1: male; (b) 1: 12 schooling years or less; 2: university degree; 3: master's degree; 4: PhD; (c) 0: industry; 1: services; (d) 0 versus 1: the younger worker (0), versus the older one (1), is selected/preferred.

Several attitudes intercorrelate positively. However, the attitude of social capital/generosity does not correlate with any other attitude. Three attitudes (adaptability; value of older workers; performance) correlate positively with the preference for the older applicant in the first and the fourth scenarios: managers with more positive attitudes toward

older workers tend to select the older worker (including when she is described as female; fourth scenario) more frequently than do the managers with less positive attitudes. The attitude of adaptability also correlates positively with the preference for the older worker in the second scenario. The attitude of social capital/generosity correlates *positively* with the preference for the older worker in the last scenario, but *negatively* with the same preference in the second and the third scenarios. The preferences for the older worker are not consistent across the five scenarios, only one correlation being significant: the managers who prefer the older applicant in the first scenario show similar preference in the fourth scenario. Remember that both scenarios only differed in that the older (younger) applicant was described as female (male) in the fourth scenario.

Table 5 shows the percentage of managers who favored the older versus the younger worker in each condition/scenario, as well as the corresponding mean scores on the five attitudes toward older workers. Fifty one percent chose to hire the older worker in the first condition/scenario. These managers present better attitudes toward older workers in three dimensions. This empirical pattern is almost completely replicated for the fourth scenario, which differed from the first one only in that the older (younger) worker in the fourth scenario is described as female (male). Therefore, gender of the older applicant does not reinforce an eventual ageism. Although the majority (65%) of managers chose the older worker to participate in training, 35% chose the younger worker, who was described as less motivated to participate in the training program. The attitudes of those who chose the older worker are more positive in the dimension of adaptability, but *less* positive in the dimension of social capital/generosity.

Table 5. Comparing attitudes (mean scores) of managers who selected older workers with attitudes of those who selected the youngers

	Scenario #1 *Hiring the older versus the younger worker*		Scenario #2 *Selecting the older versus the younger worker for training*		Scenario #3 *Hiring the older (after retiring) versus the younger worker*		Scenario #4 *Hiring the older (female) versus the younger (male) worker*		Scenario #5 *Selecting the older worker (to stay in the company) and dismissing the younger worker (to reduce costs)*	
	Younger 49.3%	Older 50.7%	Younger 34.6%	Older 65.4% ***	Younger 48.5%	Older 51.5%	Younger 47.8%	Older 52.2%	Younger 40.4%	Older 59.6% *
Adaptability	4.40	5.02**	4.34	4.91*	4.56	4.86	4.41	4.99**	4.74	4.69
Value of older workers	5.01	5.49*	5.03	5.37	5.13	5.38	4.99	5.49*	5.32	5.21
Conscientiousness	5.80	6.07	5.79	6.01	6.04	5.83	5.79	6.06	5.81	6.01
Social capital	4.68	5.01	5.23	4.64**	5.13	4.57*	4.71	4.97	4.54	5.05*
Performance	5.93	6.34**	6.06	6.18	6.16	6.12	5.92	6.33**	6.09	6.17

$*p < 0.05$, $**p < 0.01$, $p < .001$ (frequencies: binomial test comparing the % of managers who chose the younger worker vs. the % who chose the older one; attitudes: T-test for equality of means)

Almost half of managers (49%) chose the younger candidate (the one to whom would be paid a higher wage) to continue to work after retiring. A significant difference in the attitude of social capital was found between those who chose the older versus the younger worker. However, again, the managers who chose the older candidate have a *less positive* attitude regarding social capital/generosity. These findings are consistent with the negative correlation (Table 4) between that attitude and the preference for the older worker in the second and the third scenarios. Finally, although the majority (60%) of managers chose the older employee to stay in the company (dismissing the younger in a process aiming to reduce costs), 40% preferred the younger employee, who was described as having lower performance. Those who chose the older employee have a more positive attitude toward the social capital/generosity of older workers.

Regression analyses (binary logistic) were used to test the predictive value of the managers' attitudes toward older workers for their decisions in each scenario. Table 6 shows that the managers' attitudes toward older workers predict weak or modest variance of the decisions made in the scenarios. Only the attitude of adaptability is a significant positive predictor of the preference for the older worker in the second scenario. Regarding the decision in the third scenario, only the attitude of social capital is a significant predictor, the effect being negative: managers who consider older workers as more cooperative/generous tend to choose them *less*. Two other findings are worth mentioning. First: managers' age predicts the preference for the older worker in the first and the fourth scenarios, older managers showing stronger preference for the older applicant. Second: the sector in which the manager operates also predicts the decision in the first and the fifth scenarios, managers from services showing stronger preference for the older applicant/employee.

We also carried out a cluster analysis (method: Ward; squared Euclidian distance) to test how managers combine the five attitudes according to different profiles. Cluster analysis allowed to look at the managers' attitudes from a configurational point of view. Considering that attitudes toward older workers are complex and multidimensional (Kite et al., 2005), and that the bias is not independent from the dimension being assessed, it is expectable that different managers develop *idiosyncratic* biases about older workers. In short, it is likely that different attitudinal configurations, or profiles, emerge from how the managers' attitudes are combined.

Table 6. Regression (binary logistic) analysis: How managers' attitudes predict decisions about selecting an older versus a younger worker

	Scenario #1 Hiring the older worker (c)				Scenario #2 Selecting the older worker for training (c)				Scenario #3 Hiring an older worker about to retire (c)				Scenario #4 Hiring the older (female) versus the younger (male) worker				Scenario #5 Selecting the older worker (to stay in the company) and dismissing the younger worker (to reduce costs)			
	1st step		2nd step		1st step		2nd step		1st step		2nd step		1st step		2nd step		1st step		2nd step	
Constant	-5.79*** (13.86)	1.55	-9.16*** (16.83)	2.23	.42 (.13)	1.14	.12 (.00)	1.83	.93 (.69)	1.12	2.17 (1.55)	1.74	-3.19** (7.03)	1.20	-6.15*** (10.37)	1.91	-1.41 (1.48)	1.16	-3.27 (3.40)	1.78
Gender (a)	-1.06* (6.32)	.42	-.89 (3.72)	.46	-.52 (1.77)	.39	-.19 (.19)	.45	-.63 (2.99)	.37	-.31 (.58)	.41	-.92* (5.40)	.40	-.80 (3.38)	.43	.32 (.73)	.37	.18 (.19)	.41
Age	.09*** (12.50)	.03	.08*** (8.94)	.03	.00 (.00)	.02	.01 (.12)	.02	-.03 (2.32)	.02	-.03 (1.32)	.02	.08*** (11.41)	.02	.07** (8.05)	.03	.02 (1.13)	.02	.02 (.41)	.02
Schooling	.04 (.01)	.30	.03 (.01)	.30	.02 (.00)	.26	.05 (.04)	.29	.18 (.50)	.25	.27 (1.01)	.27	-.14 (.27)	.27	-.17 (.38)	.28	-.16 (.36)	.26	-.21 (.58)	.27
Tenure on the job	.01 (.06)	.03	.01 (.15)	.03	-.01 (.12)	.02	-.02 (.76)	.03	.02 (.59)	.02	.01 (.18)	.02	-.01 (.06)	.03	.00 (.01)	.03	-.02 (.53)	.02	-.01 (.21)	.02
Sector (b)	2.62** (5.58)	1.11	2.75* (6.25)	1.10	.63 (1.00)	.63	1.19 (2.92)	.70	.27 (.17)	.64	.41 (.36)	.67	.87 (1.57)	.70	1.04 (2.18)	.70	1.33* (3.97)	.67	1.44* (4.31)	.69
Adaptability			.42 (2.87)	.25			.49* (4.02)	.24			.25 (1.27)	.22			.24 (1.08)	.23			.07 (.10)	.22
Value			-.08 (.08)	.29			-.16 (.37)	.27			.08 (.09)	.26			.07 (.08)	.27			-.15 (.32)	.26
Conscientiousness			.02 (.01)	.26			.28 (1.32)	.24			-.24 (.31)	.23			.04 (.02)	.25			.18 (.63)	.23
Soc. capital			.24 (1.68)	.18			-.52 (7.28)	.19			-.32* (3.84)	.16			.19 (1.33)	.17			.28 (3.16)	.16
Performance			.12 (.12)	.34			-.20 (.41)	.32			-.11 (.12)	.30			.10 (.09)	.32			.06 (.04)	.30
Cox & Snell R^2 / R^2 change	.24		.28 / .04		.03		.13 / .10		.05		.10 / .05		.15		.19 / .04		.04		.08 / .04	
Nagelkerke R^2 / R^2 change	.32		.38 / .06		.03		.18 / .15		.06		.14 / .08		.20		.25 / .05		.06		.11 / .05	

Values in the left (right) column are the estimation coefficients (standard errors). Between parentheses: Wald's statistic.
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$. (a) 0: female; 1: male; (b) 0: industry; 1: services; (c) "No": 0; "Yes": 1

From the analysis, six clusters/profiles emerged (Table 7). Managers fall into distinct attitudinal profiles, with no single typical profile being identified. The managers of the profile #1 consider older workers as modestly conscientious and effective, and moderately cooperative/ generous, although hardly adaptable and little valuable. The managers of the profile #2 consider older workers as conscientious, cooperative, and effective, although weakly adaptable, and little valuable for the organizations. The managers of the profile #3 describe older workers as highly effective, moderately conscientious and valuable, although modestly adaptable and cooperative. The managers of the profile #4 see older workers as highly effective, valuable, adaptable and conscientious, although extremely uncooperative. The managers of the profile #5 consider older workers as highly effective and conscientious, and moderately adaptable, cooperative and valuable. The managers of the profile #6 consider older workers as highly effective, valuable, adaptable and conscientious, and moderately cooperative. No profile represents the stereotype according to which "warmer/older employees are less competent/valuable" (Cuddy, Norton, & Fiske, 2005). However, the profile #2 represents its symmetric stereotype: competent/valuable older workers are "colder".

Table 7. Attitudinal profiles and the correspondent decisions in each scenario

	Profile 1 (n = 19)	Profile 2 (n = 19)	Profile 3 (n = 43)	Profile 4 (n = 8)	Profile 5 (n = 19)	Profile 6 (n = 28)	*Statistics*
Adaptability (a)	3.12	3.71	4.40	6.19	5.22	6.19	*56.69****
Value (a)	3.84	3.89	5.53	6.38	5.14	6.48	*56.47****
Conscientiousness (a)	4.60	6.28	5.36	6.88	6.66	6.72	*38.28****
Social capital (a)	4.91	5.63	4.30	1.75	5.66	5.44	*33.07****
Performance (a)	4.61	5.75	6.20	6.96	6.40	6.92	*42.94****
Mean score of the five attitudes	4.22	5.05	5.16	5.63	5.82	6.35	*105.90****
Scenario #1 (b) (younger-older)	74%-26%	58%-42%	49%-51%	75%-25%	37%-63%	29%-71%	*13.19**
Scenario #2 (b) (younger-older)	37%-63%	63%-37%	40%-60%	0%-100%	26%-74%	21%-79%	*14.32**
Scenario #3 (b) (younger-older)	68%-32%	47%-53%	37%-63%	25%-75%	58%-42%	54%-46%	*7.95*
Scenario #4 (b) (younger-older)	74%-26%	68%-32%	40%-60%	75%-25%	47%-53%	21%-79%	*19.70****
Scenario #5 (b) (younger-older)	37%-63%	42%-58%	44%-56%	63%-38%	40%-60%	39%-61%	*3.58*
Age (a)	38.00	45.00	45.26	42.63	44.37	47.18	*2.12*

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$. (a) Mean scores (F statistics); (b) Percentage of managers who selected the younger *vs.* the older worker (Pearson Chi-square).

Table 7 also includes the percentage of managers of each profile who selected the younger versus the older manager in each scenario. The overall tendency is that as the attitudes become more positive, the preference for older candidates/employees is stronger. However, several exceptions emerge. For example, the managers from the profile #1, the one with the less positive attitudes, tend to prefer the older worker in the second and the fifth scenarios. The managers from the profile #4 tend to prefer the younger candidate/employee in three scenarios, but the older one in two

scenarios. This is the profile with the less consistent attitudes and decisions across the scenarios: the managers consider older workers as highly effective, adaptable, conscientious and valuable, but extremely uncooperative. It seems that the very positive attitudes regarding four characteristics of older workers lead these managers to prefer an older worker in two scenarios, but the very negative attitude toward social capital lead them to prefer the younger worker in three scenarios. The findings suggest that, when facing a particular situation involving a younger versus and older applicant/employee, some managers discriminate against the older worker, while others discriminate against the younger one. For example, on the first scenario, the one where the two applicants differ only in terms of age, a great majority of managers from the profiles #1 and #2 chose the younger worker (i.e., discriminate against the older worker), while a great majority of managers from the profiles #5 and #6 chose the older worker (i.e., discriminate against the younger worker). The attitudinal profiles help to explain such decisions/preferences, but the relationship is complex.

Three last notes are worth mentioning. The first one relates to discriminating female older workers. Our findings show that when the older candidate is described as being female and the younger as male, the managers' preferences do not change in comparison with the situation/scenario where the gender of both candidates is not described. In fact, the preferences of managers with different profiles are similar in the scenarios 1 and 4 (Table 7). The second relevant issue is that the managers of the profile #1, who have the overall less positive attitude toward older workers (and discriminate against them in three scenarios), are comparatively younger. The finding is consistent with the positive correlation between age and (a) two attitudes, and (b) decisions in two scenarios (Table 4; see also, on Table 6, the predictive power of age for the decisions in two scenarios). The last note goes to the profile #4, which represents workers who consider older workers as highly effective but uncooperative. The small number of managers included in this profile recommends being cautious in interpreting the findings. However, we advance some possible interpretations. Considering the negative correlation between the attitude of social capital and the decisions in two scenarios (Table 4), and that managers of this profile tend to choose older workers in two scenarios, one could suppose that there is positive bias toward older workers who are seen as effective and relationally "cold". However, this attitude correlates *positively* with the preference for the older worker in the fifth scenario (Table 4), and the managers of the profile #4 denote preference for the younger worker in three scenarios. Therefore, it is possible that the managers' attitude of social capital benefits older workers in some managers' decisions, and is detrimental for older workers in other managers' decisions.

Discussion and conclusions

Several findings are worth discussing. First: in the whole, the Brazilian managers who participated in the study have positive attitudes toward older workers. These attitudes are even more positive than those emerging from Rego et al.

(forthcoming): 4.71 (against 4.05[4]), 5.25 (5.04), 5.93 (5.47), 4.84 (4.63), and 6.13 (5.52), respectively for the adaptability, value of older workers, conscientiousness, social capital, and performance. Several explanations are plausible. One relates to the samples' characteristics: in comparison with Rego et al.'s study, our study includes a higher number of older managers, the empirical evidence suggesting that older managers develop more positive attitudes toward older workers and chose older workers more often. Other possible explanation is that this study measured attitudes after asking the managers to make decisions in the five scenarios (three in Rego et al., forthcoming). Future studies may explore this issue through collecting data from larger samples through different procedural methods.

Second: in spite of developing positive attitudes toward older workers, a significant number of managers chose younger ones even when this worker is described as having poorer" qualities (from a managerial point of view). This finding corroborates literature (Rego et al., forthcoming; Truxillo, Cadiz, & Hammer, 2015). Third: overall, the managers' attitudes toward older workers explain a small amount of variance related to how managers prefer older versus younger workers. However, our findings corroborate Rego et al. (forthcoming) by showing that different managers develop different attitudinal profiles toward older workers, and that these profiles help to explain how managers discriminate against applicants/workers with different ages. There is no single, or typical, stereotyped lens through which managers perceive/see older workers. A profile may lead the respective managers to make different decisions in different scenarios. Moreover, some attitudinal profiles are associated with discrimination against younger, not older, applicants/workers (Duncan & Loretto, 2004). This empirical evidence also corroborates Rego et al. (forthcoming).

Fourth: although no attitudinal profile represents the stereotype according to which "warmer/older employees are less competent/valuable" (Cuddy et al., 2005), and many managers see older workers as having both high social capital/generosity and high value and competence, our study suggests that some managers develop the symmetric stereotype: the older worker as competent/valuable *and* weakly provide with social capital/generosity (profile #4, Table 7). These managers denote high preference for older workers in two scenarios, and low preference in three scenarios. The evidence emerging from our data suggests that the attitude of social capital/generosity has somewhat distinct consequences for how managers make HRM decisions: the relationship is positive for some decisions and negative for others (see opposite correlations on Table 4).

Fifth: our study does not corroborate Fineman (2014, p. 1721), who argued that "age is gendered" and that, "for women, age is potentially a double jeopardy". Future studies must continue to explore the issue through collecting data from larger samples and comparing the decisions and attitudes of male and female managers. Sixth: our evidence corroborates literature (Kite et al., 2005) suggesting that younger versus older managers tend to show more negative (and

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[4] These values are not shown in Rego et al. (forthcoming), where the data from the Portuguese and Brazilian samples were merged.

less positive) attitudes toward older workers and to discriminate them more. Seventh: managers operating ii the services versus the industry sector are more likely to prefer older workers. One possible reason is that some jobs in industry may require abilities (e.g., physical abilities) that may be less present in older workers. Finally, our study contributes to validate the instrument for measuring the managers' attitudes toward older workers. The five-factor model fits the data well, although future studies should improve the reliabilities of the items used to measure some attitudinal dimensions. Future studies should also include other attitudes such as those related to the older workers' intellectual capabilities and ethical skills.

The study has several limitations, beyond those mentioned above. First: the five scenarios cover a reduced number of managers' decisions. Future studies should include scenarios involving other, more complex decisions. Future studies should also consider *real* situations, not *hypothetical* ones, and test how managers *actually* react toward that *reality*. Second: data about the dependent and the independent variables were collected simultaneously and from a single source. Although our findings mostly corroborate Rego et al. (forthcoming), who adopted a reverse sequence in measuring managers' attitudes and their decisions, future studies should measure dependent and independent variables at different times. Third: considering that different jobs require different competencies and skills, it is expectable that managers value the older workers' perceived characteristics differently. Future studies should include job and organizational type as moderators of the relationship between the managers' attitudes and their decisions toward older workers. For example, it is possible that managers develop better positive attitudes toward older workers who perform jobs requiring experience and wisdom (Backes-Gellner et al., 2011). Other moderators are managers' personality traits and values, and organizational climate. Fifth: our research includes managers from just one Latin American country, and it is possible that the findings are influenced by the respective legal, social-political environment, and cultural idiosyncrasies. Future studies may include managers from other Latin American countries and from cultures characterized by higher individualism, lower power distance, and lower uncertainty avoidance.

In spite of those limitations, the study suggests three main findings. First: managers' attitudes toward older workers explain the managers' decisions, but this relationship is a multiplex one. To better understand such a relationship, it is necessary to identify attitudinal profiles, or configurations, rather than studying each dimension separately. Second: some managers discriminate against older applicants/workers, and this bias is somewhat predict by their attitudes toward older workers. However, other managers also discriminate against younger, not older, applicants/workers. Therefore, ageism in workplaces is multi-targeted, in that it discriminates against individuals from different age layers. Third: the empirical evidence found for Brazil corroborates literature from other contexts. Because managers' attitudes toward older workers have consequences for organizational policies and practices and these, in turn,

affect older workers' behaviors, well-being, health, and performance (Schalk et al., 2010), our study suggests that efforts must be made, namely in terms of training and development, to raise the managers' awareness about the consequences of ageism in workplaces. Considering that, such as Leeson (2011) argued, Latin America and the Caribbean, including Brazil, "now stand on the brink of their own ageing challenge", these efforts should start being carried out right now. Age diversity produces positive consequences for organizations, individuals, and the whole society (Boehm, Kunze, & Bruck, 2014; Kunze, Boehm, & Bruch, 2011; Srivastva & Saatçioglu, 1998; Vasconcelos, 2012). Fostering diversity is also an important endeavor for "the future of HR" and a crucial way to foster "respect for humanity at work" (Cleveland, Byrne, & Cavanagh, 2015).

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