

**PERCEPTIONS OF AGE DISCRIMINATION IN
HOTEL EMPLOYMENT**

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ABSTRACT

Age discrimination is regarded by many individuals and organizations to be a problem. Indeed, the UK government has stated that it is “bad for the individual, bad for business and bad for the economy”. However, relatively little research has been undertaken into age discrimination. To address this lack of research, this thesis investigates age discrimination in the workplace with a focus on hotel employment in Ireland and the UK. The study reports on evidence from a survey regarding managers’ perceptions of older workers and from thirty three interviews with older employees and HR managers in the UK and Ireland.

Despite the paucity of research and literature concerning age discrimination in hotel employment, there is a wide range of research and literature regarding age discrimination in the workplace and organisational employment policies and practices. In terms of workplace equality, four major types of social justice are examined: relative deprivation, distributive justice, procedural justice and retributive justice. Furthermore, liberal, radical and managing diversity approaches to equality are investigated and theories to ageing analysed. Human resource management policies and practices, especially in relation to the hospitality industry, are examined as these may perpetuate and legitimise age discrimination.

The main findings from this thesis suggest that major differences exist in the age diversity of a hotel’s workforce with older workers being under-represented in certain properties. Moreover, a number of organizational employment policies and practices were found to potentially disadvantage older workers and HR managers in the UK and Ireland possessed a poor knowledge of workplace equality initiatives. The varied experiences of older employees themselves highlight the heterogeneous nature of this group. The majority of older workers stated that, with some reservations, they felt they were treated fairly by management but a lack of IT skills, in particular, limited development opportunities for older workers.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Background and rationale

This thesis concerns age discrimination in the workplace with a focus on hotel employment in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and the UK. In attempting to establish the nature, extent and characteristics of age discrimination in employment, the experiences of older workers in hotel units will be ascertained. These experiences will be affected by political, economic, socio-cultural and technological factors in the firm's external environment, competitive forces related to the industrial sector in which the firm is located and the organisation's employment policies and practices, especially in relation to equality and diversity, and influenced by managements' perceptions of older workers. A central argument of this thesis is that, in order to understand age discrimination in the workplace, account needs to be taken of the political, economic- socio-cultural and the technological factors affecting the employment of older people and the commonplace interactions that contributes to the inclusion or exclusion of older workers.

Discrimination based on age is not a new phenomenon. People have experienced discrimination because of their age for hundreds of years. In some societies the "old" were venerated but, in general, they were treated with hostility (Minois, 1989). The hostility towards older people in England in the sixteenth century can be gleaned from Shakespeare's plays. For example, Hamlet declares:

".....Old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled,
their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum,
and that they have a plentiful lack of wit"
(Hamlet, II.2. 197-202)

Negative and stereotypical views of older people are not the sole domain of English playwrights in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Negative views of older people exist today and represent a challenge to the fair

and equitable treatment of older people in society, employment and other spheres of life.

Although the UK did not introduce a law to address age discrimination in employment (and vocational training) until October 2006 (IRS, 2006), other countries have long since pursued a legislative approach to confront age discrimination. For example, the U.S.A. introduced the Age Discrimination in Employment Act in 1967 (Harris, 1990) whilst, at the state level, Colorado passed a law in 1903 which covered age discrimination of people aged 18-60 (Adams, 2003). In Europe, Spain appears to have the most developed provisions for protecting older workers' rights (McDonald and Potton, 1997). In the Republic of Ireland (ROI), age was introduced as a ground of discrimination in the workplace in the Employment Equality Act, 1998, and the Equal Status Act, 2000 (The Equality Authority, 2002) and revised in the Equal Status Act, 2004 . It should be remembered, however, that because legislation exists to combat age discrimination in employment, it does not necessarily mean that age discrimination is eliminated. Much age discrimination in the workplace is subtle (Cooper and Torrington, 1981) and appears to be deeply embedded in the policies, practices and cultures of many organisations (Hollywood, Brown, Danson and McQuaid, 2003). Therefore, legislation alone cannot be expected to fundamentally change peoples' perceptions of older workers but can act as a catalyst to foster change.

The focus of this thesis is employment in the hotel industry in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (ROI). The rationale for selecting these countries in examining age discrimination in employment is that no substantial research has ever been undertaken on age discrimination in hotel employment in the UK and ROI and, at the start of undertaking research on age discrimination in employment, and until October 2006, the UK did not have legislation on age discrimination in employment whereas the ROI did. Moreover, although the

concept of diversity has gained in importance in the Republic of Ireland as the economy has grown and labour supply is tight (OECD, 2003), there is a distinct lack of research on diversity in Irish firms and organisations (Linehan and Hanappi Egger, 2006).

This thesis focuses on age discrimination in hotel employment as no major piece of research has been undertaken into age discrimination in hotels, the hospitality industry or associated sectors. Moreover, hotels and restaurants employ significant numbers of workers in the UK and ROI. In March 2006, 1.79 million people were employed in this industry in the UK (ONS, 2006). In the period March to May 2005, 111,000 were employed in hotels and restaurants in the ROI (CSO, 2006). Hotels and Restaurants are part of the hospitality industry which is itself part of the Services Industry (see Appendix 1 for a discussion of definitions pertaining to hotels, hospitality and the hospitality industry). This is now the dominant industry for jobs in the UK and the ROI. In 2003, the Services Industry sector represented 81% of employee jobs in the UK (Labour Market Trends, 2004) and 66% of persons in employment in the ROI (CSO, 2005). Hotel and restaurant employment has been criticised for having high labour turnover, low levels of pay, high levels of stress and low union density (Wood, 1997). Despite poor working conditions, the industry continues to attract a diverse workforce, in recent years bolstered by the ranks of young Eastern Europeans looking for work in the UK and ROI. It is anticipated that the recruitment of personnel will be a key issue in the hospitality industry, both in the UK and ROI, in the foreseeable future (Boella and Goss-Turner, 2006 and Failte Ireland, 2005).

Traditionally, the hospitality industry has relied, to a large extent, on younger workers. As a result of demographic changes, however, there will be fewer younger people. For example, by 2020, there will be 0.9 million (4%) fewer working people aged below 40 than aged above 40 in the UK (Shaw, 2006). The

ROI is somewhat less affected by population ageing than the UK or the rest of Europe (CSO, 2006) but a decline by 15% in the school leaving-age cohort in the period 2005-2010, associated with low unemployment and a high participation rate of women in employment, points to recruitment difficulties for the Irish hospitality industry (Failte Ireland, 2005).

This thesis focuses on the experiences of employees aged fifty and above. Thus, the focus is on “older” employees. It should be noted, however, that age, and the process of aging, are phenomena which are biological in nature but their meanings are socially and culturally constructed (Hareven, 1995, Wilson, 2000). It is difficult to establish the moment at which a person becomes old. This is because old age is an imprecise term (Minois, 1989). An individual may not realise he or she has become old as old age is sometimes more apparent to other people than to the individual concerned (de Beauvoir, 1996). In undertaking research on age discrimination in employment, a deliberate choice was made to focus on age discrimination against “older” workers rather than “younger” workers as older people experience most age discrimination (www.direct.gov.uk). This does not mean that younger people do not experience age discrimination. Indeed, there is evidence that some organizations discriminate against both older and younger workers in that they favour “prime age” labour, defined as workers aged 25-35 (Loretto, Duncan and White, 2000a).

In relation to this thesis, an “older” worker is defined as a person aged fifty or above. The rationale for choosing chronological age for research on age discrimination in employment is that it is an objective, knowable measure of age. Furthermore, much research on ageism in employment uses the age-band of fifty and above to define an older worker. For example, McKay and Middleton’s (1998) report on the Characteristics of Older Workers for the Department for Education and Employment suggests that the age of 50 is a

suitable point at which to refer to workers as “older”. The Cabinet Office’s (2000) report “Winning the Generation Game” focused on people aged between 50 and state pensionable age. Furthermore, Loretto, Vickerstaff and White’s (2005) report on “Older workers and options for flexible work” for the Equal Opportunities Commission defined an older worker or older person as being aged 50 and above. Also, in discussing the labour market participation of older people in the UK, Elizabeth Whiting (2005) defines an older person as anyone aged 50 and above. In addition, in constructing statistical tables on labour market trends in the UK for the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) uses the age category “50 and over” (www.statistics.gov.uk). In addition, the OECD’s series of reviews on ageing and employment policies in OECD countries, defined older workers as all workers aged 50 and above whilst acknowledging that “the age of 50 is not meant to be a watershed in and of itself in terms of defining who is old and who is not” (OECD, 2004, p.3). However, not all organisations use the category 50 and above in referring to older people. At an international level, the EU defines an “older worker” as someone aged 55-65 in employment in its Labour Force Survey (<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>). The “Older Workers Recommendation 1980” (Section 1), accepted at the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation in Geneva, 1980, does not mention a specific age but refers to older workers as “all workers who are liable to encounter difficulties in employment and occupation because of advancement in age” (www.ilo.org). However, International Labour Organisation statistics on older workers refer to people aged 55-64 in the labour force (www.laborsta.ilo.org).

From a business perspective, hotel employers need to attract non traditional employees such as those aged 50 and over. In order to utilise the skills and knowledge of individuals in this group, employers should address issues of age discrimination as “research points to the existence of widespread age discrimination in the labour market” (Taylor, 2001, p.2) It seems that, compared

to younger adults, older workers are disadvantaged in the labour force and this is due to stereotypical views about older employees (Harris, 1990).

Furthermore, Bytheway (1995, p.49) has stated that “It is well known that there is discrimination against older people in the labour market. Apart from the impact that this has on income, it restricts our choices on how we occupy our time”. A report on ageism in Britain by Age Concern England, based on interviews with 1843 people throughout the UK, revealed that more people had suffered from age discrimination than any other form of discrimination (Age Concern England, 2005). The UK government believes ageism and age discrimination to be a problem, stating that it is “bad for the individual, bad for business and bad for the economy” (Department for Work and Pensions, 2005, p. 19) whilst Folger and Cropanzano (1998) believe any form of injustice to be detrimental to organisations and employees. Furthermore, an OECD (2004) report into ageing and employment policies in the UK identified age discrimination as a widely perceived problem. The hospitality industry is not the most enlightened of industries in terms of progressive employment practices. Indeed, a recent publication on managing an ageing workforce in hospitality for the Department for Work and Pensions (McNair and Flynn, 2006, p.5) states that “employers in hospitality are generally less sympathetic than others to extending working life, with low degrees of flexibility over retirement dates”.

Despite the acknowledgement, by government and academics, of the existence of age discrimination in employment (for example, The Carnegie Inquiry into the Third Age, 1993; CIPD, 2001; DTI, 2003; Age Concern, 2005; Taylor and Walker, 1998; Snape and Redman, 2003), compared to other forms of discrimination, relatively little research has been undertaken (Age Concern, 2005). Indeed, “Discrimination by age remains the most pervasive and perhaps the least recognised and acknowledged of prejudices in our modern society” (The Edge, 2005, p.26) and age discrimination is the last outpost of discrimination (Panorama, 2006). To address this lack of research, this thesis

investigates age discrimination in employment in the hotel industry and presents the findings of twenty three semi-structured interviews with older workers and ten semi-structured interviews with Personnel and Training managers representing ten workplaces in the ROI and UK within a multinational hotel group (HotelCo). Furthermore, the thesis reports the findings of a survey to ascertain, primarily, HotelCo managers' perceptions of older employees. A survey of managers' perceptions was conducted as these "may be particularly important in determining the employment of older workers" (OECD, 2004, p. 15). The beliefs and views of these people are located within a wider debate about ageism and age discrimination in employment. A case study of HotelCo is presented containing information from a variety of sources, both qualitative and quantitative, about policies, practices, perceptions and opinions regarding older people in the workplace and organisational employment policies and practices. Moreover, the views of different sub-groups within the organisation are ascertained concerning ageism in the workplace and an attempt is made to establish the effects of Human Resource Management policies and practices on the recruitment, selection, training and development of older workers. Indeed, this is an approach recommended by Taylor (2001) in his report to the European Commission entitled "Analysis of ways to improve employment opportunities for older workers".

The problem of age discrimination in employment in the hotel industry has never been investigated in-depth, only as part of a wider study (e.g. Chiu, Chan, Snape and Redman, 2001; Loretto and White, 2006a) or limited to an exploratory survey (e.g. Magd, 2003). Furthermore, relatively little is known of the experiences of older workers themselves (Loretto, Vickerstaff and White, 2006; Donovan and Street, 2000) or those older workers currently in employment (Loretto and White, 2006c). Thus, older workers have been largely sidelined by studies on age discrimination in the workplace and have been treated as objects rather than subjects who are able to speak for themselves

(Blaikie, 1999). It is the intention of this thesis to redress this imbalance by focusing on the views of older workers, as well as managers, in order to give voice to those who, potentially, experience discrimination in the workplace. But it is not the intention of this thesis to ignore the opinions, attitudes and actions of managers as Human Resource managers, in particular, “play an important role as guardians of equal opportunities” (Hoque and Noon, 2004, p.497). Moreover, Human Resource managers have an important stake in how employees perceive the fairness of outcomes (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998).

In an examination of management attitudes and perceptions towards older employees in hospitality management, Magd (2003) concludes that “Many hospitality organisations have realised the value that older workers bring to their organisations and have begun aggressively recruiting them” (p.395), However, only catering-industry examples (such as Pizza Hut) are given. Magd’s (2003) research focussed on small and medium hospitality firms in Scotland and employed a postal questionnaire. This could be considered a methodological weakness since much age-discrimination is subtle and would not be identified using such a method. Moreover, only 25 questionnaires were returned and, as the questionnaire was completed by the owner or managing director of the firm, it is likely that the results present a biased view of older workers in the hospitality industry. The research is useful, however, in that it identified the perceived benefits and disadvantages of employing older workers.

Although sex discrimination, race discrimination and disability discrimination have been widely discussed in literature on equality, age discrimination is “a neglected social phenomenon” (Bytheway, 1995, p.1) and there is “little information about age discrimination in employment” (IPM, 1993, p.24). Although much has changed since the IPM’s (1993) report on Age and Employment, with major growth of research in the UK on older workers (Loretto, Vickerstaff and White, 2006), there is a lack of information and awareness in

organisations about older workers and the problem of age discrimination. Thus a survey by Martin and Gardiner (2007) into awareness of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 by British hospitality industry managers prior to the introduction of the new legislation, revealed a lack of preparedness for the new age discrimination legislation. Despite this lack of awareness, in recent years organisations have started to recognise the need to address age discrimination (Thompson, 2003), probably as a result of demographic changes, a tight labour market and impending legislation. The introduction of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 in the UK will mean that British businesses will need to reflect on how they treat older workers as, in today's highly competitive environment, there is increasing pressure for companies to behave in a responsible manner (Back, 2006, p.180).

The aim of this thesis is to investigate and establish the nature and extent of age discrimination in hotel employment. This aim is supported by four research questions which will provide an explicit organizational focus. These questions are:

1. How can age discrimination in the workplace be explained?
2. What role do employment policies and practices play in the inclusion or exclusion of older workers?
3. What are managers' perceptions of older workers and how might these affect employment policies and practices?
4. How does an analysis of the accounts of employment given by older workers provide an understanding of age discrimination in the workplace?

1.2. Theoretical framework

Despite the paucity of research and literature concerning age discrimination in hotel employment, there is a wide range of research and literature regarding ageism and age discrimination in the workplace and organisational employment

policies and practices. These literature strands will provide the theoretical framework for this thesis and are briefly discussed in the following section.

In terms of workplace equality, a social justice framework (Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith and Huo, 1997) is used to establish the link between resources and entitlement and the perceived fairness of decisions regarding these. Thus four major types of social justice are examined: relative deprivation, distributive justice, procedural justice and retributive justice (Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith and Huo, 1997). These types of social justice are related to types of equality initiatives in the workplace, namely liberal, radical and managing diversity approaches (Kirton and Greene, 2000). In order to understand age discrimination it is necessary to establish the process by which ageism results in discrimination. According to Hughes (1995), the economic structure, political values, cultural heritage, historical legacy and social attitudes results in negative images, stereotypes and messages about older people. These will affect policy, personal values and the experiences of older people. Three economic explanations for discrimination are presented: human capital theory, segmented labour market theory and reserve army of labour theory (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003) and these are used to help explain age discrimination in the workplace.

A number of different theories will be examined to establish their merits in explaining age discrimination in the workplace. These include biological theories to ageing which focus on finding reasons for biological and psychological change in human beings over time; disengagement theory which refers to the process whereby old people withdraw from society, ensuring continuity of the overall system and balance between social groups (Hughes, 1995) and structural theories which focus more on the political, social and economic factors affecting older people (Thompson, 2006). Furthermore, social constructionism theories, which argue that, to a large extent, a person's ageing

is affected by socio-cultural factors (Blaikie, 1999), and symbolic interactionism theories, which argue that meanings of ageing arise out of social interaction that manifests itself in stereotypes, images and labels (Blaikie, 1999), will be examined in attempting to explain ageing and age discrimination.

As organisational employment policies and practices may facilitate the inclusion or exclusion of older workers (Taylor, 2001), human resource management policies and practices, especially in relation to the hospitality industry, are examined as these may perpetuate and legitimise age discrimination (Lyon et al, 1998). Indeed, Lyon et al (1998, p. 57) recognise HRM's role in perpetuating age discrimination as HRM theory "can be seen to amplify older workers' problems by reinforcing ageism in management thinking through the provision of a commercially appropriate rationale which embellishes existing stereotypes and doubts about the commitment of older workers". HRM is examined within the context of a three part cycle: attracting an effective workforce, developing an effective workforce and maintaining an effective workforce (Baum, 2006). Thus, HRM will be concerned with recruitment, selection, training, development, remuneration, retirement and redundancies.

Employment relations in the hospitality industry is examined using an application of Guest and Conway's (1999) framework in relation to Employment Relations policy choices as the type of employment relations found in an organisation may affect the employment of older workers. As flexible working arrangements may help older workers combine work and family responsibilities and also ease the transition from employment to retirement (OECD, 2006a), these are examined using a variety of frameworks based on Atkinson's (1984) "Manpower strategies for flexible organisations" model. Furthermore, the role of equal opportunities and managing diversity approaches to the employment of older people is examined. However, a discussion of managing diversity is particularly challenging as it has been packaged and repackaged for potential

buyers and lacks any definitive formulation (Kaler, 2001). An attempt is made to conceptualise both equal opportunities and managing diversity and establish similarities and differences between these two approaches. In discussing equal opportunities and managing diversity, a number of approaches, theories and models are discussed. These include Liff's (1996) managing diversity approaches, Gooch and Todd's (2001) key factors in the successful management of diversity by the manager, Iverson's (2000) diversity management strategy and Kirton's (2003) types of diversity policies. In the context of older worker employment a critical discussion of managing diversity, as well as equal opportunities, is important as "the managing diversity discourse offers an alternative equality route to tackling age discrimination" (Duncan, 2003, p. 109).

1.3. The ageing population and the changing workforce

The European Union's population is ageing. This is a result of falling rates of fertility, increased life expectancy, effects of the "baby-boom" and migration movements (Commission of the European Communities, 2002). In all OECD countries the proportion of elderly people in the population is forecasted to increase dramatically (Spiezia, 2002). In terms of the fertility rate in the EU, figures have fallen for all countries (Eurostat, 2005). The declining fertility rate is the result of a complex interplay of factors, including higher rates of female participation in the labour market, women having children later in life, more women in higher education, increased costs of child rearing, higher divorce rates and an increase in the number of childless women (Hollywood, Brown, Danson and McQuaid, 2003).

With reference to life expectancy in the EU, for both sexes this has increased by eight years during the last forty years and, for the expanded EU, life expectancy at birth stood at 75 years for men and 81 years for women in 2002 (Eurostat, 2005). During the period 1992-2002, life expectancy in the UK increased from

73.6 years to 75.9 years. For Ireland the increase was from 72.7 years to 75.2 years (Eurostat 2004). It is projected that, of all regions of the world, Europe will be the most affected by population ageing with the number of people in the 50-64 age group increasing by 26% in the period 1995-2015 (Taylor, 2001, p.1). In the UK, figures for 2003 show that the population aged 50-64 was 16.9% in 2000; for Ireland the figure was 14.3% (Eurostat 2004). In the UK, the median age of the population is forecasted to increase from 38.6 years in 2004 to 42.9 years by 2031, reaching approximately 45 years by 2060 (Shaw, 2006). There are 19.8 million people aged 50 and over in the UK (www.statistics.gov.uk). This represents a 24% increase since 1961 and the number is projected to increase by a further 37% by 2031 when the UK will possess almost 27 million people aged 50 and over (www.statistics.gov.uk). As the baby-boom generation of the Mid 1960s age, the working age population of the UK will become older. By 2020, there will be 0.9 million (4%) fewer working people aged below 40 than aged above 40 in the UK (Shaw, 2006). In the UK, people aged between 50 and the State Pension Age (SPA) account for just under 22% of the working population (Age Positive, 2002). Compared to the 25-49 age group, workers aged 50 and above in the UK are more likely to be self-employed, have spent a longer time with their current employer, have fewer qualifications, have lower unemployment rates and are more likely to be long-term unemployed (Age Positive, 2002). People aged 50 and above are more likely to be economically inactive (TUC, 2006). There are 2,486,000 economically inactive women and men aged between 50 and the SPA in the UK and a further 221,000 are unemployed (TUC, 2006).

As is the case with most OECD countries, employment of people aged 50 and over in the UK has declined sharply since the 1970s although in the period 1998 to 2002, the number of people aged 50 and over in employment in the UK increased by 650,000 (Disney and Hawkes, 2003). Furthermore, in the period 1997-2004, the employment rate for people in the UK aged 50 and above but

below the SPA increased from 64.7% to 70.0% (Kersley et al, 2006). In particular, the decline in economic activity rates of men aged 50 and older in OECD countries over the last thirty years has been remarkable (Duncan, 2003) with participation rates for older males falling on average between 29% and 30% in OECD countries in the period 1970-1990 (Desmond, 2000, p. 241). At the end of 2002, about seven million people aged 50 and over were in employment in the UK; of these 56% were male (Disney and Hawkes, 2003). Employment rates for older people vary greatly between different parts of the UK with activity rates being considerably lower in Scotland, Wales and Northern England than Southern England (Brown and Danson, 2003). Amongst older people, the unemployment rate is twice as high in Scotland compared to England (Hollywood, Brown, Danson and McQuaid, 2003). In addition, it is likely that severe inequalities exist amongst older people in the UK with respect to employment opportunities with professional and managerial workers being able to work part-time into their 70s whilst “manual workers with grotty jobs and few skills often lack the opportunity, or desire, to work past their 50s” (The Guardian, 02/12/03). Demand for workers aged 50 and above is likely to be influenced by their substitutability, comparability and cost compared with other workers (Hotopp, 2005).

There is also considerable variation in Employment rates between European Union countries. In 2003, the employment rate for persons aged 55 to 64 in the EU's 25 countries was 40.2% with the UK having an employment rate of 55.5% and Ireland 49% (Eurostat, 2004). The highest employment rate for older workers was found in Sweden (68.6%); the lowest Slovenia (23.5%) (Eurostat, 2004). An ageing population affects the labour market in two ways: it reduces labour supply, thereby influencing the unemployment rate, and increases dependency levels, resulting in higher taxation and a reduction in employment (Spiezia, 2002). Population ageing is likely to be the most important of all demographic changes for the foreseeable future (Hollywood, Brown, Danson

and McQuaid, 2003) and will have major implications for everyone in society (Harper, 2000). Moreover, population ageing may result in labour shortages and reduce economic growth (OECD, 2004). Concern about population ageing has led to a preoccupation with debate about a “demographic time bomb” where declining birth rates, increased longevity and an ageing population pose a threat to economic prosperity. However, in his book “The Imaginary Time Bomb”, Mullan (2002) argues that such a threat does not exist. Rather, it represents a warning against the dangers of playing on individual uncertainties and fears and of naturalising social problems.

According to the OECD (2006), population, productivity and participation (known as the three Ps), are key to address population ageing. Issues regarding population ageing have been discussed above but the main negative impact of an ageing population on GDP per capita growth relates to the decline in the size of the prime-working population (those aged 20-64) and an increase in the size of the older and younger age groups (OECD, 2006, b). In relation to productivity, a decline in the prime-working population can be offset by a permanent increase in the labour productivity of all workers (OECD, 2006, b). Increased labour participation rates of older workers would have the effect of reducing economic dependency ratios, increasing public finances and potentially enhancing economic growth (OECD, 2006, b).

As this thesis concerns age discrimination in employment, with a focus on hotel employment, it is necessary to assess the nature of hotel employment, located within the broader context of hospitality industry employment which is part of the service sector. Therefore, the following section will discuss some key issues regarding employment and age diversity in the hospitality industry with a focus on the UK.

1.4. Employment in the hospitality industry

Hotels combine production and service in the one establishment and possess many of the characteristics of service industries (Mullins, 1998). Although hospitality firms offer accommodation, food and drink and entertainment, the hospitality firm's main function is to provide a service to the customer (Kandampully, 2002). According to Mullins (1998, p.17-18) there are seven main characteristic features of services: the consumer is a participant in the process, there is simultaneous production and consumption, services are perishable, site selection is determined by customer demands, services are labour intensive, services are largely intangible and it is difficult to measure performance.

Although it is claimed that hospitality services are intangible, this is not usually the case as tangible elements, such as the hotel itself, the bed, bathroom, the food and drink, and even elements of service delivery are tangible in nature. However, there is an increasing focus in the hospitality industry on intangibles and, therefore, the role and importance of human resources in the delivery of products and services (Baum, Amoah and Spivack, 1997).

These features will affect the nature of employment in the hospitality industry. As the consumer is a participant in the process, there is considerable interaction between the host (employee) and guest (consumer). Therefore, for the interaction to be successful, the employee will need to establish the needs and wants of the customer and deliver an appropriate service. As production and consumption are simultaneous, there is added pressure on the employee to deliver quality service. Quality is defined and judged by the customer and is strongly related to the people who deliver the service (Arrowsmith and McGoldrick, 1996). The encounter between the server and the served will mean that hospitality employees will need to perform "emotional labour" (D'Annunzio-Green, Maxwell and Watson, 2002), which will require the suppression of feelings in order to produce a belief in others that they are being cared for

(Hochschild, 1983). This has resulted in many hospitality businesses focusing on service excellence and this emphasis is likely to continue into the foreseeable future (Olsen, Teare and Gummesson, 1996).

Hotel customers have different needs and wants. A simplistic division between leisure customers and business people is often made in the hospitality literature. Hotel supply is related to tourism demand and the development of the hospitality industry is closely linked to the growth of the tourism industry (Kandampully, 2002). In May 2006, the UK attracted 30.8 million overseas visitors, an increase of 6% on the previous May (www.statistics.gov.uk). The UK greatly benefits economically from overseas visitors and in 2004 the UK earned approximately £13 billion from overseas residents visiting the UK (www.statistics.gov.uk). Overseas visitors tend to visit England, more especially London, and in 2003 London represented 11.7 million overnight visits, the rest of England 11.3 million, Scotland 1.6 million and Wales 0.9 million (British Hospitality Association, 2003). England is also the most popular country in the UK for domestic visitors, representing 415.8 million nights in 2002. This compares to 64.5 million for Scotland, 39.8 million for Wales and 9.3 million for Northern Ireland (British Hospitality Association, 2003). Spending by domestic tourists in the UK for 2003 was £52.9 billion, including trips of one night or more, day trips (estimated) and rent for Second Ownership (www.tourismtrade.org).

Figures from MINTEL (2002) suggest that there are about 60,000 lodging establishments (a broader term than hotels) in the UK with 80% of the capacity in England. A defining feature of the hotel industry is the large number of small businesses (Nolan, 2002). For example, approximately 70% of hotels in Scotland are classified as small (operations with fifteen bedrooms or less) (Buick, 2003). The hospitality industry in the UK consists of a large number of owner operators with the average size of establishment being about 20 rooms. (<http://www.bha-online.org.uk/hotels-profile.asp>). Indeed, over 99% of hospitality

industry businesses in the UK are classified by the DTI as SMEs: Small or Medium enterprises (Martin, 2004).

The labour intensive nature of the industry (Mullins, 1998; Yu, 1999) means that large numbers of people are needed for employment. As measured by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), "Hotels and Restaurants" employed 1,785,400 people in the UK in March 2006 (ONS, 2006). According to the ONS UK Industrial Classification of Economic Activities for 2003 (www.statistics.gov.uk), the Hotels and Restaurants Industry includes hotels and motels, both licensed and unlicensed, camping sites and other provision of short-stay accommodation, restaurants, including licensed, unlicensed, cafes and take-away food outlets, bars, including clubs and public houses and canteens and catering. There has been continued growth in the number of jobs in Hotels and Restaurants in the UK. This has occurred largely due to the growth in the annual turnover of British hotels which grew from £10 billion in 2000 to £11.2 billion in 2005 (MINTEL, 2006). In June 1993, 1.36 million employee jobs were to be found in Hotels and Restaurants in the UK. By June 1998 this figure had increased to 1.55 million and in March 2006 the figure was just over one and three quarters of a million (Labour Market Trends, 2004 and 2006). However, most jobs in hospitality are operational, requiring low levels of skill and attracting poor levels of pay (Wood, 1994).

The success of hospitality businesses depends on its employees (Hornsey and Dann, 1984) and how it effectively manages its human resources (Teare, Farber Canziani and Brown, 1997). A hotel may possess the most developed technology, luxurious facilities and enviable location but without appropriate human resources the business will ultimately fail. As hotels become standardised, and as hotel corporations offer broadly similar products and services, the human element is argued to be crucial in achieving competitive advantage (Knowles, 1998, p.165). Therefore, the role of differentiating the

hotel's intangibles, such as its staff, becomes critical in developing and maintaining competitive advantage (Lashley and Taylor, 1998).

A hospitality firm achieves competitive advantage when its actions create economic value in the industry and where few competing firms engage in actions which are similar (Barney, 2002). According to Porter (1990), competitive advantage is a result of the ways in which a firm organises and performs its activities. Porter (1996) terms these activities primary and support and these constitute the "Value Chain" which represents the conversion process from the beginning to the final product (Hannagan, 2002). Human resource management is recognised as a support activity within the chain. Therefore, according to Porter (1990), competitive advantage would be achieved by the firm adopting innovative approaches in developing new technologies, new or shifting buyer needs, the emergence of a new industry segment, shifting input costs and availability and changes in government regulations. Whether a firm adopts a differentiation, cost leadership or focus strategy (McGee, Thomas and Wilson, 2005), the human resources will undoubtedly be important in any business but perhaps especially so in the hospitality industry with its focus on customer service (Mullins, 1998).

The Hospitality Industry in general, and more specifically hotels and restaurants, employ a predominantly young workforce. This is confirmed by the results of the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS) which found that, in all workplaces surveyed, 32% of workplaces had 25% or more of their workforce aged 50 and above. This compared to only 13% of workplaces in the Hotel and Restaurants industry (Kersley et al, 2006). Moreover, older employees, defined as those aged 50 and above, were absent from 14% of all workplaces compared to 40% of workplaces in the Hotels and Restaurants industry (Kersley et al, 2006). At the other end of the age spectrum, results from WERS 2004 revealed that 47% of workplaces in the Hotels and Restaurants Industry

employed 25% or more employees aged 16 to 21 compared to 15% for all workplaces (Kersley et al, 2006). Furthermore, younger employees, defined as those aged 16 to 21, were absent from 37% of all workplaces compared to 16% of workplaces in the Hotels and Restaurants industry (Kersley et al, 2006). Much of the industry is style obsessed, particularly designer bars, boutique hotels and celebrity-chef restaurants. The industry seems to be particularly ageist and “The image of beautiful young things dressed in Armani dominates the industry. Employers seem determined to discriminate when it comes to age” (Clark, 2000, p.24).

1.5. The structure and organization of the thesis

Chapter 1 will serve as an introduction to the thesis and has four main functions: to present the theme, central argument and background to the research; to establish why research on age discrimination in the context of hotel employment is important; to state the theoretical considerations and framework for researching age discrimination in employment and to outline the key themes and issues discussed in each chapter.

Chapter 2 reviews literature on ageism and age discrimination, from a general perspective, focusing on older people in history and society, to a more specific focus on age discrimination in employment. Thus, after defining ageism and age discrimination, the chapter discusses literature related to cultural anthropology and sociology and attempts to engage in the debate about equality and inequality. In examining the link between ageism and discrimination, Hughes' 1995 model will be examined. Furthermore, Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith and Huo's (1997) four eras of social justice research: relative deprivation, distributive justice, procedural justice and retributive justice will be used as a framework to discuss equality and inequality in the workplace. Thereafter, liberal, radical and managing diversity equality approaches will be discussed based on Kirton and

Greene's (2000) framework although managing diversity will be critically examined in chapter 3. In terms of age discrimination in employment, the role of employers, employees and others in perpetuating age discrimination will be examined. The chapter concludes with an investigation into legally-based initiatives concerning age discrimination in employment around the world, including supra-national organisations, such as the EU and UN, and national initiatives from 1903 to the present, with a greater focus on legislation in the USA, UK and ROI.

Chapter 3 of the thesis focuses on organizational employment policies and practices, commencing with a discussion of HRM as a dominant paradigm, the major processes concerning the HRM approach, namely recruitment, selection, training and development and the possible effects on the employment of older workers. Thereafter, the hospitality industry labour market in the UK and ROI is examined and policies and practices pertaining to hospitality industry employment discussed. Employment relations and employment flexibility are examined as separate issues and their effects on older workers assessed. Equality policies and practices in the workplace are subsequently critically examined, focusing on equal opportunities and managing diversity initiatives.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the methodological issues pertaining to the major themes associated with an investigation into age discrimination in employment and seeks to demonstrate that the research paradigm, methodology, methods and analytical techniques are consistent with the research questions. In specific terms, this chapter serves to examine the approach and philosophical orientation to the research before describing the design issues, method and administration of the principal methods used in the research, namely a case study, interviews and a survey. The chapter then examines the major reliability and validity issues

of using a case study and mixed-methods approach within a critical realist paradigm. The research context and potential researcher bias are subsequently established and the major limitations to the methodology are examined.

Chapter 5 presents a case study of HotelCo which will outline the historical development of the company, operations and strategy of the organization and how the firm manages its human resources. Thereafter, the characteristics of ten HotelCo properties (where interviews with older employees and Personnel and Training managers took place) will be presented and these properties analysed to determine the age diversity of the workforce, especially in relation to the presence of older workers in each property.

Chapter 6 presents the findings of the principal methods used in this thesis, namely a survey into managers' perceptions of older workers and interviews with older employees and Personnel and Training managers. The findings related to the survey are presented first and, after a presentation of respondent characteristics, are structured according to themes identified and discussed in the literature, namely human resource and equality practices, the perceptions of older employees and perceptions of age discrimination in the workplace. Similarly, the findings in relation to the interviews are structured according to themes identified and examined in the literature. The findings from interviews with older workers are presented first and integrate responses from older workers in the UK and ROI (as the questions asked were almost identical). The findings from interviews with Personnel and Training managers mostly integrate responses from Personnel and Training managers in the UK and ROI with a separate section relating to equal opportunities and managing diversity as UK and ROI managers were asked a different set of questions regarding equality initiatives in each country.

Chapter 7 reviews the evidence collected during the course of the research and draws conclusions about how age discrimination in the workplace can be explained, the role of employment policies and practices in the inclusion or exclusion of older workers, managers' perceptions of older workers and how these might affect employment policies and practices and how the accounts of employment given by older workers provide an understanding of age discrimination in the workplace. Furthermore, specific recommendations are given for companies to maximise the potential of older workers and to eliminate discriminatory practices which may affect the recruitment, selection, training and development of older employees. The chapter concludes by examining the weaknesses and limitations of the study and implications for further research.

In conclusion, this thesis is concerned with an examination of age discrimination in the workplace. This examination takes place at the unit, or hotel, level and a detailed investigation is made into issues pertaining to age discrimination in ten units, five in the ROI and five in the UK. The key issues which emerge from this study include the ageing of the population and the resulting change in the demographic nature of the labour market, the firm's approach to how it manages its employees, specifically with regards to employment policies and practices, equality and diversity in the workplace, the beliefs of older workers regarding their employment and the views of managers with respect to older employees.

Chapter 2. Ageism and age discrimination in employment

2.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to define ageism and age discrimination and to demonstrate that these phenomena have a long history and are affected by political, economic, socio-cultural and technological forces. Furthermore, the role played by these forces in shaping ageism and age discrimination will be examined. In order to understand ageism and age discrimination, the theoretical constructs in relation to equality and inequality will be explored and types of equality initiatives discussed. Age discrimination will be subsequently examined from the perspective of research on the role of employers and, to a lesser extent, employees in perpetuating discriminatory practices. The final section will focus on legislative approaches to address age discrimination in employment at the supra-national and national levels.

2.2. Ageism and age discrimination.

Ageism is not a new phenomenon (Kingston, 1999). Older people have experienced extremes of treatment throughout history ranging from ridicule to respect and history generally points to a less than positive view of older people (Kingston, 1999). Indeed, throughout history it was not uncommon in some tribes and societies for older people to be systematically killed (de Beauvoir, 1977, quoted in Branine and Glover, 1997). Some authors, notably Giddens (2000), suggest a past golden-age where older people were accorded full authority and prestige but it would seem, however, this is not necessarily the case as the nature of ageism and the process of ageing are strongly influenced by culture (Henrard, 1996). From a cultural anthropologist perspective, Lewis (1981, p.279) notes that “Unlike ours, most traditional societies are gerontocratic in that as men grow older they receive increasing prestige and

power". For example, in north east Africa the Galla speaking peoples expect that their citizens accept roles with increasing levels of responsibility as they get older (Lewis, 1981). The gerontocratic nature of traditional African societies is also discussed by Mair (1980, p.56), who states that "Simpler societies usually attach greater importance to seniority. Also, it is often supposed that the old deserve particular respect because they are nearer to death, and so to God and their ancestors". According to Mair (1980), traditional societies exist in which roles are assigned to the male population by virtue of the social age of the age-set to which the person belongs. Broadly speaking, older men are called upon to undertake tasks which require wisdom in order to perform public duties, rituals and arbitrate disputes (Mair, 1980).

Branine and Glover (1997) claim that older people were probably not as respected and valued in the past as many people think. Furthermore, there is considerable variation in the status of old people in different societies (Hazan, 1994). In his account of the history of old age from Antiquity to the Renaissance, Minois (1989) demonstrates that, in general, the old were treated with hostility. This was due largely to the fact that ancient societies were based on physical strength and vigour, conditions that were unfavourable to old age (Minois, 1989). Similarly, during the early middle ages, the old were largely excluded from public life in Europe (de Beauvoir, 1996). According to Blaikie (1999), throughout history old people only appear on record when they are a problem and, as few people lived to become old, they were too scarce to be considered anything other than a curiosity. From an examination of old age in history, it is evident that older people were treated differently according to the period in history and the society in which ageing took place. Thus, it is clear that great differences exist in the status of the aged in different societies (Hazan, 1994, p.53).

Butler and Lewis (1973, p.127) developed one of the earliest definitions of ageism, stating that it represents “the prejudices and stereotypes that are applied to older people sheerly on the basis of their age”. Ageism is a form of oppression which arises from a social construction of old age (Biggs, 1993). Furthermore, ageism, as is the case with racism and sexism, pigeonholes people and does not represent peoples’ unique ways of living (Butler and Lewis, 1973). Ageism limits an older person’s life chances due to restrictions being placed on them as a result of stereotypical assumptions about their role and abilities (Thompson, 2003). Research by Bowd (2003) reveal eight apparent stereotypes by which older people are characterised: the impotent male, the vain/virile male, the insatiable female, the unattractive female, the infirm old person, the disinterested female, the forgetful old person and the innocence of second childhood. Germaine Greer (quoted in The Times, 09/09/05) has criticised some of Britain’s leading actresses for parts that caricature older people in a vicious manner, commenting: “Just what is it that’s funny about Mrs Overall? (an elderly woman who can barely carry a tray of teacups and could be characterised, based on Bowd’s 2003 stereotypes, as the forgetful old person). However, Bowd (2003) warns against the “political correctness” of discouraging jokes about ageing as much humour on ageing is positive.

According to Bytheway (1995, p.14), ageism is “a set of beliefs originating in the biological variation between people and relating to the ageing process and is in the actions of corporate bodies, what is said by their representatives, and the resulting views that are held by ordinary ageing people that ageism is made manifest”. It is interesting to note that Bytheway (1995, p.14) directs his attention to the role played by “corporate bodies”. But what of bodies that are not corporate in nature? Will ageism also be manifest in such entities? In producing a working definition of ageism, Bytheway (1995, p.14) has stated that:

“Ageism generates and reinforces a fear and denigration of the ageing process, and stereotyping presumptions regarding competence and the need for protection. In particular, ageism legitimates the use of chronological age to mark out classes of people who are systematically denied resources and opportunities that others enjoy, and who suffer the consequences of such denigration, ranging from well-meaning patronage to unambiguous vilification”.

As well as generating and reinforcing a fear of the ageing process, stereotypical views of older people may exist as a result of our own fears about loss of control, loss of sexuality, loss of intelligence and loss of adaptability (Perdue and Gurtman, 1990).

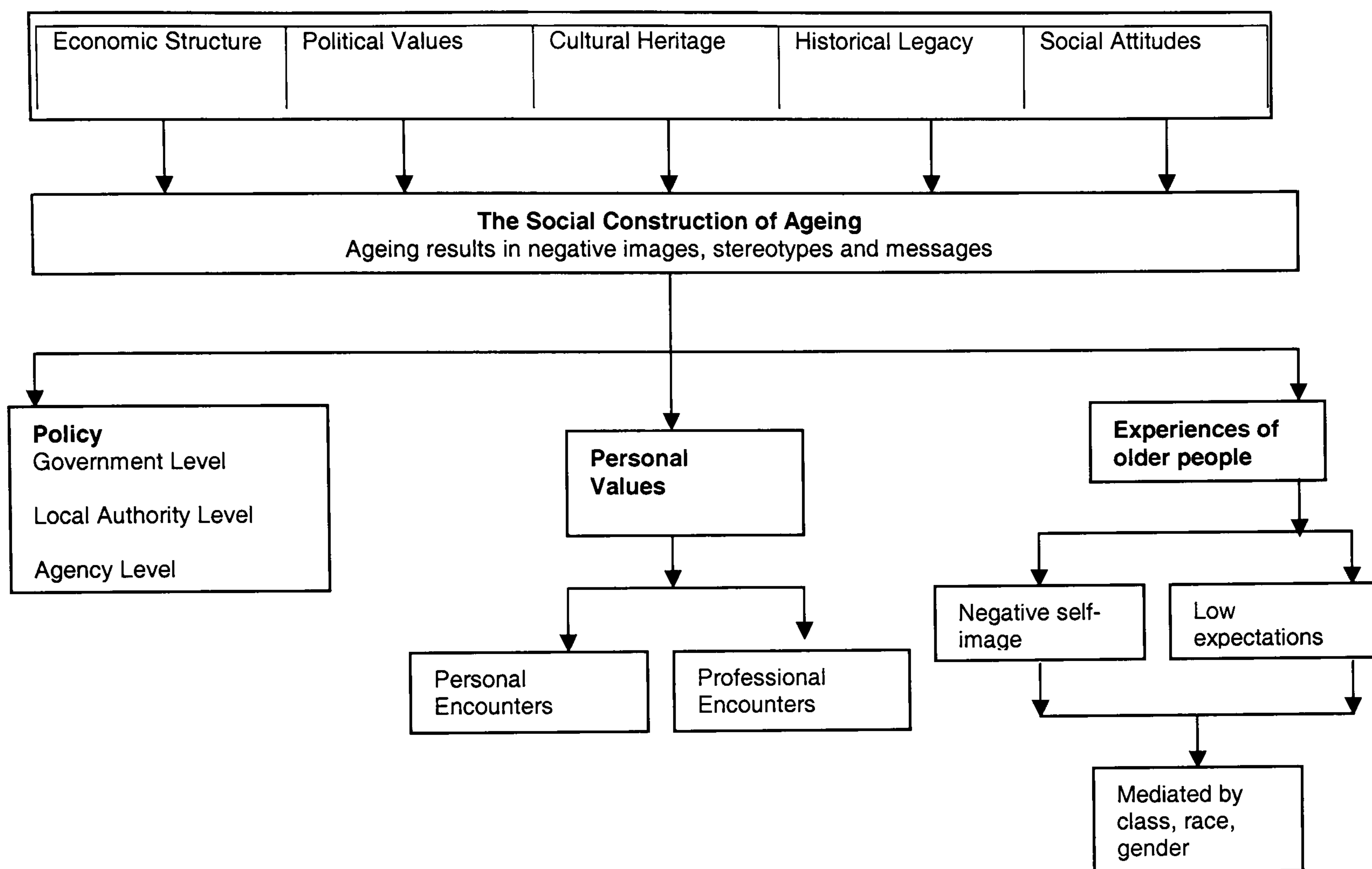
Bytheway (1995) believes ageism to be pernicious, leading to discrimination based on chronological age. Similarly, Giddens (2000, p. 587) has defined ageism as “Discrimination or prejudice against a person on the grounds of age”. This is similar to Glover and Branine’s (2001, p.4) definition of ageism as “unconscionable prejudice and discrimination based on actual or perceived chronological age”. This definition is perhaps more useful and insightful than Giddens’ definition in that discrimination may occur because of a person’s perceived age rather than their actual age. Lyon and Pollard (1997, p.245) follow a similar approach to Giddens, stating that ageism is “discrimination on the basis of chronological age”. This discrimination usually occurs against certain age groups.

Although the focus of much British government intervention regarding age discrimination has been on the over fifty age group, age discrimination can affect people of all ages and now affects individuals in their thirties and forties (Wersley, 1996). Age discrimination sets older people apart as being different in a generalised and oversimplified way and is a set of social relations which is used to discriminate against older people (Minichiello, Browne and Kendig, 2000). Ageism is a set of beliefs and attitudes which portrays older people in a negative, stereotypical manner, reinforcing the fear of ageing (Hughes, 1995). It

combines with globalization to stigmatize older people as bigoted, rigid and backward-looking (Glover, 2001). The critical tradition of “anti-ageism”, which has been developed most obviously in the social sciences, social services and intergenerational relations, recognises that social injustice exists towards older people (Coupland and Coupland, 1993). However, a potential problem of anti-ageism is that it can draw on the same well of prejudiced assumptions about older people as ageism, leading to unnecessary or misplaced concern and view older people as being oppressed and vulnerable (Coupland and Coupland, 1993).

A model which helps explain the link between ageism and discrimination is given in Figure 2.1. From this model it is evident that ageism and discrimination are complex phenomena which are affected by a range of environmental factors and result in stereotyped views of older people. At the policy level, supranational institutions, such as the European Union, can initiate policy to address age discrimination, as well as national governments. Professional industry-bodies, such as the British Hospitality Association, can also play a role in shaping policy, as can the firm or organisation itself. Personal values may be shaped by a range of factors including gender, class, educational background and religion, as will the experiences of older people, although these may be positive or neutral, a fact that is not represented formally in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 The relationship between ageism and discrimination (adapted from Hughes, 1995, p.43)



According to Thompson (2003) there are eight processes which are closely associated with inequality, discrimination and oppression, these being stereotyping, marginalization, invisibilization, infantilization, welfarism, medicalization, dehumanization and trivialization. These processes, in turn, will result in different categories of discrimination (e.g. based on age), leading to a form of oppression (e.g. ageism) (Thompson, 2003). According to Young (1990) there are five “faces of oppression”, these being exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence and any one of these faces can lead to the oppression of a group. In particular, older people are oppressed by marginalization and cultural imperialism with the former representing the most dangerous type of oppression (Young, 1990). Similarly, Thompson and

Thompson (2001) considers that older people represent an oppressed group due to discrimination, marginalization and dehumanization. Thus, Thompson (2006) argues, older people are assigned lower status in the labour market because they are viewed as marginal to the labour market.

Biological theories to ageing focus on finding reasons for biological and psychological change in human beings over time but these theories are discriminatory and negative as they concentrate on the biological and psychological decline of older people (Hughes, 1995). As they age, organisms change biologically and, as human beings age, they undergo functional and bodily changes (Hughes, 1995). These changes are the result of living which produces toxins, leading to “age related degeneration” (Vincent, 2006, p. 685). In biological terms, old age is a stage of cellular senescence corresponding to less-efficient apoptosis and shortened telomeres (Vincent, 2006). Ageing results in the shrinkage of the brain which can affect a person’s mental performance (The Economist, 2006). However, this will affect different people in different ways, leaving some people largely unaffected (The Economist, 2006). As much literature in relation to old age is from a medical perspective, theories that focus on “medicalization” can be themselves considered ageist since they focus on old age as a problem, viewing it as a pathological state or disease (Thompson, 2006). Theories which instead adopt a structural approach to old age focus more on the political, social and economic factors affecting older people (Thompson, 2006). Furthermore, de Beauvoir (1996) contends that old age cannot be understood from a biological focus alone as it is also a cultural phenomenon.

Disengagement theory refers to the process whereby old people withdraw from society, ensuring continuity of the overall system and balance between social groups (Hughes, 1995). Thus, older people would tend to have lower expectations as they gradually withdraw from roles, obligations and social

networks (Vincent, 1995). Biggs (1993), however, claims that disengagement theory can be rejected because older people actively create meaning and are the authors of their own projects. Furthermore, disengagement theory has been criticised because it may provide legitimacy for policies which reinforce indifference to or the inevitability of retirement (Blaikie, 1999). McMordie (1981, p. 72) criticizes the disengagement theory because, although there is evidence to suggest that older people tend to withdraw from some aspects of activity, “to attribute this withdrawal to an intrinsic, almost biological basis appears questionable”. Instead, McMordie (1981) claims that a person’s experience of old age will be fundamentally affected by the person’s previous experience in forming and developing intimate relationships. Such claims led to the development of “Activity theory” which questioned the underlying assumptions about disengagement, postulating that meaningful roles, relationships and activities would be equally important to an older person as to a younger person (Hughes, 1995).

According to Blaikie (1999) there are two theories of ageing: social constructionism and symbolic interactionism. Social constructionism theorists reject the view that ageing is natural and argue that, to a large extent, a person’s ageing is affected by socio-cultural factors (Blaikie, 1999). Thus, old age differs according to historical period, culture and class (Blaikie, 1999). Social constructionism theories are critical of traditional models of society as these do not recognise the importance of meaning and perception (Thompson, 2003). Although social constructionism theories are diverse in nature, they share a belief that meaning is a social construction rather than a private, cognitive construction (Hackley, 1998). Symbolic interactionism theorists believe, however, that people imagine themselves in other social roles and, therefore, meanings of ageing arise out of social interaction which manifests itself in stereotypes, images and labels (Blaikie, 1999). Moreover, symbolic interactionism proposes that, as people age, they have to develop a consensus

as to their new role and relationship with other people (Hughes, 1995). Jeon (2004) contends that symbolic interactionists share many beliefs with phenomenologists, emphasizing an individual's meaning, experience and behaviour and attempting to understand these from the participant's perspective. Neither social constructionism nor symbolic interactionism are wholly satisfactory because "the former risks portraying action as over-determined by external forces, while the latter ignore these selfsame constraints" (Blaikie, 1999, p. 5).

Research on age discrimination in employment principally concerns professional encounters, i.e. encounters in the workplace. However, these will be affected by the social construction of ageing which, in turn, will be influenced by wider political, economic, socio-cultural and technological factors (Lucas, 2004). These factors will facilitate or inhibit change and will affect the organisation's formal and informal systems (Wainwright, 1981). As a result of actual or perceived age discrimination, policy will be developed at different levels. The government level may also include supranational government such as the United Nations and the European Union. Within an organisation, discrimination can take one of three forms: individual discrimination, structural discrimination or organisational discrimination (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003). Individual discrimination concerns prejudice demonstrated by one individual against another; structural discrimination results in certain groups being excluded due to certain practices (e.g. requirements for promotion) and organisational discrimination reflects commonly-held beliefs about the suitability of certain groups for certain jobs (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003).

According to Thompson (2003), discrimination operates at three levels. Firstly, at the personal level discrimination manifests itself as prejudice which may be explicit or implicit (Thompson, 2003). Secondly, at the cultural level discrimination can be used to exclude other groups, it can create beliefs of

superiority and assumptions which lead to discrimination (Thompson, 2003). Thirdly, at the structural level, discrimination includes political, social and economic factors and inequalities which are embedded in the social order and play an important role in maintaining this order (Thompson, 2003).

2.3. Age and society.

Age is a complicated phenomenon. It represents a title covering complex socio-cultural formations (Hardy, 1997) and its use is not unproblematic as a factor in defining a group within society (Hughes, 1995). Age represents physiological ageing, social and economic change and membership of a generation or cohort (Arber, Davidson and Ginn, 2003). It is a dimension of social structure and is used to allocate opportunities, power and privilege (Thompson, 2006).

Experiences of ageing will be radically influenced by gender, class and race (Biggs, 1993). Indeed, differences according to class will invariable persist into old age and may be exacerbated (Blaikie, 1999). Age can be regarded as a trait but it may be useful to consider age as a string of events with a focus on survival (Hardy, 1997). Ageing involves both psychological and biological changes (Doering, Rhodes and Schuster, 1983). It is, however, important to remember that both ageism and old age are ideas and ways of thinking, reflecting cultural forces which are very powerful (Bytheway, 1995). Age, and the process of aging, are phenomena which are biological in nature but their meanings are socially and culturally constructed (Wilson, 2000). Ageing is about how people construct their lives (Sachs, 1993).

In order to study ageism, the way in which age is measured is crucial (Bytheway, 1995). This measurement usually corresponds to chronological age. However, it is important to remember that, for some people, a clear boundary into old age does not exist (Wilson, 2000). Indeed, because of the heterogeneity of older people, it is important to remember that ageism “does not relate to a

uniform and circumscribed set of moral criteria which apply across all social contexts” (Coupland and Coupland, 1993, p. 279-280). Monk and Katz (1993) argue that, as far as women are concerned, chronological age does not by itself mark status and role, employment, child-bearing or marriage. Furthermore, Bodily (1991) argues that an uncritical and unreflective use of chronological or typological age may legitimise and reinforce ageism. Therefore, in examining and explaining ageism age should not be used “as a dustbin of residual variation for which we lack explanations or as a misleading conceptual proxy for the actual events and processes that concern us” (Bodily, 1991, p. 259). The OECD comments that chronological age and perceptions of being old are loosely connected and invariably and inherently subjective (OECD, 2004).

In any discussion on age, it is important to consider the words used to describe phenomena, processes and situations and, wherever possible, use relative rather than absolute terms. Therefore, an attempt should be made to abandon ageist language, especially the word “elderly” (Bytheway, 1995). In relation to ageing, it may be useful to consider stages of life rather than chronological age. This approach would involve viewing ageing as a processes involving change during a person’s life course (Harris, 1990). However, this approach also has its dangers because the stages of life may form “The basis of rigid cultural expectations about behaviour and appearance” (Bytheway, 1995, p.19). Moreover, the concept of life stages is itself culturally determined. For example, the traditional Hindu life course does not include a stage termed “old” (Wilson, 2000).

It is difficult to establish the moment at which a person becomes old as old age is affected by socially-constructed practices (Mullan, 2002). Old age is an imprecise term and there is no fixed moment in a person’s life when she or he becomes old (Minois, 1989). Ageing does not start when a person reaches sixty or seventy: it is a continuing process through different life stages and starts

when a person is very young (Greengross, 1985). One way of defining old is to ask the person concerned whether she or he regards herself/himself as old (Hazan, 1994). Regardless of the system used to define age, be it scientific, bureaucratic, socially-constructed or by the individual concerned, any theoretical constructs about ageing are “replete with contradictions, conflicts, and paradoxes originating in our cultural system (Hazan, 1994, p.17).

Ageing is a gradual and sometimes almost imperceptible process (Harris, 1990). Old age should be expected though it is more often unforeseen and old age is sometimes more apparent to other people than to the individual concerned (de Beauvoir, 1996). There are also cultural differences with regard to the view of ageing and old age-these are constructed differently depending on the society (Wilson, 2000). Hazan (1994) claims that older people are separated from society due to ageing being identified with ugliness, horror and evil and to ageing being perceived as a dangerous phenomenon located between life and death.

Ageing as a psychological process of decline still pervades attitudes towards older people (Hughes, 1995). Hobman (1978) rallies against the idea of old age being a social problem or disease. Human beings, of course, have a finite life-span. “We are born, we live, we die” (Featherstone and Wernick, 1995, p.1). In fact, we are conceived dying. All living organisms have a developmental pattern of physiological change which can be described as ageing and takes place over a period of time (Vincent, 1995). Although the potential for a long life can be enhanced through improved medical care, diet and exercise, the flow of life from birth to death will prevail (Butler and Lewis, 1973). If we are fortunate enough to live a long, healthy life, we will experience the process of ageing (Harris, 1990). We may be referred to as old by other people. We may use old as a label for ourselves. But it is important to remember that “Old age is a cultural concept, a construction that has certain popular utility in sustaining ageism within societies

that need scapegoats” (Bytheway, 1995, p.119). Although the coming of old age should not be a great surprise to humankind it is not viewed by many in a positive light, rather it is viewed with rebellion or sorrow (de Beauvoir, 1996). Germaine Greer (The Guardian, 22/04/05) has discussed the “unpleasant surprises” associated with ageing.

Age boundaries can be defined in different ways. They can be defined by life stage, bureaucratically, social transition or physiologically (Wilson, 2000). Different cultures will have their own age markers and there will invariably be differences according to gender (Wilson, 2000). The concept of life stages has existed for hundreds, if not thousands of years. In the sixth century Saint Augustine developed the theme of the six ages of man: the cradle, childhood, adolescence, youth, maturity and old age. According to Saint Augustine, old age began at approximately sixty years of age (Minois, 1989). The concept of life stages is also reflected in the popular term “The Third Age” which has been defined as “The period of life when people emerge from the imperatives of earning a living and/or bringing up children and, without precedent in our society, are able to look forward to perhaps twenty or more years of healthy life” (The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, 1993, p.iii). The Third Age is a manifestation of greater wealth, especially for retired males (Gilleard and Higgs, 2002). For statistical purposes, The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust (1993) defines Third Age people as those aged fifty but not yet 75. This is the same definition used by Curnow and McLean Fox (1994) who define the First Age as the period of childhood and education, the Second Age as the period related to marriage, careers and parenting and the Fourth Age to decline, dependency and death.

The above categories can be criticised for being overly simplistic given the role of education in later life and lifelong learning, the declining birth rate and the conscious decision of many people not to have children and the increasing

numbers of people above seventy five who are fit, healthy and active. As a group, older people are diverse and heterogeneous (Latimer, 1997). Thus, in order to challenge potentially naïve assumptions about old age being “youth with grey hair”, it is important to view old age across its full spectrum including good health but also infirmity, as a time of fulfilment for some but for many a time of anxiety and deprivation (Coupland and Coupland, 1993, p. 286).

2.4. Equality, inequality, ageism and age discrimination,

Equality is a difficult word to define, its meaning is ambiguous and it is used to mean different and sometimes contradictory things (Levin et al, 1992). The Collins Concise Dictionary defines equality as “the state of being equal” (Collins Concise Dictionary, 1989, p.418). In determining equality and inequality, a moral judgement has to be made about whether social difference is better or worse (Vincent, 1995). According to Barnard, Deakin and Kilpatrick (2002) under English law, no general principle of equality exists. However, the same authors identify two types of equality: formal equality and substantive equality; the former referring to a liberal conception of equality, which is reflected in the principle of direct discrimination (Barnard, Deakin and Kilpatrick, 2002) and the latter relating to equality of results (where apparently consistent treatment results in inequality and is reflected in the principle of indirect discrimination), equality in terms of “fairness” (the full participation of groups in the workplace) and equality of opportunity (equal starting points) (Barnard, Deakin and Kilpatrick, 2002). With regards to equality of opportunity, Baker (1987) identifies five versions: careers open to talents, fair equal opportunity, affirmative action, reverse discrimination and proportional equal opportunity, and comments that people will have a vested interest in preferring one version above another. For example, an organisation pursuing a managing diversity agenda would tend to favour a career open to talents approach whilst a disadvantaged group may favour an affirmative action approach. A criticism of equality of opportunity is

that it pretends that one generation's successes and failures can be separated from those of the next generation but this is not possible (Baker, 1987).

The notion of equality and inequality is strongly related to political orientation. A central belief of capitalism is the transformation of humans into a workforce which is a factor of production and an instrument of capital (Braverman, 1974). This would invariably result in some people being treated more favourably than others and lead to social inequalities (Blaikie, 1999). Indeed, Phillipson (1982) claims that capitalism is incompatible with attempts to meet the needs of older people. Furthermore, inequality against older people reflects the fundamental weaknesses of social welfare and social policy in a capitalist economy (Phillipson, 1982). It is not just capitalism that creates and maintains inequality. Thomson (2003) argues that it is ideology, the "power of ideas", that sustain discrimination, oppression and inequality. However, Levin, Paul, Conway, Papps, Taylor and McElroy (1992) claims that, in relation to capitalism, the free-market is a great leveller of prejudice and has, over the years, tended to eliminate discrimination because of the monetary costs involved in pursuing discriminatory practices.

The concept of equality in employment is a constantly evolving concept and is influenced by a multiplicity of factors. According to Tomei (2003), three models of equality can be recognised: the procedural or individual justice model, the group justice model and equality as diversity. The procedural or individual justice model seeks to reduce discrimination by eliminating personal characteristics which are not relevant to the job. Therefore, this model is individualistic and merit-based. As a result of criticisms of this model, the broader concept of substantive equality was developed, resulting in the equality as social justice model and the equality as diversity model (Tomei, 2003). The equality as social justice model includes the group justice model, which is concerned with the results of selection, recruitment and dismissal and

affirmative action, which gives preferential treatment to disadvantaged groups. The equality as diversity model recognises individuality and acknowledges the existence and equal value of individual's different identities. This approach has been popularised by the term: "Diversity Management" or "Managing Diversity" and will be critically discussed in Chapter 3. Equality is a complicated concept and, as such, Baker (1987) recommends treating it not as a single principle but as a number of principles covering economic equality, political equality, basic needs, equal respect and equality related to gender, race, ethnicity and religious beliefs.

Equality, or inequality, is related to fairness. This is further related to the concept of justice which is socially constructed and is based on past decisions of fairness (Colquitt et al, 2001). Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith and Huo (1997) discuss four eras of social justice research: relative deprivation, distributive justice, procedural justice and retributive justice. Relative deprivation concerns satisfaction and dissatisfaction regarding the allocation of goods and services but theories of relative deprivation do not help explain people's knowledge of whether something is deserved or that a person's judgement of justice will affect feelings and actions (Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith and Huo, 1997).

Distributive justice relates to decisions where "outcomes are consistent with implicit norms for allocation, such as equity or equality" and procedural justice refers to the justice of the processes which lead to decision outcomes (Colquitt, 2001, p.386). According to Skarlicki and Folger (2003), however, distributive justice is where a mismatch exists between allocated resources and entitlement whereas procedural justice refers to the impossibility of allocating resources to meet every employee's view of fairness. Cropanzano and Greenberg (2001) consider that distributive justice is about the perceived fairness of procedures which are used to establish outcomes. However, Young (1990) is critical of the distributive paradigm, stating that it tends to ignore the institutional context

which largely determines material provision and tends to misrepresent the logic associated with distribution as applied to nonmaterial goods and services. Therefore, according to Young (1990), justice should focus on the institutional conditions required for developing cooperation, collective communication and individual capacities.

Procedural justice can be explained according to two models; the instrumental model, which focuses on the economic incentives to promote fairness and the relational or group value model which focuses on the economic benefits of being a member of a particular group (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 2001). Retributive justice concerns how people react to social rules being broken and how the person should be punished by an individual or group, the type of punishment which should be implemented and the severity of the punishment (Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith and Huo, 1997)

Research on organizational justice is complex, due to the lack of a unifying theory or established research paradigm (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 2001). Moreover, as the effects of distributive justice on employees in the workplace are affected by procedural justice, there is much overlap between these two concepts (De Cremer, 2005). Mueller and Wynn (2000) differentiate “justice norms” and “justice values”. According to these authors, at a general level, a justice norm is the rule whereby people should be treated fairly and is linked to a particular principle of justice such as equality or equity. The justice value concerns the value which individuals give to the justice norm (Mueller and Wynn, 2000). Montada (1998) discusses the concept of a “justice motive” based on justice principles which seek to rectify perceived injustices. Justice, according to Montada (1998), is about choosing from different principles of justice. Thus, in relation to salaries, older workers may wish to apply the seniority concept whereas younger workers may plead for equity based on like work (Montada, 1998).

In relation to equality and inequality, the term fairness is often used and connected to justice, impartiality in judgement and open competition (Baker, 1987). However, as fairness is a loose and flexible idea, it is best not to place too much emphasis on it (Baker, 1987). A somewhat different perspective on inequality is offered by Vincent (1995) who suggests two perspectives: inequality as a function of power and wealth, termed the socio-structural perspective and inequality as a function of culture- the cultural perspective. Writers on inequality may emphasise one perspective over the other even where they try to incorporate both in a framework. In the UK, the principle of equal treatment of individuals is a cornerstone to approaches and understandings of equality (Liff, 1999).

In discussing the types of equality initiatives, Kirton and Greene (2000, p.102) have developed the following framework: (Table 2.1)

Table 2.1 Types of equality initiatives

Approach	Principle	Strategy	Method	Type of equality
Liberal	Fair equal opportunity	Level playing field	Policy statement, equality proof, recruitment and selection procedures	Equality of opportunity
	Positive action	Assistance to disadvantaged social groups	Monitoring, pre-entry training, in-service training, special courses, evaluate EO within management	Equality of opportunity
	Strong positive action	Give positive preference to certain groups	Family friendly policies, improve access for disabled, make harassment a disciplinary offence	Moving towards equality of outcome
Radical	Positive discrimination	Proportional equal representation	Preferential selection, quotas	Equality of outcome
Managing diversity	Maximise individual potential	Use diversity to add value	Vision statement, organization audit, business-related objectives, communication and accountability, change culture	Equality means profit aligned with organizational objectives

The above framework is a development of Jewson and Mason's (1986, p. 312) "elements of equal opportunities policies" which differentiates between liberal and radical approaches. According to Jewson and Mason (1986, p. 312), the liberal approach to equal opportunities is characterised by fair procedures, bureaucratisation of decision making, Positive Action and the perception is that justice is seen to be done. The radical approach is characterised by fair distribution of rewards, politicisation of decision making, Positive Discrimination and the perception is consciousness-raising (Jewson and Mason, 1986, p. 312). The liberal approach is based on the philosophy of sameness where the focus is on the individual and individual merit (Kirton and Greene, 2000). The free market is central to the liberal approach where efforts are made to remove distortions in the operation of the free market (Kirton and Greene, 2000). The liberal approach is associated with the practice of Positive Action which concerns efforts to "remove obstacles to the free operation of the labour market" (Jewson and Mason, 1986, p. 322). In the UK, the Equal Pay Act (1970), Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and Race Relations Act (1976) are all manifestations of the liberal approach to equality (Kirton and Greene, 2000).

The radical approach emphasizes direct intervention to achieve equality of opportunity and equality of outcome (Kirton and Greene, 2000). This may be achieved through positive discrimination or reverse discrimination, although, in most cases, this is illegal in the UK (Daniels and Macdonald, 2005). Positive discrimination concerns the "deliberate manipulation of employment practices so as to obtain a fair distribution of the deprived or disadvantaged population within the workforce" (Jewson and Mason, 1986, p. 322). Proponents of the radical approach believe that discrimination is not simply a result of free-market distortion but the socially constructed nature of the market process (Kirton and Greene, 2000). The managing diversity approach takes individuals, rather than groups, as the primary focus of attention (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003). This approach owes much of its development to the area of equal

opportunities and, in some organizations, managing diversity is not a different approach but re-labelled equal opportunities (Noon and Ogbonna, 2001).

Kandola and Fullerton (1998) claim that managing diversity is an organisational strategy and must pervade the whole organisation if it is to be successful. The managing diversity approach will be discussed in-depth in chapter 3.

According to Miller (1996), there are four types of equality: ontological equality, equality of opportunity, equality of condition and equality of outcome.

Ontological equality refers to equality of need and is based on a belief that human beings are essentially the same; equality of opportunity is associated with a liberal political perspective and attempts to create a level playing field; equality of condition seeks to improve or equalize material conditions for disadvantaged people and equality of outcome is based on a radical political perspective and aims to decisively change the workforce composition by such means as positive discrimination (Miller, 1996, p. 204).

Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby (2003) propose three economic explanations for discrimination: human capital theory, segmented labour market theory and reserve army of labour theory. According to human capital theory, workers are rewarded for their productivity in a non-discriminatory labour market with group disadvantage occurring because the group is less productive (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003). In terms of segmented labour market theory, some groups are over-represented in primary, secondary, core or periphery labour markets (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003). Finally, the reserve army of labour theory is based on the writings of Marx who saw the reserve army being employed when conditions were right or repelled from the labour market at other times (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003).

Similarly, Collinson, Knights and Collinson (1990) discuss three theories to explain gender inequality in the labour market: women as a reserve army, dual

and segmented labour markets and managerial strategy and agency. Although these theories are used to help explain gender inequality, they are nevertheless useful in helping to understand inequalities according to age. The women as a reserve army theory postulates that, as an economy expands, surplus labour could be called upon while, in times of high unemployment, the size of the reserve army could be reduced (Collinson, Knights and Collinson, 1990). However, Collinson, Knights and Collinson dismiss this theory as being empirically and theoretically inadequate in explaining women's employment patterns although Vickerstaff (2005) considers that older workers effectively function as a reserve army of labour to cushion the firm against changes in demand.

The theory of dual or segmented labour markets relates to employers structuring demand for labour by either operating dual or segmented labour markets (Collinson, Knights and Collinson, 1990). Again, Collinson, Knights and Collinson criticise this theory, stating that dual labour market theory treats all women in an undifferentiated manner. A criticism levelled against segmentation theory by Collinson, Knights and Collinson (1990), is that it attributes managers power which they do not warrant. However, Laczko and Phillipson (1991) claim that this theory, despite its limitations, provides is useful in helping explain the employment experience of older workers. The gender and post-Fordism theory, as proposed by Rose (2001), represents an extension to the dual labour market theory and considers in more detail the composition of internal and external labour markets. The theory of managerial strategy and agency concerns the variety of strategies adopted by management in attempting to control the labour process, given the contradictory relationship between capital and labour (Collinson, Knights and Collinson, 1990).

All organisations discriminate in that they have to choose between individuals when recruiting, selecting and promoting (Newell, 1995). This, if undertaken with

care, would constitute fair discrimination. Unfair discrimination occurs when non-relevant criteria are used, such as the colour of a person's skin, the individual's gender or the person's age (Newell, 1995). Discrimination in employment concerns the inequitable treatment of some employees, irrespective of their skills, knowledge and abilities (Rose, 2001). Prejudice refers to beliefs and opinions whereas discrimination refers to actual behaviour (Rose, 2001). The links between stereotypes and prejudice are explained in Devine's (1989) dissociation model which postulates that everyone knows the stereotypical characteristics of the major groups in society (Locke and Walker, 1999). However, not everyone will accept the stereotype. Some people, labelled "low prejudice" by Devine (1989), will have egalitarian and non-prejudiced attitudes which conflicts with the stereotype. Other people, labelled "high prejudice" by Devine (1989), will have beliefs which overlap considerably with the stereotype. Studies by Lepore and Brown (1997), Augoustinos et al (1994) and Fazio et al (1995) point to limitations in Devine's (1989) dissociation model but these studies also have their limitations (Locke and Walker, 1999).

Discrimination can be direct or indirect (Tomei, 2003). Direct discrimination takes place where an employee is treated less favourably on the grounds of age, gender, race et cetera than an employee of a different age, gender, race et cetera (Daniels, 2004). However, being treated differently does not necessarily mean that the person is treated less favourably (Daniels and Macdonald, 2005). Indirect discrimination takes place when an employer applies an unjustifiable criterion to different groups (for example, based on age, gender and race) which adversely affects one group, resulting in a person from the disadvantaged group being unable to comply with the criterion (Daniels, 2004). Direct discrimination is easier to uncover than indirect discrimination (Tomei, 2003). A similar concept to indirect discrimination is the concept of adverse impact which refers to a "substantially different rate of selection in hiring, promotion or other employment decision which works to the disadvantage of members of a race, sex or ethnic

group” (Biddle, 2006, p. 1). Unlike direct or indirect discrimination, however, adverse impact is not a legal term (Biddle, 2006).

2.5. Age discrimination and employers

Employment opportunities for older workers are largely determined by employers (OECD, 2006b). These opportunities will be affected by discriminatory policies and practices. Age discrimination in the workplace takes place when “Decisions made by an employer, about an individual, are based on an individual’s chronological age” (Sargeant, 2001, p.141). Age discrimination may also result from an employer’s attitude about an employee’s perceived age (Glover and Branine, 2001). In many cases, an individual’s first experience of age discrimination will take place in the workplace (Slater, 1995). Discrimination will usually take place as a result of certain assumptions being made about age (Sargeant, 2001). These assumptions may also be directed at women where employers believe that certain jobs are better suited to women than men (Pratt and Hanson, 1993).

Age discrimination appears to be deeply embedded in the policies, practices and cultures of many organisations (Hollywood, Brown, Danson and McQuaid, 2003). Kirton and Greene (2000) claim that employers are the main barrier to the employment of older workers with their attitudes of older workers being rooted in myths and stereotypes. In a review of ageing and employment policies in OECD countries, stereotypical attitudes of older workers were found to be widespread (OECD, 2006b). A deeply-rooted stereotype of older persons is that they are inflexible, conservative and not supportive of change (Hazan, 1994). De Beauvoir (1996) claims that employers dislike the very idea of employing older people. Moreover, many employers believe that older workers should make way for younger workers (Shah and Kleiner, 2005).

Organizations are major sites of power conflict and formal and informal power relations between the organization, groups, individuals and its employees may affect the employment of older people (Thompson, 2003). Understanding these power relations is necessary in order to understand and eliminate age discrimination (Thompson, 2003). Discrimination will be most felt where relatively powerful groups are able to systematically discriminate against those in groups which have relatively less power (Thompson, 2006).

According to Blakemore and Boneham (1994) thoughts about ageing are permeated by myths and stereotypes. In discussing the role played by employers in perpetuating age discrimination, it is necessary to define "stereotype". According to Clements and Jones (2002, p.159), stereotyping is "A cognitive process that leads to a generalization concerning the characteristics of a group of people". These characteristics may relate to age, gender, race, disability or sexual orientation. Where gender is the object of stereotyping, physical and temperamental abilities and characteristics are generalised and exaggerated (Collinson, Knights and Collinson, 1990).

Bowd (2003, p.22) defines a stereotype as "person perception schemas based on a particular categorization principle and may either be positive or negative". Stereotypes tend to be illogical, resistant to change, overwhelmingly negative, potentially oppressive and ingrained (Thompson, 2003). A central belief in stereotyping is that members of a particular group share particular traits (Clements and Spinks, 2001). As stereotypes are generalizations, there are occasions when these are fundamentally inaccurate (Huczynski and Buchanan, 2007). Moreover, these inaccuracies will be more costly to the person being perceived rather than the perceiver him or herself (Macrae, Milne and Bodenhausen, 1994).

Stereotypes against older people are based on inappropriate, inaccurate and outdated stereotypes (Department for Trade and Industry, 2003). Furthermore, stereotypes against the old will focus on superficial aspects of appearance, reducing older people to observable physical characteristics (Blaikie, 1999). Individuals are likely to base their beliefs of older people on readily accessible traits (Perdue and Gurtman, 1990). Thus, categorizing a person as “old” will tend to create a subset of overwhelmingly negative characteristics which will perpetuate ageism (Perdue and Gurtman, 1990). It is also possible for positive stereotypes to exist of older people in employment. This may be referred to as “sageism” where the assumption is made that the older person is wise (Minichiello, Browne and Kendig, 2000).

Age discrimination in employment is closely linked to individual’s age stereotypes (Institute of Personnel Management, 1993). A common saying is “life begins at forty”. But, for many of us, working life could be over by the time we reach forty five (The Sunday Herald, 06/08/06). The Carnegie Inquiry into the Third Age (1993, p.21), concluded that “In general older workers are thought to be less productive, to have less relevant skills, to be less tangible, and to leave sooner, so that training them to provide the relevant skills has a low rate of return”. Furthermore, the same report pointed to widespread age discrimination of older people in employment, manifesting itself in prejudice and stereotyping and leading to under-utilisation and under-training of older workers. Employers’ stereotypes of older workers are likely to lead to fewer older workers being promoted, fewer being trained and may lead to lower pay (Wersley, 1996). According to the OECD (2006b), negative perceptions held by employers about the characteristics of older workers translate into lower recruitment levels and retention rates which fall dramatically when a person reaches their 50s. A typical stereotype perpetuated against older workers is that they are not physically capable of doing the job. Yet, over the years, the number of jobs

which are physically demanding has, in all likelihood, declined and this trend is set to continue into the future (OECD, 2006, b.).

Similarly, Taylor and Walker (1997) state that employers believe older workers to lack relevant skills, require training for which the payback period is too short, have maximum recruitment ages and possess pension scheme rules which discourage the employment of older people. An investigation by the Institute of Personnel Management into age and employment in the UK found that “policies, practices and approaches which many organisations operate with respect to older people are, at best, under-developed and opportunistic” (IPM, 1993, p.68). In a review of ageing and employment policies in the UK, the OECD (2004) report on the negative employer attitudes to recruitment and retention of older workers and state that these attitudes need to undergo major change. These stereotypical attitudes may result in fewer older workers being recruited, trained and developed (OECD, 2004). However, a review of ageing and employment policies in Ireland by the OECD (2006a) concluded that the attitude of most employers towards older workers was generally favourable.

However, discrimination against older people in employment is not just about individual prejudice; it is a social construct. It is institutionalised in social, economic and employment systems (Taylor and Walker, 1998). Moreover, it is not just employers who are discriminatory towards older people as the state, unions and works councils have conspired to provide opportunities for younger workers by removing older people from the labour force (Institute of Personnel Management, 1993). Indeed, union members may possess discriminatory attitudes towards older workers (Harcourt, Wood and Harcourt, 2004).

Taylor and Walker (1998) report the findings of UK employers’ policies, practices and attitudes towards older workers with primary data being collected from interviews with managers in eighty five private and public-sector

organisations. Sixteen interviews were held with managers in the distribution and hotel sector. Taylor and Walker (1998) present two models which characterise the orientations towards older workers. The first model concerns attributes of policies and practices and is composed of four elements, these being orientation (proactive versus reactive; inclusion versus exclusion), scope and coverage (limited versus comprehensive and older employee-specific versus general), depth of commitment (strong versus weak; formal versus informal) and implementation (extensive versus partial and active versus passive) (Taylor and Walker, 1998, p. 63). The second model concerns external factors (competitive pressures, economic growth/recession, demographic changes, legislative/EC rulings, codes of practice and awareness campaigns and technological changes) and internal environmental factors (knowledge of equal opportunities issues in the organisation, attitudes of managers, workforce and trade unions and previous organisational practice) which affect policy or practice formulation. The authors conclude by stating that “most organisations had taken only limited steps to prevent age discrimination” and “in the absence of any strong commitment to realise equal opportunities for older people, it is likely that age discriminatory attitudes will persist” (Taylor and Walker, 1998, p. 73).

It is probable that employers have mixed views of older workers. Taylor and Walker (1994), in a postal survey of employers' attitudes and policies towards older workers in the UK, found that employers have both positive and negative views. The positive views were associated with productivity, reliability and loyalty whereas negative views were associated with flexibility, speed in adapting to new technology and cautiousness. Although Taylor and Walker (1994) established that employers have both positive and negative views of older employees, in practice it is the negative views which prevail. As the survey concerned all industrial sectors (with the exception of agriculture, forestry and

fishing), it would seem that the views expressed in the survey are fairly representative of large employers (with 500 or more employees) in the UK.

Some employers have recognised the benefits of employing older workers. For example, in 1989 B&Q opened a store in Macclesfield which was staffed entirely by workers over the age of 50. This initiative worked very well and the company began encouraging applications from older people (Department for Education and Employment, 1999). ASDA is the largest employer of employees aged 50 and above in the UK with almost 23,000 employees, representing 20% of their workforce (EOR, 2004). According to AgePositive (2007), Barclays Bank has more employees aged over 50 than under 21 and has sought to confront ageist stereotypes through various initiatives with the support of senior management. The bank recognises that, during the 1990s, it lost a number of older employees because of restructuring and is attempting to redress the age balance of its workforce (www.agepositive.gov.uk).

Relatively few people are employed once they reach the mandatory retirement age in the UK. Thus, for women over 60 years of age in the UK, the employment rate is only 8% and for men over 65 the figure is 9% (Department for Work and Pensions, 2004). Although there has been an upward trend in the number of older people in employment in the UK over the last decade, economic inactivity rates for men and women aged 50 to State Pension Age (SPA) remain high: in the winter of 2003/2004 this stood at 25% for men and 32% for women (www.statistics.gov.uk). It is, however, important to remember that the transition from employment to retirement is not always clear with some moving in and out of different forms of work whereas others retire (Hirsch, 2003). Two key factors drive work and retirement: pull factors and push factors (OECD, 2006b, p. 53). Pull factors consist primarily of financial incentives, such as early retirement schemes, which serve to pull older workers into retirement (OECD, 2006b, p. 53). Push factors, such as perceptions of older workers,

restrict attractive job opportunities to older workers and thus serve to push older employees into retirement (OECD, 2006b, p. 53).

As the cost of workers in the UK rises steeply as retirement approaches, older workers are often selected for early retirement (The Carnegie Inquiry into the Third Age, 1993). This was particularly the case in the 1990s (Cappelli, 1999). Indeed, early retirement can be viewed as a social invention which is used by firms to induce older workers to leave the organisation to allow for a restructuring of the workforce (Rein and Jacobs, 1993). Moreover, non-flexible working arrangements can discourage older workers from remaining in the workforce resulting in a move from full-time employment to retirement (OECD, 2006b). Furthermore, older workers, as is the case of all employees, are susceptible to changing employment patterns. As labour-intensive industries have been superseded by skill-based industries which, in turn, will be replaced by knowledge-based industries (Handy, 1990), older workers will be affected. Thomson and Warhurst (1998, p.1) claim that “we are now living in a postindustrial, information or knowledge economy”. One of the effects may be an increase in early retirement of older workers. However, if businesses wish to become knowledge-based employers, why is it that many businesses have policies and practices which deliberately squander these very qualities (Wersley, 1996)? Furthermore, it may well be the case that it is the more skilled and knowledgeable older workers who leave the company (Shacklock, 2003). The trend towards early retirement is not just caused by employers wishing to downsize or create a knowledge-based workforce. It is also a desire on the part of individuals for a greater amount of leisure time (Harris, 1990).

According to a CIPD survey (2003) on age, pensions and retirement, of those aged over 50 and working, 51% stated that they would like to continue working for their current employer past their mandatory retirement age if they could. However, in many instances, older workers end up retiring well before the

mandatory retirement age and this is sometimes due to employer age discrimination. Early retirement and age discrimination are tied to institutionalised ageism where “discrimination pervades the organisation, and employees feel that they have little choice or say in their futures” (Loretto and White, 2002, p.iv).

In their account of the marginalisation of older workers from the 1970s onwards in the UK labour force, Laczko and Phillipson (1991) give four reasons for this marginalisation: a concentration of older workers in declining industries, various early retirement schemes, mass unemployment and attitudes towards older employees. Early retirement and organisational change are closely related. As organisational change is implemented, older workers are often marginalised and some are forced to leave the labour market altogether or face occupational downgrading (Laczko and Phillipson, 1991). One form of organisational change is downsizing where firms reduce their workforce due to economic, political, socio-cultural or technological factors. Downsizing may adversely affect older workers (Urwin, 2006; Bajawa and Woodall, 2006). Also, as older workers are often the most senior employees and likely to be highly paid, downsizing may discriminate against them (Henry and Jennings, 2004). It seems that older workers are particularly vulnerable to the effects of downsizing (Taylor, 2001). Organisational restructuring and the creation of leaner firms over the past twenty years has greatly affected older people’s job prospects (Cabinet Office, 2000). In terms of early retirement, it seems that it is no longer the straightforward entry point to old age that it one was and is therefore an “increasingly anachronistic definition of older people” (Walker and Maltby, 1997, p.13).

Employers are sometimes reluctant to offer older workers appropriate training. This was a finding of Brown and Danson’s (2003) examination of demographic change and the changing labour market in Scotland. Lack of training

opportunities for older workers results in greater barriers to re-engagement after redundancy and the core skills gap in information technology amongst older workers is a particular concern (Brown and Danson, 2003, p. 299). A CIPD report into learning and training in the workplace revealed that fewer older workers had received training in the previous twelve months than younger workers (CIPD, 2005). This is demonstrated by the fact that 85% of employees aged 16-24 had received training in the past twelve months compared to 71% for employees aged 55 and above (CIPD, 2005). Newton (2006) considers that the decline in training participation according to age is the result of a number of factors: employers' stereotypical views of older workers and learning ability; a lack of confidence amongst some older workers and the belief amongst some older workers that experience lessens the need for training.

2.6. Age Discrimination and employees.

Although numerous surveys of employers' attitudes to older employees exist, surveys of employees are much less common (Duncan, Loretto and White, 2003). The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development, in a survey of age discrimination in employment, found that one in eight workers reported having been discouraged from applying for a job because the advertisement used for recruitment contained a restriction based on age (CIPD, 2001). A CIPD survey on age, pensions and retirement (2003) reported that 15% of the sample felt they had personal experience of discrimination during a job interview and 40% felt they had been discriminated against at work.

The issue of age discrimination and the views of employees was addressed in The Carnegie Inquiry into the Third Age (1993, p.27) which found "widespread age discrimination in terms of recruitment, training and development, promotion, and selection for redundancy and early retirement". Snape and Redman's research (2003, p.82) on the impact of perceived age discrimination in a local

authority in the UK found that the over 50s in the sample did not report significantly higher levels of age discrimination than any of the other age groups under investigation. However, the authors recognise that age discrimination may be a significant push factor in terms of the desire to seek early retirement by the older employee.

Bennington (2001) examined four aspects concerning age discrimination in employment in Australia: age bias in job advertisements (Study 1); age discrimination by recruitment consultants (Study 2); employers' attitudes to older workers (Study 3) and age discrimination as perceived by people who had applied for jobs in the last six months (Study 4). Bennington (2001, p.132) concludes that "notwithstanding age discrimination legislation, discrimination on this ground continues and appears to be accepted by most job applicants" (despite the fact that Australian states have gone further than most US states in the nature and scope of age discrimination legislation). Bennington (2001, p.126) highlights the need for greater in-depth research into age discrimination in employment, stating that "there are few systematic studies to support the numerous anecdotal reports about age discrimination in the recruitment and selection process". Australia is also the focus for Bennington and Wein's (2002) research concerning the job applicant's role in aiding and abetting age discrimination perpetuated by the employer. Bennington and Wein (2002) suggests that job applicants aid and abet the employer in using age discrimination in the selection process, despite the existence of legislation which prohibits employers from asking certain questions.

Although much discussion in the literature centres on age discrimination perpetuated by younger people, it is important to recognise that older people also have ageist attitudes (Minichiello, Browne and Kendig, 2000). It is also important to recognise that older workers do not represent a homogeneous group: there is great diversity in terms of the type of older worker (Institute of

Personnel Management, 1993). Moreover, due to the heterogeneous nature of older workers, some of the disadvantages faced by this group do not specifically relate to age per se but will be shared with younger workers(OECD, 2006a).

2.7. Age Discrimination and the law.

From an American legal perspective, there are two forms of age discrimination: animus discrimination and statistical discrimination (Posner, 1999). Animus discrimination is a “systematic undervaluation, motivated by ignorance, viciousness, or irrationality, of the value of older people in the workplace”. (Sargeant, 2001, p.141). Statistical discrimination refers to the “Failure or refusal, normally motivated by the costs of information, to distinguish a particular member of a group from the average member” (Sargeant, 2001, p.142). An English account of discrimination in employment is offered by Barnard, Deakin and Kilpatrick (2002, p.129) who state that there is “No general principle of equality in English law”.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Conservative governments in the UK were opposed to introducing legislation to prohibit age discrimination (Chiu, Chan, Snape and Redman, 2001). Instead, voluntary schemes were encouraged. In the 1990s, voluntary initiatives advocating a business case against ageism and early exit from employment were encouraged in the UK (Duncan, 2003). Since 1997, with the election of a Labour government, age discrimination has received greater attention and, in particular, the employment of older workers has risen up the political agenda in the UK (Brooke and Taylor, 2005). In many ways it is ironic that the one form of discrimination which affects us most “is the one that has been given the lowest priority by legislators and employers alike” (Wersley, 1996, p.70). It seems that society is less morally outraged by age discrimination than any other type of discrimination (Grossman, 2005; Gunderson, 2003). As a form of discrimination, ageism is linked to other forms of oppression, such as

racism and sexism, but the exact nature of this relationship is unclear (Biggs, 1993). It is, however, important to recognise that ageism does not operate in isolation and will cut across other forms of discrimination, such as racism and sexism (Thompson, 2006). Although legislation is often important in stating a government's willingness to address a particular issue, on its own legislation will have a limited impact in achieving equality as the commitment of individuals and organisations is vital in achieving positive change (Kersley et al, 2006).

As far as anti-discrimination legislation in the UK is concerned, legislation exists on Sex Discrimination (the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975), Race Discrimination (The Race Relations Act, 1976), Disability Discrimination (The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995), Sexual Orientation (the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations of 2003)) and Religion or Belief ((the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations of 2003)) However, until October 2006, no single piece of legislation existed to prohibit age discrimination in the UK (Beardwell and Holden, 2001; Taylor, 2003). The 1999 Code of Practice on "Age Diversity" was a government-backed voluntary initiative to encourage the employment of older people, supported by good-practice case studies from a range of businesses in the UK (Loretto, Duncan and White, 2000b). This code was updated in 2002, but without any major changes of substance (www.emplaw.co.uk). Thereafter, as a result of a number of impact assessments, the UK government produced a consultation paper, "Age matters" in 2003 (IRS, 2006, a.). This led to the publication of draft regulations in 2005, together with a further consultation paper, "Coming of age", and the final version of the regulations were published in March 2006 (IRS, 2006, a.). A Department for Work and Pensions report "Opportunity Age", published in March 2005, attempted to set out a coherent strategy to prepare for population ageing and to meet peoples' aspirations of a better life. In relation to older people in the workforce, the report outlines five principles: a million more older workers should be attracted into employment, raising the employment rate to 80%; people

should have the opportunity to work and save for retirement; older people should be able to combine work with other responsibilities; retirement should offer greater flexibility and employers should invest in the skills of older workers in order to remain competitive (DWP, 2005).

In common with other types of discrimination legislation in the UK, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 covers direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation (IRS, 2006, a.). The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 are likely to affect many areas of the employment relationship, including the use of recruitment agencies, the use of age limits, experience requirements, graduate recruitment and the whole of the recruitment, selection, training and development process (IRS, 2006, b). Furthermore, the potential impact of the new regulations on pay and benefits is potentially great (IRS, 2006, c), for example benefits that reward long service such as extra holidays and a more generous redundancy package (The Financial Times, 20/10/05). It is, as yet, too early to establish the effectiveness of new UK legislation on age discrimination. The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 came into force on the 1st of October 2006 (IRS, 2006, d.).

According to the Equality Authority (of Ireland) (2002), ageism is widespread in Irish society and negative stereotypes exist of older people. In order to address the problem of age discrimination, the Equality Authority is responsible for eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity (The Equality Authority, 2002). To this end, it has developed a number of acts which address age discrimination. The Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 prohibit discrimination on nine grounds, one of these being age (The Equality Authority, 2005, a.). Discrimination, as set out in the acts, refers to the treatment of a person in a less favourable way and includes indirect discrimination, discrimination by imputation and discrimination by association (The Equality Authority, 2005, b.)

There are a number of exemptions in the acts that apply to age. These include an exemption on age for the defence forces, age-based criteria for occupational benefits schemes, retirement age of employees and being able to offer a temporary contract to a person over the compulsory retirement age (The Equality Authority, 2005, b.). The Equality Authority deals with cases of suspected age discrimination and, in 2002, almost 10% of the Authority's casefiles related to age discrimination (The Equality Authority, 2004). As is the case with the UK, Irish equality initiatives and legislation on equality for older people have been influenced by European legislation, especially Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty (The National Economic and Social Forum, 2003). The 2002 report on implementing equality for older people put forward an equality agenda for older people in Ireland, recognising that older people are diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, sexuality and disability (The Equality Authority, 2002). An aspect of equality specifically addressed in the report is employment and recommendations include identifying and removing obstacles to the employment of older people, creating more flexible working arrangements, incorporating age equality into collective bargaining, introducing age awareness training as part of equality training, working with trade unions to combat age discrimination and active use of positive action to promote the integration of older people into employment (The Equality Authority, 2002).

In May 2005, the "Say No to Ageism Week" was held throughout Ireland. The initiative, developed by the Equality Authority, the Health Service Executive and the National Council on Ageing and Older People, sought to "promote new awareness and understanding of ageism and of how ageism excludes people from participating in and contributing to society" (The Equality Authority, 2005, c.). As part of the "Say No to Ageism Week", the Equality Authority and the National Council on Ageing and Older People co-produced a report called "Towards age friendly provision of goods and services". The report recognises nine initiatives in providing age friendly provision of goods and services. As far

as businesses and organisations are concerned, two initiatives relate to employment and older people: develop staff awareness about ageism and equality for older people and employ older people as “the presence and participation of older staff can enhance the relevance, attractiveness and accessibility of goods and services to older customers (The Equality Authority, 2005, c., p.37). However, no evidence of such preference is forthcoming in the report.

The Irish government considers equality and diversity training, alongside equality employment policies, to be essential in creating equitable workplaces (The Equality Authority, 2005, d.). The Equality Authority’s (2005) report “Equality and Diversity Training in Enterprises” recognises priority themes for equality and diversity training, one of these being age equality training. According to the report, age equality training would cover legislation, positive action, ageing and ageism issues, assumptions, stereotypes and prejudice, impact of ageism in the workplace, age issues in equality policy and procedures, positive actions permitted for people over 50 years, initiatives and action programmes and age management skills (The Equality Authority, 2005, d). However, there is a danger that diversity training is diversionary, “a stratagem for diverting attention away from what is really important in the organization” (Furnham, 1998, p 70).

At a supranational level, the European Union has been instrumental in establishing a general framework for the equal treatment of older people in employment. Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty of 1999 enables the Council “to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation” (Caracciolo, 2001)). Following on from the Treaty of Amsterdam, EU Directive, 2000/43/EC, although dealing primarily with the principle of equal treatment between persons of racial or ethnic origin, states that “The right to equality before the law and

protection against discrimination for all persons constitutes a universal right” (<http://europa.eu.int>). The Council Directive 2000/78/EC, issued on the 27th of November 2000, refers specifically to “older people”, stating that “The Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers recognises the importance of combating every form of discrimination, including the need to take appropriate action for the social and economic integration of elderly and disabled people” (point 6, page 1) and “The prohibition of age discrimination is an essential part of meeting the aims set out in the European Guidelines and encouraging diversity in the workforce” (point 25, page 2). As a result of EU Directive 2000/78/EC, Directive 2000/750/EC established a Community action programme “to combat direct or indirect discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation” from 1st January 2001 to 31st December 2006 (<http://europa.eu.int>).

A variety of policies exists towards older workers in European Union countries with The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Portugal having provisions which prohibit age discrimination (McDonald and Potton, 1997). In the Netherlands, for example, discrimination is specifically mentioned in Article 1 of the Constitution: “All persons in the Netherlands shall be treated equally in equal circumstances. Discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race, or sex or on any other grounds whatsoever shall not be permitted” (Dutch Constitution, Article 1). An updated age discrimination law came into effect in the Netherlands on the 1st of May 2004 (<http://www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int>). Spain appears to have the most developed provisions for protecting older workers’ rights (McDonald and Potton, 1997). Although most EU countries do not have specific legislation on age discrimination, many countries have state constitutions or labour laws which cover age discrimination (<http://www.eiro.eurofound.ie>).

The United Nations has also been preoccupied with the problem of age discrimination in employment. In a report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid, 8th-12th April 2002, Article 12 states that “Older persons should have the opportunity to work for as long as they wish and are able to, in satisfying and productive work, continuing to have access to education and training programmes” (United Nations, 2002a. p.3). In terms of recommendations for action, the Second World Assembly on Ageing identified a number of initiatives which needed to be taken. These include promoting a favourable attitude of older workers amongst employers, increasing the awareness of the benefits of an ageing work-force, paying special attention to ageism and women’s employment, making appropriate adjustments to workplace environments, increase labour-market participation of older people, promoting self-employment for older persons and developing a more flexible approach to retirement (United Nations, 2002a). Following-on from the Second World Assembly in Madrid, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations held a meeting about ageism in society and employment at the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing, Berlin, 11-13th September 2002. The report states that “Older persons are a valuable resource and make an essential contribution to society” (United Nations, 2002b, p.1) and that priority should be given to “encouraging labour markets to respond to ageing and take advantage of the potential of older persons” (United Nations, 2002b, p.2).

Although the UK did not possess dedicated age discrimination legislation until October 2006, other Anglo-Saxon countries have possessed such legislation for considerably longer. The United States, for example, passed the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) in 1967 and established an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (Harris, 1990). The aim of the ADEA was to “Reduce the arbitrary use of age as a criterion in employment decisions” (Adams, 2003, p.1). The ADEA prohibits age discrimination in almost all areas of employment including recruitment, retention, training and compensation

(Peng and Kleiner, 1999). Before the ADEA came into existence, many US states already had laws regarding age discrimination. Colorado was the first state in the US to have such a law. This law, passed in 1903, covered the 18-60 age-group. (Adams, 2003).

The effects of US anti-age discrimination laws have been examined by a number of authors. For example, Neumark and Stock's (1999, p.1123) study on age discrimination laws and labour market efficiency in the USA established, through statistical analysis, that "age discrimination laws boost the relative employment of older workers.....and lead to steeper age-earnings profiles in the labour market". An American legal and economic perspective to ageism in employment is discussed by Posner (1999) who examined the nature and consequences of age discrimination in employment, the effects of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act and sexual harassment in the workplace. Posner (1999) identifies the effects of the ADEA on older workers and society. These include higher costs of employing older workers and the prohibition of a mandatory retirement age. An examination of the ADEA by Grossman (2005) reported continued age discrimination of older employees (workers over the age of 45) with employers using the law as a roadmap, "Enabling all but the obtuse to avoid liability and shield all but the most egregious ageist actions from public scrutiny" (p.73).

In Australia, the Age Discrimination Bill of 2003 became law under the title: "Age Discrimination Act 2003". This House of Representatives Bill/Act covers a number of areas, including work with specific reference being made to recruitment, training, promotion, redundancy and retirement (<http://parlinfoweb.apf.gov.au>). The Bill outlined three options to deal with age discrimination: retain the status quo, self-regulation or introduce commonwealth age discrimination legislation. Having considered the costs and benefits of these options, commonwealth age discrimination legislation was selected as the

preferred route (<http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au>). In New Zealand, age discrimination in the workplace was outlawed in 1999 (Myers and Mallon, 2003).

Although legal initiatives are important in helping achieve equality in the workplace and address problems of oppression, under-representation and inequality, using the law on its own will not solve these problems (Thompson, 2003). Therefore, emancipatory practice in the workplace needs to be based on a broad platform of programmes and actions (Thompson, 2003). Age discrimination legislation on its own cannot be expected to fundamentally improve the position of older people in the workplace but may act as a catalyst to develop programmes and actions which seek to address issues of ageism in employment. The following chapter will examine organisational policies and practices and their effects on the employment of older workers.

2.8. Conclusions.

This chapter has sought to reveal that ageism is not a new phenomenon. It is deeply rooted in history and culture and has existed for thousands of years. Ageism and age discrimination were defined and the relationship between ageism and discrimination examined. Major theories of ageing were discussed including biological theories, disengagement theory and socio-cultural theories. Thereafter, equality and inequality were examined from a distributive and procedural justice framework and different types of equality initiatives were discussed with a focus on liberal and radical initiatives. Managing diversity will be discussed in chapter 3. Age discrimination was subsequently examined from the perspective of research on the role of employers and, to a lesser extent, employees in perpetuating discriminatory practices. The final section focused on legislative approaches to address age discrimination in employment at the supra-national and national levels with a focus on Ireland and the UK.

Chapter 3. Organizational employment policies and practices

3.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to assess the changing nature of approaches to managing people in the workplace with a focus on Human Resource Management, employment relations and employment flexibility. Specific issues regarding employment policies and practices in the hospitality industry will be discussed and the nature and characteristics of hospitality labour markets will be examined, both in the UK and ROI. Equality policies and practices in the workplace are subsequently critically examined with a focus on equal opportunities and managing diversity. The rationale for focusing on organisational employment policies and practices, especially regarding human resource policies and practices, is that these may be facilitating the inclusion or exclusion of older workers (Taylor, 2001). Furthermore, Lyon et al (1998, p. 57) claim that HRM's perpetuates and legitimises age discrimination because HRM theory "can be seen to amplify older workers' problems by reinforcing ageism in management thinking through the provision of a commercially appropriate rationale which embellishes existing stereotypes and doubts about the commitment of older workers". Moreover, it is necessary to examine HRM in depth when assessing age discrimination in employment as it is important not to focus on older workers at the expense of HRM considerations (Brooke and Taylor, 2005).

3.2. Approaches to managing people in the workplace

Although elements of HRM can be traced back to the Human Relations movement of the 1930s (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2002), HRM developed largely in the USA in the 1980s where two schools of thought sought to explain the components of HRM (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2005). The first, developed by Fombrun et al in 1984, focused on selection, development, appraisal and

reward as HR components and how these relate to organisational strategy and, subsequently, how the components are effective in improving organisational performance (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2005). The second, developed by Beer et al in 1985, consists of six components: situational factors, stakeholder interests, HRM policy choices, HR outcomes, long-term consequences and a feedback loop (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2005). A criticism of both frameworks is that they do not focus on the realities of employment in organisations, especially to the fragmented, contested and contradictory nature of employment relations (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2005).

There is much debate about whether HRM constitutes a new paradigm or whether its policies and procedures are essentially the same as those utilized by a Personnel Management approach (Blyton and Turnbull, 1992). Indeed, according to Legge, (1995) there is much overlap and practitioners, managers and academics in the UK would be hard-pressed to identify clear differences. According to Price (1997) there are three accounts or perceptions of HRM: first, that it is really Personnel Management, secondly, that it is a strategic model which employs the techniques of strategic management and, thirdly, that HRM is people management which covers all aspects of managing employees in its widest sense. Beardwell and Holden (2001) identify four predominant approaches to HRM: HRM as a restatement of industrial relations and Personnel Management policies, HRM as a new discipline created from a fusion of industrial relations and Personnel Management, HRM as a resource-based approach, seeing the employee as an investment and HRM as a strategic and international phenomenon where HR is able to make an important contribution to the organisation's goals across different countries.

As a result of changes in the workplace and the development of new models and techniques to manage people in employment, HRM has become increasingly popular with both practitioners and academics. Guest (1987)

identifies six pressures associated with the rising interest of HRM in the UK: the search for competitive advantage, models of excellence, the failure of Personnel Management, the decline in trade unions, changes in the workforce and the nature of work and the availability of new models. Blyton and Turnbull (1992) argue that HRM, rather than representing a consistent and coherent approach to the managing of employees, is really a series of practices which became popular in the 1980s. Indeed, prior to the 1980s the term “Human Resource Management” was little used in the UK. (Harley and Hardy, 2004

Guest (1987, p. 507) has identified a number of stereotypes of Personnel Management and HRM. These are reproduced in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Stereotypes of Personnel Management and Human Resource Management

	Personnel Management	Human Resource Management
Time and Planning perspective	Short-term (reactive, ad-hoc and marginal)	Long-term (Proactive, strategic, integrated)
Psychological contract	Compliance	Commitment
Control systems	External controls	Self-control
Employee relations perspective	Pluralist (Collective, low-trust)	Unitarist (Individual, high-trust)
Preferred structures	Bureaucratic/Mechanistic (Centralised, formal defined roles)	Organic (Devolved, flexible-roles)
Roles	Specialist/Professional	Largely integrated into line management
Evaluation criteria	Cost-minimization	Maximum utilization (human asset accounting)

In Table 3.1, Personnel Management and Human Resource Management are represented as extremes. This may not accurately represent the realities of organisational life but is nevertheless useful as a framework for analysis (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2002). Furthermore, a firm does not operate in isolation. It will be influenced by internal and external forces. In the UK, HRM

practices have been affected by increased levels of government regulation and intervention from the European Union (Richbell, 2001).

There are two schools of thought for those advocating an HRM approach: the best fit school and the best practice school (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). The best fit school argues for an integration of HR to the specific organisational and environmental context whereas the best practice school argues that firms should adopt best practice in the way it manages its workforce (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Models belonging to either school invariably have advantages and disadvantages, explanatory power and limitations. Criticisms of best fit models include the fact that insufficient account is taken of employee interests, there is a lack of attention regarding change and organisational dynamics, there is a lack of complexity regarding competitive strategy and there is insufficient focus on the complexities of HRM's strategic goals (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Limitations of best practice models include the great diversity of models and the different list of good practices between the models, insufficient focus on employee voice and work organisation and the lack of specificity regarding goals and interests (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Increasingly, HRM issues are being delegated to line managers who are taking-on greater responsibility for recruitment, selection, induction and training (Cornelius, 1999). However, in order to effectively delegate HRM roles to line-managers, effective support, training, trust and clear delineation of tasks is required (Watson , Maxwell and Farquharson, 2007, p. 30).

Legge (1995) recognises two versions of what HRM should be: Hard HRM and Soft HRM. The Hard model focuses on the necessity for close integration between the business strategy and HR policies, systems and activities (Legge, 1995). The Soft model, whilst recognising that the link between business strategy and HR is important, places more importance on the need to treat workers as valuable assets in order to achieve competitive advantage (Legge,

1995). These versions should not be seen as being incompatible, although the Soft version of HR would seem to be “a shallow rooted plant, save in the most exceptionally fertile soil” (Legge, 1995, p. 338). Stone (2002) considers Hard and Soft versions of HRM to be approaches, the Hard version being consistent with Instrumental HRM and the Soft version being consistent with a Humanistic approach to HRM. In the former the approach is rational and quantitative which highlight the necessity of improved performance to achieve competitive advantage (Stone, 2002). In the latter, emphasis is placed on employee participation, trust, development and collaboration (Stone, 2002).

Lashley (1998) criticises the division of HRM into Soft and Hard versions for two reasons, firstly, in service organisations both control and commitment are important. Secondly, in service delivery the employee may have discretion over job design (Lashley, 1998). As a result, Lashley (1998) proposes a matrix which combines degree of standardisation and customisation of the service and the form of control over the employee’s work (see Figure 3.1.). Each style has repercussions for the Human Resource strategy (Lashley, 1998): for The Professional Style employees exercise much discretion over their tasks and HRM will focus on recruitment and selection, often with long periods of training; for The Participative Style employees will have little discretion over tasks and standardisation will dominate work; for The Command and Control Style most employees have little discretion over work with less emphasis placed on recruitment and selection due to an emphasis on systems and The Involvement Style involves some delegation and empowerment through involvement but confined within the limits of a powerful system which defines production.

Figure 3.1 Approaches to the management of HRM in Service organizations

	Customised Offer		
External Control	<p><i>The Involvement Style</i> Brand identity tangibles/intangibles Moderate predictability Moderate/high volume Simple/expanding tasks Low discretions Ask permission Share information Task specific power Calculate commitment Moderate control culture</p>	<p><i>The Professional Style</i> Brand identity intangible dominant Low predictability Low volume Complex tasks High discretion Responsible autonomy Power to shape objectives Moral involvement Psychological needs Trust culture</p>	Internal Control
	<p><i>The Command and Control Style</i> Brand identity tangible dominant High predictability High volume Simple routine tasks Low discretion Ask permission Task specific power Calculate involvement Control culture</p>	<p><i>The Participative Style</i> Brand identity tangibles/intangibles High predictability Moderate volume Simple routine tasks High discretion of intangibles Autonomy within limits Role specific power Moral involvement Moderate trust culture</p>	
	Standardised Offer		

(Source: Lashley, 1998, p. 28)

In relation to Figure 3.1, it is possible to recognise a hospitality firm's approach to HRM. For example, McDonalds Restaurants Limited is typical of an organisation with a standardised offer and predictability in the service encounter whereas TGI Fridays, whilst also standardising product offerings, focuses on customisation via an extensive menu (Lashley, 1998). However, the links between HRM and service quality in the hospitality industry are far from clear and further research needs to be undertaken (Worsfold, 1999).

Over the last ten years, there has been increased academic and organisational interest in Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM), although the term is exceptionally difficult to define (Salaman, Storey and Billsberry, 2005). Strategic Human Resource Management relates to strategic choices concerning the use of labour in the firm and how some firms manage labour more effectively than others (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Strategic Human Resource Management is therefore concerned with HRM activities which enable an organisation reach its goals and objectives (Wright and McMahan, 2003). The characteristics of a strategic approach to HRM include a long-term focus, recognising the impact of the environment outside the firm, recognising the dynamics of the labour market and the impact of competition, focusing on all employees, choice and decision making and integrating HRM with functional and corporate strategy (Anthony, Kachmar and Perewe, 2002).

According to Wright and McMahan (2003) there are four strategic theories of HRM: the Resource-Based view of the firm, the Behavioural Perspective, Cybernetic Systems and Agency/Transaction Cost theory. A central concern of the Resource-Based view of the firm is achieving and sustaining competitive advantage through an analysis of an organisation's strengths and weaknesses (Barney, 2002). However, this approach has a number of limitations. These include unpredictable threats and opportunities (also termed Schumpeterian revolutions), the imitability paradox related to managers' limited ability to create and maintain sustainable competitive advantage and problems of obtaining firm related data (Barney, 2002). The Behavioural perspective is closely related to Contingency theory and concerns the role of employee behaviour as the mediator between organisational performance and strategy (Wright and McMahan, 2003). Cybernetic systems models vary in nature, being either open systems which involve transactions with an organisation's environment or closed systems (Wright and McMahan, 2003). Agency/Transaction cost theory is based on the disciplines of economics and finance and is concerned with the problems

of human exchange (Wright and McMahan, 2003). Underlying this theory is the assumption that organisational reward systems can be used to bridge the convergence between employers and employees, although such systems are often not the panacea they are believed to be (Bamberger and Meshoulam, 2000).

According to Baum (2006) Human Resource Management consists of a three-part cycle: first, attracting an effective workforce which entails an understanding of labour markets, recruitment and selection, HR planning, flexible employment patterns and retention; secondly, development which includes performance and appraisal, education, training and development and thirdly maintaining an effective workforce which includes rewards, welfare, teamwork, empowerment, employment relations, grievance and discipline and equality and diversity. Cascio (2003) states that all managers should be concerned, to some degree at least, with five activities to manage people in the workplace: staffing, retention, development, adjustment and managing change. Together these activities constitute the HRM system and all activities are interrelated (Cascio, 2003). Nickson (2007, p. 16) states that the HRM cycle consists of attracting an effective workforce, maintaining an effective workforce and developing an effective workforce.

There are a number of different methods for attracting candidates to available jobs. These include traditional media advertising, such as newspapers, magazines and radio, recruitment agencies, head-hunters, internal advertising, internet and word-of-mouth (Cooper, Robertson and Tinline, 2003). Recruiting people to existing or new positions is crucial in the hospitality industry and the importance of “good” service quality has focused on the need to attract the “right” type of employee (Nickson, 2007). As the successful interaction between employee and customer is paramount in the hospitality industry, management will seek personnel who have the right embodied capacities and attributes which

can be “aesthetically geared” to produce a particular style of service (Warhurst, Nickson, Witz and Cullen, 2000). This phenomenon, termed “Aesthetic Labour”, has been defined by Warhurst, Nickson, Witz and Cullen (2000, p4) as “a supply of embodied capacities and attributes possessed by workers at the point of entry into employment”. This type of labour seems to be particularly prevalent in the “style” labour market of hospitality organizations and is an intentional managerial response to recruit, select and train the “right” employees (Witz, Warhurst and Nickson, 2003). According to Warhurst and Nickson (2007), the employer will attempt to recruit and select the “right” employees as this is easier than having to train employees once they have been appointed. In choosing the “right” kind of employee to enhance company image and deliver service quality, potential discriminatory practices may take place (Nickson, Warhurst and Dutton, 2005). This may result in the exclusion of certain people from the “style” labour market, such as older employees, and this exclusion will be the result of employers’ recruitment and selection processes, assessing whether or not the person is aesthetically acceptable, but also self-selection where the potential employee does not apply for jobs where aesthetic labour is deemed important (Nickson, Warhurst, Cullen and Watt, 2003). One of the most obvious signs of aesthetic labour is “sounding right” and “looking good” (Nickson, Warhurst, Cullen and Watt, 2003). As looks and age are closely tied it is probable that women will experience ageism in a way men do not (Granleese and Sayer, 2006). Thus women may experience the triple jeopardy of age, gender and looks (Granleese and Sayer, 2006).

Organisations may choose to fill a vacancy from the internal labour market, that is, from inside the organisation, or from the external labour market (Beardwell and Holden, 2001). Recruiting from the internal labour market offers a number of advantages as it is less expensive and it guarantees tacit knowledge from candidates (Kersley et al, 2006). However, internal labour markets can limit the acquisition of knowledge and experience from other organisations, be inflexible

and potentially unfair and discriminatory (Kersley et al, 2006). A number of selection methods are available when choosing between candidates. These include interviews, psychological testing, integrity testing, work sample tests, self assessment, peer assessment, references and educational achievement (Cooper, Robertson and Tinline, 2003). As the interview offers the opportunity to directly assess a candidate's behaviour, it is a popular method of selection (Searle, 2003). A survey of 81 hotels by Lockyer and Scholarios (2004, p. 130) revealed a "general lack of systematic procedures" for recruitment and selection although the one-to-one interview was the most frequently used selection method.

In order to gain and sustain competitive advantage, it is necessary that an organisation invests in training and development. Increasingly, in an ever more competitive world, training and development is important for the individual, the organisation and the nation (Nickson, 2007). Whilst training represents a bounded activity with the aim of improving an employee's skills and knowledge necessary to perform work tasks and roles, development focuses on achieving potential by growing and developing an employee (Robinson, 2006). Therefore, development represents an improved situation for an individual in realising mental and physical potential (Wilson, 2005). Given the changing nature of employment, there is greater demand for education and training that address the vocational needs of the firm and the personal development needs of the individual (Caldwell, 2000). But not everyone has the same access to training. In particular, older workers often receive less training than younger workers (OECD, 2006b). This limited access to training will further negatively affect the retention opportunities of older workers (OECD, 2004). As far as vocational training is concerned, it is vital that all workers have the same access to such training as older workers tend to have fewer qualifications than younger workers (OECD, 2006b). In relation to age-awareness training, this may raise the individual's consciousness of the issue and its value is further multiplied by

raising the collective awareness, thereby resulting in collective action (Thompson, 2006). But workplace learning is not necessarily about motivating, enriching and emancipating employees. It can be a vehicle for debasement, demotivation and coercion (Rainbird, 2000). Moreover, training and development may serve a social function, helping workers form friendships thus distracting them from the alienating work which they perform (Grugulis, 2006).

Given the academic and managerial focus on Human Resource Management for the last quarter of a century, the actual meaning of HRM should, perhaps, now be agreed but this is not the case (Guest, 1998). HRM remains a concept which is difficult to define with any degree of confidence (Worsfold, 1999) and “conceptual-theoretic ambiguity seems intrinsic to HRM” (Keenoy, 1999, p. 1-5). Furthermore, the more HRM is investigated, the less convincing it is (Keenoy, 1999). In many respects, HRM is no more than a collective noun for the policies, processes and techniques to manage the employment relationship (Keenoy, 1999). Notwithstanding definitional ambiguities, it is important to realise that HRM is no panacea for solving employment problems (Storey, 2001). However, HRM remains a highly persuasive narrative which gives form and meaning to a complex world (Storey, 2001). The concept of HRM has inspired practitioners and academics but it is a term shrouded in rhetoric with relatively little analysis having been undertaken to establish its applicability in the workplace (Hollinshead and Leat, 1995).

HRM can be seen as an attempt to influence power relationships in an organisation (Jacques, 1999). Its power over workers means that, paradoxically, the more employees are valued as an important resource, the more the desire to exploit this resource to the full (Legge, 1999). As HRM was firmly established within a manufacturing paradigm, it is questionable whether some of its features apply to service organisations (Hoque, 2000). Managing people in the workplace will invariably be a challenging, dynamic and complex task

(Anderson, 2004). Moreover, the realities of workplace employment relations are often very different to the rhetoric of HRM and organisational employment policies.

According to Lyon and Glover (1998), HRM provides a business-orientated explanation of the problems inherent in employing older workers, calling into doubt the commitment of older people and valorising youth. Furthermore, there is nothing intrinsic about HRM which makes it a positive force in challenging oppression and discrimination, although it may offer increased opportunities for encouraging equality (Thompson, 2003). It should be remembered, however, that ageist attitudes towards older workers existed long before the emergence of HRM as a management phenomenon (Lyon, Hallier and Glover, 1998).

3.3. The hospitality industry labour market in the UK and Ireland.

The hospitality industry labour market can be defined in many different ways. According to Choi, Woods and Murrmann (2000), the labour market represents the supply of individuals who are seeking employment and the availability of jobs in a particular area. Baum (2006) states that, in the broadest sense, the labour market is composed of the total working environment at a transnational, national, regional or local level. It has been suggested that, for many occupations in the hospitality industry, the labour market is essentially local in nature (Goldsmith, Nickson, Sloan and Wood, 1997). Boella (2000) identifies a number of characteristics of hospitality industry labour markets. These include geographical distribution, size, technological complexity, pay, elasticity and status, i.e. primary or secondary. In relation to status, Boella (2000) comments that the primary labour market represents those committed to the industry whereas the secondary labour market represents those who are not committed to a career in the industry. This is a problematic differentiation since, at any given time, the hospitality industry employee, whatever his/her age, may

experience differing levels of commitment, especially during particularly stressful times or moments of reflection.

According to Goldsmith, Nickson, Sloan and Wood (1997), the hospitality industry broadly operates in secondary labour market. In discussing hotel and catering labour markets, Riley (2000) identifies the following features: there are a large number of unskilled jobs; there is a high degree of transferability of skills; there are often relatively high levels of labour turnover and levels of pay are low. In relation to skills, the hospitality labour force has often been classified according to skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled jobs although this classification is a social construct rather than reflecting actual tasks performed (Burns, 1997). Labour markets can also be either internal or external (Hornsey and Dann, 1984). Internal labour markets exist inside the firm and are governed by rules and regulations relating to the pricing of jobs and the movement of people (Riley, 2000). It is possible to imagine extremes in the strength of the Internal labour market: strong and weak. Riley (2000, p. 161) has identified structural features of strong and weak internal labour markets with strong markets being characterized by specified hiring standards, a single port of entry, high skill specificity, continuous on-job training, fixed criteria for promotion and transfer, strong workplace customs and pay differentials which remain fixed over time. According to Riley (2000, p. 161), weak internal labour markets are characterised by unspecified hiring standards, multiple ports of entry, low skill specificity, no on-the-job training, no fixed criteria and transfer, weak workplace customs and where pay differentials vary over time

It is generally acknowledged that the hospitality industry corresponds to a weak internal labour market (Baum, 1996). According to Wood (1992), local labour markets in the hotel and catering industry determine both the price and supply of labour as well as managers' attitudes to staffing. The Office for National Statistics (2004) states that the labour market is similar to any other market and

is affected by the forces of supply and demand. The supply side represents individuals and the way in which they supply their labour and the demand-side refers to the packaging of outputs. Supply and demand meet where a post is filled (Labour Market Trends, August 2004).

Labour markets have also been defined as being either core or peripheral. The core workforce is characterized by permanent, highly skilled employees with defined internal career routes (Deery and Jago, 2002) whose employment security is achieved at the cost of having to accept functional flexibility (Atkinson, 1984). The peripheral workforce has been examined from many different perspectives but there seems to be general agreement that this workforce is composed of non-core workers who have a somewhat looser attachment to work and the organization. Atkinson (1984) identifies different peripheral groups, for example a first peripheral group who are full-time workers but enjoy less job security than the core group, and the second peripheral group who include part-time workers, people on short-term contracts, job-sharing and public subsidy trainees. Another option for employers is to use agency temporaries, sub-contractors and to increase the amount of outsourcing (Atkinson, 1984).

According to Deery and Jago (2002, p. 346), in the hotel industry company core workers comprise general, deputy or assistant managers; unit core workers are made up of department heads, supervisors and skilled operations staff; operational core workers include waiting staff, receptionists and skilled kitchen staff; peripheral group 1 workers represent highly trained kitchen or waiting staff and peripheral group 2 workers include waiting or other staff in key areas of the hotel. Student workers, in particular, are vital to the hotel industry, forming a key element of part-time and casual, peripheral staff (Lucas and Ralston, 1996). According to Nickson, Warhurst, Cullen and Watt (2003), the hospitality industry

in the UK relies on certain segments in the external labour market, especially students from middle-class backgrounds

In discussing the key features of the tourism, hospitality and leisure labour markets, Baum (2006) states that it is an industry dominated by SMEs alongside large MNEs, it experiences major fluctuations in demand due to seasonality and other factors, it is affected by service-sector characteristics and the impact of standardization and automation, it is labour-intensive, it relies on semi-skilled and unskilled jobs and some sectors of the industry are characterized by low pay and poor working conditions. The above features also apply to the hotel and restaurant industry, both in the UK and in the Republic of Ireland. Riley (2000) recognises four features of the hotel and catering labour market: there are a large proportion of people with unskilled jobs; emphasis is placed, by employers, on transferability of job skills; there is often a high level of labour turnover and levels of pay are low.

The hospitality industry, both in the UK and Ireland, relies, to a large degree, on foreign labour. This is not a new phenomenon as British employers have often sought to attract foreign labour (Braham, Rhodes and Pearn, 1981). In 2005, the UK witnessed the largest entry of foreign workers in any one year and foreign employed migrants constituted 1.505 million people or 5.4% of the UK employed population (Salt and Millar, 2006). Under the Worker Registration Scheme for A8 nationals (citizens from countries that acceded to the EU on the 1st May 2004, namely Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), the UK registered 195,000 A8 nationals in 2005, most of whom (171,400) were from Poland (Salt and Millar, 2006). It is likely that many of these workers ended up in the hospitality industry, particularly in London and the south east of England (Salt and Millar, 2006). In addition to attracting thousands of A8 workers to the UK, work permits and first permissions were granted to 6,494 hospitality, hotels, catering and other

services workers in 2005, representing 7.5% of all work permits and first permissions granted Salt and Millar, 2006).

Wood (1997) identifies a number of features of hotel employment, including high levels of stress, low union density, conflict in the workplace, high levels of labour turnover and low pay. Thus Wood (1997, p.198) states that “It is clear that hospitality work is largely exploitative, degrading, poorly paid, unpleasant, insecure and taken as a last resort or because it can be tolerated in the light of wider social and economic commitments and constraints”. Similarly, Lucas (1996) states that hotel and catering workplaces have been ugly and bleak environments. Wood (1992, p.16) is particularly critical of the hotel industry, stating that “For many employees-probably the majority-labouring in hotels and catering is a last ditch option characterised by exploitative and conflictual relationships”. Boella and Goss-Turner (2006) recognise that the labour cost focus of the hospitality industry has resulted in the relatively slow rate of improvement in employment conditions, compounded by other factors such as low trade union density in the industry, reliance on the secondary labour market and low levels of pay. These conditions have created associated labour problems such as high labour turnover, low service standards and institutionalised pilfering (Boella and Goss-Turner (2006). Moreover, as hospitality industry businesses have high fixed and semi-fixed costs, the manipulation of the largest variable cost, the payroll, can produce cost savings (Wood, 1998).

However, despite poor employment conditions, the hospitality industry / hotels and restaurants industry continues to employ thousands of people and many of these are presumably content to be working in such establishments. It should also be remembered that the hospitality industry is a large and diverse industry and employment conditions vary between sectors of the industry and individual employers. It is, therefore, important not to make any sweeping generalisations

about working in the industry as some jobs are relatively attractive whilst others are undoubtedly routine, repetitive and physically demanding (Baum, 2006). Working in the hospitality industry is, in many respects, not dissimilar to other types of work. Thus, serving hamburgers at a fast food restaurant is more akin to working at a supermarket check-out than working as a waiter at the Ivy restaurant in London (Guerrier and Adib, 2001). Many individuals are drawn to the hospitality industry because of the entrepreneurial opportunities which may exist (Powers and Barrows, 2006). Others are perhaps drawn by close customer contact or the transient nature of hospitality industry employment.

There has been much discussion in the hospitality literature as to the skills requirements and contents of jobs with some authors claiming that most jobs are unskilled (e.g. Choi, Woods and Muurmann, 2000). However, the description of the hospitality industry as a low skills industry is a generalisation which does not sufficiently reflect the heterogeneous nature of employment (Baum, 2006). Indeed, hospitality work is often demanding and requires a range of skills to undertake jobs and tasks (Baum, 1999). A survey of the retail and hospitality industries in Glasgow by the Scottish Centre for Employment Research (2004) revealed that employers placed far greater emphasis on employees' soft skills, such as appearance and attitude, than technical skills. According to Brotherton and Watson (2001), traditionally the hospitality industry has emphasised operational rather than management skills but a quantitative survey of licensed house managers in the UK (2001) by the same authors revealed a focus on people skills which managers believed were more important in delivering business success.

In relation to part-time employment, findings from the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey indicate that 55% of hotels and restaurant workplaces have a majority of part time versus full time employees. This is the highest figure for any industry and more than double the percentage (26%) for

all workplaces (www.dti.gov.uk). Furthermore, the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey revealed that, within almost one third of workplaces in the Hotels and restaurant sector, more than three quarters of employees worked part time (Kersley et al, 2006). Cully, Woodland, O'Reilly and Dix (1999) also point to the relatively high percentage of part-time employees in Hotels and Restaurants in the UK. The reasons why large numbers of hospitality industry employees in the UK seek part-time jobs is complex (Lucas, 2004) but may include domestic responsibilities, alternative employment opportunities, or lack thereof, and the characteristic of labour supply in the hospitality industry, with employers needing to match labour supply with peak demand.

In relation to the age composition of hotel employees in the UK, traditionally employment has been dominated by relatively young age groups in the population (Commission for Racial Equality, 1991; British Hospitality Association, 2003). An analysis of the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey by Kersley et al 2006 (p.30) points to the fact that 47% of Hotels and Restaurants in the UK employ 25% or more employees aged 16 to 21 compared to only 15% for "All Industries". Goldsmith, Nickson, Sloan and Wood (1997, p.68) have commented that "The hotel and catering industry is heavily dependent on young workers". Similarly, Lucas (1995) has commented that the commercial hotel and catering sector in the UK employs a sizeable minority of younger workers. In addition, McNair and Flynn (2006) state that the hospitality sector in the UK employs a large number of younger workers whilst employing relatively few workers over the age of fifty five. Baum (1996, p.138) has discussed the image of tourism and hotel employment and states that it is "frequently portrayed as a young person's industry and this projection is used to create the image of vibrancy, energy and fun". In the fast-food sector of the hospitality industry, it has been estimated that about 40% of all employees are under 21 (Nickson, Baum, Losekoot, Morrison and Frochot, 2002). The reliance

on younger workers in the hotel industry has led to accusations, in some quarters, of ageism (Wood, 1997).

In terms of gender and employment, considerable numbers of women are employed in the British hospitality industry. For example, 62% of all employment in hotels and restaurants in the UK in 2004 were females (Kersley et al, 2006). Women are segregated both vertically into relatively low skilled and low status jobs and horizontally into particular jobs and operational areas (Purcell, 1996). This will invariably be the case for females aged 50 and above. In order to succeed in the hospitality industry, Purcell (1996, p.23) states that women have to be tough, diplomatic, able to deal with much pressure and “tread the delicate line between personal and occupational identity, managing their sex, gender and authority roles”.

In relation to ethnicity and employment, very little research has been undertaken on this topic related to the British hospitality industry. For example, the “British Hospitality Trends and Statistics 2003” includes statistics on gender and age but not ethnicity. This seems a peculiar omission given the fact that, in the 2001 Census, 4.62 million people, or 8.1% of the population of Great Britain, was from an ethnic minority (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2004). According to the Labour Market Review 2002 for the hospitality industry in 2001, 12.2% of hotel employees and 14.3% of restaurant employees were non-white. The review further identified certain job occupations with relatively high levels of non-white employment. These included restaurant and catering managers (13.1%), chefs/cooks (14.7%), waiting staff (12.0%) and hotel porters (11.9%).

In relation to disability and employment, according to data from the autumn 2001 Labour Force Survey, almost one in five people of working age in the UK had a current and long-term disability (Smith and Twomey, 2002). However, as is the case with ethnicity and employment in the hospitality industry, there is a

dearth of information on all aspects related to the employment of people with disabilities. It is also very difficult to obtain any statistics regarding the employment of people with disabilities in the hospitality industry. One of the few studies to broach this topic is Chi and Qu's (2005) article on employers' attitudes towards recruiting people with disabilities in the restaurant industry. The study, based on a survey of 500 restaurants in Oklahoma, concluded, perhaps unsurprisingly, that employers held more positive views about people with visual impairment and physical disability than those with a mental disability. The study also revealed that employers who had prior experience of employing disabled workers tended to have a positive attitude about recruiting disabled workers. An exploratory study of fourteen hotels in Toronto by Groschl (2005) revealed that hotels employed very few disabled staff, despite there being a tight labour market and a growing labour pool of people with disabilities. However, a limitation of Groschl's study is that interviews were held with HR directors and senior managers. Therefore, the employee's voice, in this case the employee with a disability, was absent from the research.

Many commentators point to poor employment conditions in the hospitality industry. For example, Lucas and Wood (2000, p. 111) claim that "Low wages and poor conditions of employment can lead to high levels of labour instability". At the European level, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EFILWC) has recognised the high workloads, irregular working times, high levels of stress, violence and harassment, discrimination and poor training in the European Hotel and Restaurant Sector (EFILWC, 2004). Price (1994) has stated that one of the key features of employment in the industry is low pay. The claim of low levels of pay, particularly for unskilled work, is also made by Riley (2000). Furthermore, findings from the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey (WERS) indicate that 48% of hotels and restaurant workplaces are "low paying" workplaces compared to 9% for all workplaces. The term "low paying", in the context of WERS 1998, relates to workplaces with 25%

or more employees earning less than £3.50 an hour. (www.dti.gov.uk). This is by far the highest figure for any industry and was more than twice the percentage for the second worst industrial sector, "Other Community Services" (19%).

The Low Pay Commission has identified nine sectors of the UK economy which, in September 2004, were affected by low pay. Hospitality was one of these sectors and this sector had the highest percentage of employees aged 18 and over who were paid only just above or below the minimum age for adults (Low Pay Commission, 2005). As trade union density in the hotel industry can be categorised as low or extremely low (Hoque, 2000; Wood, 1997; Lucas 2004; Piso, 1999), it could be expected that this would affect levels of pay. Indeed, according to the findings of the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey, only 4% of employees in Hotel and Restaurant workplaces are union members compared to 36% for all industries (Cully, Woodland, O'Reilly and Dix, 1999). Figures from the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey reveal little change in terms of trade union membership. Thus, according to Kersley et al (2006, p. 110), the percentage of workplaces where Union Density is 50% or more is 0% for Hotels and Restaurants and 18% for All Workplaces.

Furthermore, no Hotel and Restaurant Workplaces recognised trade unions, compared to 30% for All Industries (Kersley et al, 2006, p.119). It would appear that there is a direct relationship between union density and low pay. Findings from WERS 1998 demonstrate that only 2% of workplaces where unions were recognised were categorized as low paying workplaces compared to 9% where unions were present but not recognised and 16% of workplaces with no union presence.

The hospitality industry in the UK has a low incidence of collective bargaining, which has been defined by Rose (2001, p.306) as: "The process whereby representatives of employers and employees jointly determine and regulate decisions pertaining to both substantive and procedural matters within the

employment relationship”. According to the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey, only 2% of Hotel and Restaurant workplaces were covered by any collective bargaining compared to 27% for all industries (Kersley et al, 2006, p.180).

In relation to pay in the hospitality industry, the introduction of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) in the UK was a major issue for the industry, trade unions, employees and the government. The arguments for introducing the NMW included social justice, the cost savings for government expenditure, increased competitiveness of businesses and the need to follow the example of other European countries (Wood, 1998). Arguments against the NMW included concerns about increases in unemployment, higher inflation, decreased competitiveness and increased poverty due to greater unemployment (Wood, 1998). The National Minimum Wage (NMW) was introduced in the UK in April 1999 with a minimum hourly rate of £3.60 for employees aged over 21 years of age and a rate of £3.00 for workers aged 18-21 (Arrowsmith, Gilman, Edwards and Ram, 2003). Since the hospitality industry contains a high proportion of low paid workers, it could be expected that the introduction of the NMW would have relatively large impact on this industry. However, it seems that the NMW has had less of an impact on the hospitality industry in the UK than might have been envisaged, although hospitality workers have benefited from better wages (Adam-Smith, Norris and Williams, 2003). Although many jobs in the hospitality industry are low paid, at the executive level pay has “rocketed” over the past five years with some executive salaries increasing by 201% in the period 2002-2005 (Frewin, 2006, p.1). Moreover, the average chief executive’s salary increased from £375,919 to £501,613 over the same period (Frewin, 2006, p.1). In terms of level of pay as given in the 2006 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ONS, 2006), the median gross weekly pay for hotel and restaurant employees in 2005 was £172.60 compared with £349.80 for all industries and services and £525.40

for the industrial sector with the highest median gross weekly pay, “Electricity, Gas and Water Supply”.

Another feature of hospitality industry employment is the relatively high levels of labour shortages (Nickson, Baum, Losekoot and Frochot, 2002) and difficulties in recruiting staff (Powell and Wood, 1999). For example, research undertaken by the Scottish Centre for Employment Research (2004), points to recruitment problems in Glasgow’s hospitality industry. Research undertaken on selecting hotel staff in Scottish hotels by Lockyer and Scholarios (2004) points to similar difficulties. Indeed, according to Powell and Wood (1999), perhaps the biggest problem facing the hospitality industry is recruitment with the industry attracting 8,000-9,000 people a year to management positions but needing 30,000 people. Bob Cotton, the Chief Executive of the British Hospitality Association, has claimed that the staff and skills shortage has become worse and is likely to get even worse in the future as the industry is likely to create an extra half a million jobs by 2010 (in Boella and Goss-Turner, 2006). It would seem that certain hotel departments are worse affected by recruiting difficulties than others. It has long been the case that hotels have had difficulties in recruiting trained chefs. More recently, other areas such as housekeeping, have experienced a staffing crisis (Gander, 2006).

Invariably, some parts of the UK will be more affected by labour shortages than other areas. The difficulty in recruiting staff to the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industry in London has led the London Development Agency to implement an Action Plan costing £3.5 million over the next four years (<http://www.lda.gov.uk>). The Agency has estimated that the industry accounts for 430,000 jobs in 47,000 businesses in London and 40% of these businesses are experiencing difficulties in recruiting staff in the capital (www.lda.gov.uk). It is difficult to establish the exact number of vacancies in the British hospitality industry. The UK Office for National Statistics produces a survey of vacancies

across the economy with “Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants” being recognised as an Industry. In April 2006, there were 167,100 vacancies in Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants in the UK. This compared to 596,300 for all vacancies and is the highest of any industry (ONS, 2006). The number of vacancies in Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants is more than three times the number in manufacturing and more than eight times the number in construction (ONS, 2006). The consistently higher ratio of vacancies versus employment is also to be gleaned from the Employer Skills Survey for England (ONS, 2002). For the period November 2000-April 2001, Hotels and Restaurants accounted for 5% of all employment but 8% of all unfilled vacancies. Vacancies, per 1,000 employees, for the same period were higher than any other industry except “Business Services”. In 2002, the Hospitality Training Foundation estimated that 56.4% of vacancies for hospitality industry jobs remained unfilled (Hospitality Training Foundation, 2003).

There has been much discussion in the hospitality management literature about high levels of labour turnover (Wood, 1997; Lee-Ross, 1999, Rowley and Purcell, 2001; Teare, 1996). Research undertaken by Rowley and Purcell (2001, p.166) identified both positive and negative factors. Positive or pull factors include the use of intrinsically transient staff, local competition for labour and mobility & career progression. Negative or push factors include changes in ownership and leadership, stress and burnout, false expectations and poor management practices.

From an examination of the causes of labour turnover in the hospitality industry, Rowley and Purcell (2001) conclude that much of the turnover was self-inflicted by the employers as they purposively focused on recruiting transient labour, offered low levels of pay for hard work and failed to manage stress and bullying in the workplace. As large hotels were overrepresented in Rowley and Purcell’s research, and given that the larger the establishment, the more likely that

sophisticated personnel procedures are to be found (Price, 1994; Worsfold, 1999), it is probably the case that employment practices in smaller establishments are even worse. Where labour turnover is high, however, older workers may contribute to stability in the workplace (Brooke, 2003). An analysis of the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey data by Lucas (2002) revealed that the mean rate of labour turnover in the hospitality industry was 42%. This was more than double the rate for all industrial sectors. An analysis of the 2004 Workplace Employee Relations Survey by Kersley et al (2006) revealed that little had changed with labour turnover in hotels and restaurants for 2003-2004 at 39%. This compared to labour turnover for "All Industries" of 20%. A similar picture emerges from the June 2004 Survey report by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development on recruitment, retention and turnover which reported a labour turnover rate of 45.7% for the hotels, catering and leisure industry sector. This compares to 20.5% for all private sector services. The rate of labour turnover for the hotels, catering and leisure industry sector was the second highest of any industry sector. Only call centres experienced a higher rate of labour turnover at 50.9% (CIPD, 2004).

There has been a steady increase in the number of persons in employment in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) from 1.14 million in 1983 to 1.79 million in 2003, with the greatest increases taking place since 1996 (Statistical Yearbook of Ireland, 2004). As with many industrialised countries, the ROI has experienced growth in the number of service-sector jobs whilst the number of jobs in agriculture has declined. For example, in the ROI agriculture employed 136,000 people in 1998 but only 116,600 people in 2003 whereas the number of people employed in services increased from 929,600 in 1998 to 1,179,300 in 2003 (Statistical Yearbook of Ireland, 2004).

The hospitality industry in the ROI has been greatly affected by the growth in international tourism and travel earnings. In 2000, international tourism and

travel earnings for the ROI were 3,637 million euros. By 2005, this figure had increased to 4,272 million euros (CSO, 2006). International and domestic tourism demand has led to an increase in accommodation provision in the ROI. In 2005, the ROI had 870 hotels with 47,000 bedrooms (Irish Hotels Federation, 2005). As with the United Kingdom, it is difficult to establish the exact number of people working in the Irish hospitality industry. This is due to the fact that the Central Statistics Office for Ireland (CSO) uses the NACE Classification Scheme (General Industrial Classification of Economic Activities within the European Communities) which classifies hospitality employment in a number of categories, most notably “Hotels and Restaurants” (NACE code 55). In 1996, 65,325 persons were employed in hotels and restaurants in the ROI from a total of 1,307,236 employed persons. By 2002, the number of people employed in hotels and restaurants had increased to 81,418 and total employment had increased to 1,641,568 (Census, 2002). The number of people employed in hotels and restaurants has increased since 1998. Table 3.2 shows the number of people employed in hotels and restaurants in the ROI in the period March 1998 until May 2005 (in thousands).

Table 3.2 Employment in Hotels and Restaurants

	Mar- May 98	Mar- May 99	Mar- May 00	Mar- May 01	Mar- May 02	Mar- May 03	Mar- May 04	Mar- May 05
Hotels and Restaurants	97.8	102.0	108.1	103.8	104.2	114.4	107.8	111.0
Total in employment	1,494.0	1,589.1	1,671.4	1,721.9	1,763.9	1,798.4	1,836.2	1,929.2

(Source: Central Statistics Office Ireland, 2006)

From Table 3.2 it is evident that total employment in the ROI has increased in every period since March-May 1998. However, this is not the case as far as employment in hotels and restaurants is concerned as employment in the period March-May 2005 was lower than in March-May 2006. There appears to be a discrepancy when the CSO figures for 2002 are compared to the results of the

Census in 2002. According to the figures in Table 12, 104,200 people were employed in hotels and restaurants in the ROI in the period March-May 2002. However, findings from the Census 2002 suggest that 81,418 people were employed in hotels and restaurants. Another discrepancy can be found in terms of statistics pertaining to earnings as NACE code 55 is shown as “Accommodation and catering” instead of “Hotels and Restaurants” (CSO, 2006). However, as is the case with the UK, it would appear that earnings in the hospitality industry are poor compared to other industries. Thus, in 2005, the average weekly earnings for full-time employees in hotels and restaurants in the ROI was €418.67 compared to €644.70 for all jobs in distribution and business services (Central Statistics Office Ireland, available at www.cso.ie)

In September 2005, trade union membership in the ROI was just under 35% of the workforce, although there is controversy over this figure and how it is calculated (www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int). Unfortunately, few figures exist for trade union density in the hospitality industry or hotels and restaurants in the ROI, although Piso (2003) claims that, compared to the UK, unionisation in Irish hotels is much more common and union density amongst hotel workers in Dublin is significantly higher than for hotel workers in the UK. Furthermore, Piso (2003) states that higher levels of unionisation in the Dublin hotel industry has resulted in more stable patterns of employment, greater levels of training and an understanding within the workplace that the union can make a real difference to people’s lives.

3.4. Employment policies and practices in the hospitality industry.

There is disagreement in academic circles as to whether the UK hospitality/hotel and restaurant industry is developed in terms of Human Resource practices and whether HRM has taken hold in the industry (Hoque, 2000). According to Go, Monachello and Baum (1996), Human Resource Management has traditionally

been weak in the hospitality and tourism industry. Wood (1994, p.170) is even more critical, stating that “To say that hotels and catering have, in the past, somewhat neglected the personnel and human resource functions is to articulate a near truism”. The Commission for Racial Equality (1991) also identify the low priority given to personnel issues in the hospitality industry.

Kelliher and Johnson (1997), from a survey of HR practices in large hotels (i.e. those with 150+ bedrooms), found that there is evidence to suggest that large hotel employers are adopting more sophisticated HR practices. However, as the authors themselves point out, data was only gathered from managers and no attempt was made to assess how effective the procedures are or how subordinates have reacted to them. A further limitation of Kelliher and Johnson’s (1997) research is that all hotels in their sample were located in central London which may have different staffing needs, policies and processes than hotels elsewhere in the UK.

Hoque (2000) is one of the relatively few academics to have made positive statements about Human Resource Management practices in the hotel industry, commenting that researchers should stop highlighting examples of bad management, branding the industry as backward or under-developed. In a survey of the UK hotel industry, Hoque (1999) reported that the industry has undergone change and that “much of the evidence portraying the hotel industry as backward and unstrategic dates back to the 1980s”. Furthermore, Hoque (1999) claims that such conventional stereotypes are outdated, at least where large hotels are concerned. This view was challenged in a response by Nickson and Wood (2000) who criticise Hoque for methodological failings and reliance on managers’ views. Nickson and Wood (2000) claim that the dominant research paradigm of HRM in the hotel/hospitality industry is one where sophisticated HRM practices are underdeveloped. This finding is supported by McGunnigle and Jameson (2000) who point to the fact that most research on

HRM in hotels has unearthed little evidence of the implementation of HRM and the dominant paradigm remains one where HRM in hotels is unsophisticated and underdeveloped. A limitation of McGunnigle and Jameson's (2000) research is the reliance on qualitative methods and the small number of hotels in the sample (ten). Furthermore, the article is not specific in terms of who was actually interviewed or where the interviews took place, only that the units were located in acceptable travelling distance from the researchers' base (McGunnigle and Jameson, 2000).

Price (1994) states that the hotel and catering industry in the UK operates a cost-minimization strategy, using disadvantaged labour in operational positions and utilising personnel practices which keep costs low and does little to increase organisational commitment. Based on a survey of 426 Hospitality establishments in the UK, and achieving a high response rate to a postal questionnaire of 53%, Price (1994) discovered that the larger the establishment, the more likely it had personnel policies and practices which met the requirements of employment law in the UK, though, in general, personnel practice in the industry was poor.

Lucas (1995, p.43) claims that the personnel function is poorly developed in the hotel and catering industry and is simple, reactive rather than proactive, and unsophisticated. The lack of a sophisticated personnel function is possibly the result of a focus on cost with the common perception that all activities should make a direct contribution to profit (Mullins, 1998). Boella and Goss-Turner (2006) are somewhat more positive about the hospitality industry's approach to managing employees in the UK, claiming that the HR function is becoming increasingly sophisticated, although little evidence is offered to support this argument.

One of the few research articles to address Strategic HRM in the hotel industry was Biswas and Cassell's (1996) article on the gendered division of labour. Using a case study approach, the authors note the possible contradictions between a Strategic approach to HRM and the practical issues surrounding the implementation of equal opportunities policies. Specifically, Biswas and Cassell (1996, p. 30) conclude that "the placing of women in certain departments of the hotel and encouraging specific gendered behaviours is hardly compatible with implementing and sustaining an equal opportunities policy"

Little research has been undertaken concerning HRM or HRD practices in Irish companies in general and, more specifically, in Irish hotels (Nolan, 2002). As is the case with the rest of Europe, the ROI has witnessed a dramatic fall in the number of workers employed in agriculture and consistent growth in service-sector employment (Morley and Gunnigle, 1994) with consequences for employee relations practices. Research evidence points to the existence of various forms of HRM (Gunnigle, Morley and Turner, 1994) and a dualist approach to HRM where traditional and contemporary techniques coexist (Gunnigle, Flood, Morley and Turner, 1994). Maher and Stafford in Nolan (2002) observe that HR policies and practices are underdeveloped in many Irish hotels. In common with HRM in hotels in the UK, many hotels in Ireland demonstrate a low level of commitment to HR (Nolan, 2002). In one aspect of employment relations, the UK and ROI are similar, namely the absence of a permanent, general and statutory system of employee information and consultation (Geary and Roche, 2005). One area of employment relations where significant differences between the UK and the ROI exist is centralised wage agreements. In the ROI, the government, employers and the unions have, since 1987, agreed a number of centralised wage agreements (Roche and Geary, 2005). Again, the impact of these agreements on the Irish hotel industry has not been researched in depth.

A Human Resource development strategy for Irish tourism, 2005-2010, was recently produced by Failte Ireland, the national tourism organisation of the Irish Republic. The strategy recognises the importance of skills and knowledge for employees in helping the Irish tourism industry achieve competitive advantage. Given the expected continuation of a tight labour market in the ROI, and difficulties in recruiting workers, the strategy recognises the need to attract non-traditional workers to the industry, though there is no mention of the merits of employing older workers. Instead, Failte Ireland propose that the industry react to labour supply constraints by using more non-Irish workers, introducing flexible work practices, improving productivity and use greater numbers of part-time and casual workers (Failte Ireland, 2005). From a survey of HRM practices in the Irish tourism industry, most practices were found to be unstrategic, with larger enterprises being more likely to have a structured and systematic approach to HRM (Failte Ireland, 2005).

3.5. Employment relations

Employment relations are fragmenting (Storey, 2001). If the traditional life-long employment relationship could be considered a marriage, today's relationship is more like a series of divorces and remarriages (Cappelli, 1999). Employment relations have become less focused on employees as a collective body and more on the employee as an individual (Gennard and Judge, 2005). This has occurred due to prevailing political beliefs from four Conservative governments between 1979 and 1997 which sought to promote an enterprise culture in the UK where individuals and organisations would be primarily responsible for economic performance rather than the government (Sisson and Storey, 2001). The election of Labour governments in 1997, 2001 and 2005 do not seem to have radically changed this belief.

The hospitality industry has never been a highly unionised industry and, in common with other industries, non-unionisation has become more common as markets deregulate and businesses move from areas of high unionisation (Flood, 1998). Trade union density in the hotels and restaurants industry in the UK is low. Findings from WERS2004 reveal that all workplaces have a percentage employee aggregate density of 34% compared to only 6% for Hotels and Restaurants (Kersley et al, 2006, p. 110). The situation is somewhat different in The Republic of Ireland (ROI) where trade union density is higher than in the UK (Piso, 2003). The hotel and catering Industry is largely devoid of collective bargaining arrangements (Lucas, 1996). Collective bargaining relates to the process for determining employment conditions whereby trade unions and employers reach joint decisions about the employment relationship (Gennard and Judge, 2005).

The relationship between HRM and Industrial Relations is complex. In helping to explain this relationship, Guest and Conway (1999, p.368) have developed a framework in relation to Employment Relations policy choices, which is shown in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 Employment Relations Policy Choices

Industrial Relations Priority	High	The New Realism	Traditional Collectivism
	Low	Individualised HRM	The Black Hole
		High	Low
		HRM Priority	

The New Realism policy choice focuses on management's attempts to foster and enhance employee commitment, and where a trade union has been established, to work with the union (Guest and Conway, 1999). Traditional Collectivism represents many of the characteristics of the pre 1980s Industrial Relations era and is associated with high trade union density and collective agreements (Guest and Conway, 1999). Individualized HRM involves extending employment policies and practices for managers to the whole workforce in order to gain employee commitment (Guest and Conway, 1999). The "Black Hole" usually operates by default and is characterised by an absence of trade unions and HR practices and by poor working conditions (Guest and Conway, 1999). Based on the results of WERS98, Lucas (2004) concludes that, in relation to hospitality industry workplaces, the metaphor "Black Hole" is increasingly less applicable, despite having stated earlier (1996) that hotel and catering workplaces have long been bleak and ugly places to work. Using data from the 1996 Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD) national survey of the employment relationship, Guest and Conway (1999, p. 379) concluded that 44% of employees in hotel and leisure businesses work for "Black Hole" organisations and are more likely to have a temporary contract, low pay and shorter service.

3.6. Employment flexibility

Employment flexibility is not a new phenomenon. It has existed since the creation of work itself (Stredwick and Ellis, 2005). A move towards more flexible working practices was witnessed in the 1980s in the UK with employers retaining a diminished core of permanent full-time employees whilst expanding casual, part-time, subcontracted and short-term contract employees (Tyson, 2006). Flexible working patterns were advocated by successive Conservative governments in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s, with a move from standard working patterns (Stanworth, 2000). In the workplace, flexibility can be defined

as “The ability of the organisation to adapt the size, composition, responsiveness and cost of the people inputs required to achieve organisational objectives” (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2006, p. 104). Atkinson (1984), in his seminal article “Manpower strategies for flexible organisations”, suggested that firms seek functional, numerical and financial flexibility and many UK firms are attempting to introduce an organisational structure with a core group, a first peripheral group, a second peripheral group and others associated with self employment, sub contracting, outsourcing and agency temporary work. In managing the core group and externals, Atkinson (1984, p. 31) suggests that “a single approach to manpower management is unlikely to be appropriate to both groups”. Armstrong (2006) identifies three developments in employment flexibility which have been particularly important over the last decade: the greater use of part-time labour, the increasing use of subcontracts to outsource services and the greater need for specialists and professionals.

Employment flexibility refers to functional flexibility (i.e. the tasks to be performed), financial/wage flexibility, which links cost to output, labour mobility and flexibility in the pattern and organisation of work (Emmott and Hutchinson 1998). Bryson and Karsten (2005) identify four forms of flexibility: numerical flexibility (temporary contracts, agency work, labour pool, part-time insecure work, outsourcing, subcontracting, freelance), temporal flexibility (shiftwork, rostering, annualised work, part-time secure work, sabbatical leave, variable working patterns, compressed workweek), ad-hoc flexibility (paid overtime, unpaid overtime, lay offs, redundancy, casual work) and functional qualitative flexibility, including horizontal or vertical multi-skilling and teamwork. Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006, p.105) identify nine overlapping forms of flexibility: functional, numerical, temporal, financial, skills, attitudinal, learning, structural and distance. Organisations, therefore, have a range of options in terms of flexibility. However, a prescriptive solution to flexibility does not exist. Employers should examine the needs of the business, its employees and customers in

order to select appropriate forms of flexible working (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2006).

Despite the publicity given to the notion of the “flexible firm”, there remain a number of issues in its practical implementation. These include definitional ambiguities, with the model itself lacking clarity in terms of the core-periphery distinction, the extensiveness of flexible work practices, the costs and benefits of flexibility and the focus of the model on a single firm, rather than taking into account inter-firm relationships (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2005). Moreover, Noon and Blyton (2002) claim that the developments in work flexibility have not reflected the manner or extent advocated by early theorists such as Atkinson.

The 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey revealed the availability of flexible working arrangements to at least some employees, as reported by managers in all workplaces with ten or more employees. The most popular arrangements included reduced hours (70% of workplaces), increased hours (57% of workplaces), change of shift pattern (45% of workplaces), flexitime (35% of workplaces), job-sharing (31% of workplaces), home-working (26% of workplaces), term-time only working (20% of workplaces) and compressed hours (16% of workplaces) (Kersley et al, 2006, p. 250). Since 1998 there has been an increase in the provision of flexible working arrangements in workplaces in the UK (Kersley et al, 2006). Not all flexible working arrangements are popular in the hotels and restaurants industry. For example, freelance workers are found in less than one in twenty workplaces (Kersley et al, 2006). Popular flexible working arrangements in hotels and restaurants in the UK include part-time employment (53% of the workforce) and shift-working (51% of the workforce) (Kersley et al, 2006). A report by Loretto, Vickerstaff and White (2005) for the Equal Opportunities Commission revealed that women comprise 72% of older employees who work part time although “at the moment, most

older workers are working five days per week on standard contracts and working patterns” (p. iv).

Employers undoubtedly benefit from employment flexibility but the advantages to employees, with a few exceptions, are less clear (Legge, 1998). The move towards flexible working has resulted in a trend for firms to outsource activities that are not considered core activities. This will result in a change in the employment contract from own employees to using consultants or outsourcing to a new supplier (Richbell, 2001). Older workers seeking more flexibility in working would seem to present few distinct problems apart from positions of seniority where job sharing might be difficult (Stredwick and Ellis, 2005). Furthermore, flexible working arrangements may help older workers combine work and family responsibilities and also ease the transition from employment to retirement (OECD, 2006a). In relation to the ROI, evidence suggests that most Irish firms have introduced some form of flexible working, although this has usually been restricted to part-time and flexi-time work (OECD, 2006a).

3.7. Equality policies and practices in the workplace.

It is difficult to theorise about the meaning of equal opportunities as there exists a wide variety of meanings related to the concept (Kirton and Greene, 2000). It is also not helpful that the terms “equal opportunities” and “managing diversity” are sometimes used interchangeably (Torrington and Hall, 2000). The origins of equal opportunities can be traced to the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in the United States, where the civil rights movement was a powerful source of change in social justice (Lucas, 2004). In the 1970s, anti-discrimination campaigners promoted individual equality ideals in order to improve the socio-economic position of disadvantaged people, particularly women (Webb, 1997). In the 1980s, both in the USA and UK, a change in political ideology to a right-wing agenda led to an application of market principles with a focus on deregulation

and flexibility over bureaucratic control and constraint (Webb, 1997). From the 1980s onwards, structural explanations for social exclusion have been largely rejected in favour of the diversity model which places emphasis on differences rather than inequalities (Webb, 1997).

Essentially, equal opportunities is about treating people with equality and fairness irrespective of their lifestyle or background (Newell, 1995). Equal opportunities initiatives relate to policy and practice which aim to address the unequal distribution of resources, rewards and opportunities to workers who belong to a certain social group (Dickens, 2005). Equal opportunities in the British workplace is supported by a number of Acts of Parliament which have been incorporated into law over the years. These include the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), The Race Relations Act (1976), The Disability Discrimination Act (1995), the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations of 2003, the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations of 2003 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations of 2006. However, despite over twenty years of legislation on equal opportunities in the UK, organizations are still controlled by white males (Newell, 2002).

Equal opportunities policies attempt to eliminate the consideration of social differences from decision making in the organisation using bureaucratic measures (Liff, 1999). But the existence of equal opportunities policies in an organisation is not a guarantee that these policies will actually be implemented (Dex and Purdam, 2005) as such policies may be “empty shells”, merely “exercises in image management and that, in practice, inequality persists within the organisation” (Hoque and Noon, 2004, p. 482). Thus, an organisation may have an equal opportunities policy to address age discrimination but this policy is a façade unless supported by specific actions which help older workers. Using data from the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey (WERS), Hoque and Noon (2004) conclude that equal opportunities policies are more likely to have

been adopted in the public administration sector, in workplaces that are part of a larger organisation and in workplaces which have a specialist Human Resource or personnel manager. Furthermore, rather surprisingly, Hoque and Noon (2004) found that the higher percentage of older workers in the workforce, the less likely the workplace has a policy that specifically addresses discrimination or equality of treatment based on the grounds of age although such workplaces may believe that such a policy is not necessary given the age profile of its workforce. Of the firms identified by Hoque and Noon (2003) as having an equal opportunities policy to address age discrimination, only 8% of these workplaces had special initiatives to encourage applications from older workers. Therefore, without action to address age discrimination in the workplace, these policies would be nothing more than “empty shells”. As far as the hotels and catering sector is concerned, an analysis of WERS98 data by Hoque and Noon (2003) revealed that, in relation to equal opportunities policies to address age discrimination, workplaces in this sector had a greater likelihood of possessing an “empty shell” policy.

Moreover, it may be more difficult to ensure that equal opportunities are successfully implemented where the firm is pursuing a cost-reduction strategy (Woodall and Winstanley, 2000). Coussey and Jackson (1991) have identified four main barriers to equality: attitudes and behaviour, search and recruitment methods, selection and assessment methods and physical barriers.

Furthermore, for any equal opportunities programme to be successful, training will be fundamental to effective organisational change (Coussey and Jackson, 1991).

It is perhaps apt that managing diversity has a great diversity of meanings. Indeed, a universally accepted definition of managing diversity does not exist (Foster and Harris, 2005). From a study of definitions on managing diversity, Kandola and Fullerton (2000) state that managing diversity should add value to

the organisation, include almost all the ways in which people differ from one another and be concerned with the working environment and organisational culture. Kandola and Fullerton's (2000, p.146) state that:

“The basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the work-force consists of a diverse population of people. The diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences which will include factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality and workstyle. It is founded on the premises that harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, where their talents are being fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met”

Whilst being an interesting conceptual statement, the above definition is more a vision or mission than useful technical definition which may be used for research on the topic.

The phenomenon of diversity has attracted considerable interest and attention in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century (Konrad, Prasad and Pringle, 2006). Over the last forty years there has been a shift from an equal opportunities perspective to one based on managing diversity (Lucas, 2004; Noon and Ogbonna, 2001). Managing diversity has become particularly prevalent in the USA but it is unclear to what extent it has taken hold in organisations and businesses elsewhere (Harris, Brewster and Sparrow, 2004). According to Liff (1996), debates about diversity in the USA have centred on ethnicity whereas in the UK the primary focus has been on gender. The increased focus on managing diversity has taken place largely as a result of changing demographic factors, particularly the ageing of the population in the United States of America and Europe, legal protection, changes in employment, including increased globalisation, and the growth of the service sector (Hays-Thomas, 2004).

Managing diversity has become a management buzzword (Newell, 1995) although numerous versions of it exist and the meaning of the term is contested, both in the UK and the USA (Liff, 1999). Indeed, according to Groschl and Doherty (1999, p.263), “neither theorist nor practitioners in the Diversity Management area have a common view on the precise objectives and characteristics of Diversity Management”. Kaler (2001) believes that there is major difficulty in defining diversity as it has been packaged and repackaged for potential buyers and lacks any definitive formulation. Similarly, Maxwell, McDougall, Blair and Masson (2003) report on the plethora of definitions concerning diversity management and Thompson and McHugh (2002) comment on the limited nature of theory and practice. However, as the managing diversity approach is still in its infancy, it is perhaps unsurprising that it is theoretically underdeveloped (Thompson, 2006).

The CIPD recognise three different types of diversity: Social Category diversity which relates to demographic differences such as gender and age, Informational diversity which relates to differences according to background caused by education and knowledge and Value diversity which concerns differences in attitude and personality (Daniels and Macdonald, 2005). Social Category diversity and Informational diversity can be considered surface-level diversity whereas Value diversity represents deep-level diversity (Daniels and Macdonald, 2005). Whatever the categories used to frame diversity, categories are likely to be unstable and will not sufficiently account for sameness and difference within and between socially-constructed categories (Bissett, 2004).

According to Liff (1996) there are a number of approaches to managing diversity: to dissolve differences, to value differences, to accommodate differences and utilise differences. Furthermore, Liff (1996, p.15) has developed a model (see Figure 3.3) which, on the one hand, recognises the commitment to social group equality as an organisational objective and, on the other hand,

establishes the perceived relevance of social group differentiation for policy-making.

Figure 3.3 Managing diversity approaches

Commitment to social group equality as an organisational objective	High	Accommodating Differences	Valuing Differences
	Low	Dissolving Differences	Utilising Differences
		Low	High

Perceived Relevance of Social Group Differentiation for Policy-Making

In the management literature, considerable interest has been shown to managing diversity as a possible way of addressing issues concerning equal opportunities (Cassell, 2006), despite a lack of studies which evaluate their long-term impact and the need for more research on managing diversity. Miller and Rowney (1999), for example, have commented on the need for considerably more research on managing diversity in organisations. In terms of research on managing diversity in hospitality organisations, it appears that few employers are using a managing diversity approach to harness potential benefits (Maxwell, McDougall and Blair, 2000). These benefits include improved understanding of customers, better communication with customers, greater access to a variety of beliefs and perspectives and an enhanced legitimacy (Anderson and Metcalf, 2003). However, it should be noted that managing diversity has a number of disadvantages which include potentially greater conflict, greater management costs and more complicated internal communication (Anderson and Metcalf, 2003).

Kirton and Greene (2000) state that managing diversity relates to the management of workforce diversity by employers and is based around an approach which seeks to recognise, utilise and value the differences that exist between individuals. There are a number of techniques associated with managing diversity. These include multicultural workshops, support groups, reward systems for managers to effectively use managing diversity, effective HRM systems to monitor recruitment and selection, flexible working practices and new organisational forms (Dick in Davidson and Fielden, 2003).

Managing diversity represents a business case argument for equality where firms and organisations recognise the value of having a workforce which is as diverse as the communities and customers it serves (Schuler and Jackson, 1996). Although equal opportunities and managing diversity have much in common, there are important differences. Torrington and Hall (1998) have summarised these main differences (Table 3.2)

Table 3.2 The main differences between equal opportunities and managing diversity approaches

Aspect	Equal Opportunities	Managing Diversity
Purpose	Reduce discrimination	Utilise employee potential to maximise advantage
Case argued	Moral and ethical	Business case- improve profitability
Whose responsibility	Personnel department	All managers
Focuses on	Groups	Individuals
Perspective	Dealing with different needs of different groups	Integrated
Benefits for employees	Opportunities improved for disadvantaged groups, primarily through setting targets	Opportunities improved for all employees
Focus on management activity	Recruitment	Managing
Remedies	Changing systems and practices	Changing the culture

It would seem from the above table that equal opportunities and managing diversity are fundamentally different. However, this is not the case as diversity management is built on equal opportunities foundations and, in some organisations, diversity management is just re-labelled equal opportunities (Noon and Ogbonna, 2001). In reality, many organizations will adapt an approach to equality which has elements of equal opportunities and managing diversity (Nickson, 2007). Moreover, equal opportunities and diversity policies may operate alongside age discrimination legislation (Duncan, 2003). The exact relationship between equal opportunities and managing diversity is unclear. For some authors, equal opportunities and managing diversity are different approaches. For example, according to Stone (2002), there are three approaches to managing diversity, namely equal employment opportunity, affirmative action and diversity management. Moreover, Duncan (2003, p. 109) states that “The managing diversity discourse offers an alternative equality route to tackling age discrimination”.

According to Humphries and Grice (1995), managing diversity is more consistent with a liberal economic discourse in that the focus is on responding to individual’s aspirations and needs rather than trying to reduce inequality between groups. Kirton (2003) recommends four initiatives in developing a good diversity policy: firstly, building on equal opportunities to ensure the existence of a safety net for disadvantaged groups of employees; secondly, a strong case needs to be made for diversity and how diversity is to be achieved; thirdly, the policy needs to be regularly reviewed and evaluated and, lastly, organisations need to confront policy failures as well as celebrating success.

One of the largest empirical surveys on managing diversity was undertaken by Kandola and Fullerton (2000) who based their findings on the results of four hundred and forty five questionnaires from British and Irish firms. As a result of the analysis of completed questionnaires, Kandola and Fullerton recommend

that managing diversity should be treated as an organisational strategy rather than an organisational policy. Furthermore, they propose a MOSAIC approach in implementing managing diversity and creating a diversity-oriented organisation: this relates to Mission and Values, Objectives and Fair processes, Skilled workforce, Active flexibility, Individual focus and Culture that empowers. Kandola and Fullerton's (2000) research is of value in that it provides an empirical base for managing diversity. A major limitation, however, is that it represents the views of a senior manager within each of the companies under investigation (Cassell, 2006).

Managing diversity presents a business case for having a diverse workforce. However, there is little evidence to support the assertion that diversity is either good or bad (Kochan et al, 2003). Furthermore, it is difficult to assess the impact of managing diversity on the business' finances (Cassell, 2006). The business-case argument for managing diversity relies on the business recognising the need for equality as a way of gaining competitive advantage. Thus, rather than government legislation, employers are the key actors (Dickens, 1999). There are three main sources of competitive advantage linked to managing diversity: marketing advantage, where the firm is better able to understand the needs of individuals and groups in different markets; stimulating innovation and creativity, due to the inherent strengths of a heterogeneous group and making full-use of potential of everyone, irrespective of their gender, race, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation (Newell, 2002). Price (1997) argues that for true competitive advantage to exist, a workplace needs to be free of prejudice, where employers are inclusive towards potential and existing employees.

Inevitably, business case arguments are variable, contingent, incomplete and are affected by short-term market pressures (Dickens, 1999). Moreover, as managing diversity was originally developed in the United States of America,

situational adaptability may be necessary (Human, 1996). Furnham (1998, p.70) is critical of managing diversity and states that “it is a stratagem for diverting attention away from what is really important in the organisation”. Furnham (1998) further criticises managing diversity programmes for being guilt-driven, having clear messages of what is right and wrong and often ignoring the present. Thompson (2006) criticizes managing diversity approaches because they are too individualistic and do not address issues of power relations at the structural and cultural levels. However, Thompson (2006) also accepts that there are benefits to a managing diversity approach which include the recognition of diversity and how to value it, seeing people as assets rather than problems and realising that differences can easily lead to discrimination. The impact of managing diversity on older workers is difficult to establish as this will depend on how the organization interprets its managing diversity policy (Duncan, 2003).

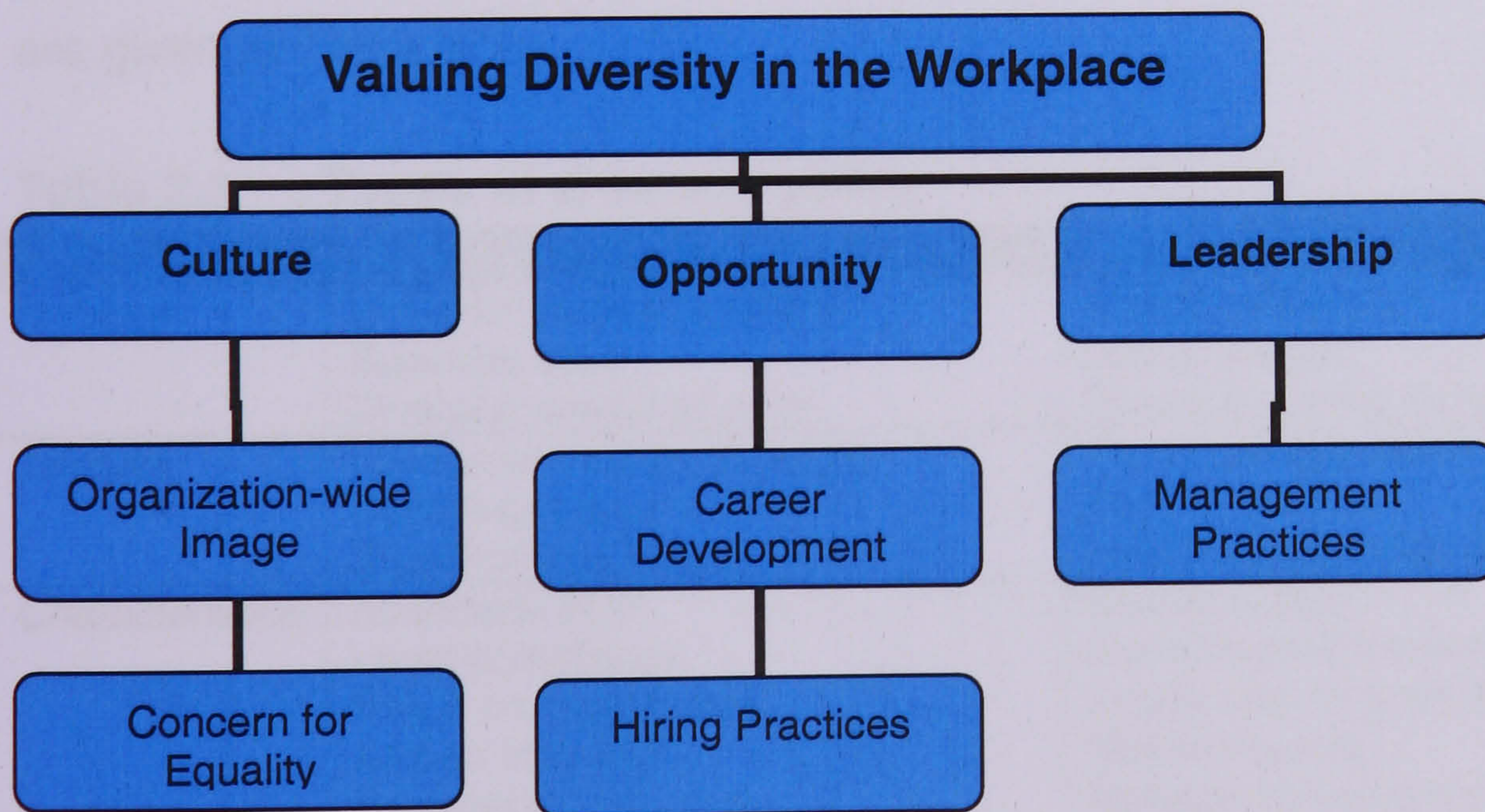
The shift to a managing diversity approach may not deliver fair treatment to less advantaged people in the labour market who still need a strong platform of rights (Doherty, 2000). Moreover, managing diversity literature is vague in terms of how to actually achieve a diverse workforce in practice (Newell, 2002). There are many problems and contradictions of managing diversity programmes including ambiguity, legal implications, complexity, cost, conflict and a weakening of mainstream discrimination prevention (Newell, 2002). According to Cassell (2006), there is little evidence that managing diversity policies and practices have been integrated into HRM.

Cornelius, Gooch and Todd (2001) consider a number of key factors in the successful management of diversity by the manager. These are customer focus, major initiatives, providing a business case for diversity management, EU policy and strategy, sharing knowledge, community links, organizational learning strategies, communication strategies, HRM “partnership” model, building on

existing knowledge and expertise, company policy, strategy and structures and viewing employees as strategic asset. It is interesting to note that Cornelius, Gooch and Todd's (2001, p.47) model does not contain any reference to equal opportunities. It very much represents a business-case approach to managing diversity. According to Foster and Harris (2005), in adopting an approach to managing diversity, the manager will be influenced by four key factors: the impact of regulation, HR policies and procedures, organisational factors and managerial capability

A somewhat different model is proposed by Iverson (2000, p. 35-36) as a means of developing a diversity management strategy. This prescriptive model identifies three major aspects to value diversity in the workplace, these being culture, opportunity and leadership. Figure 3.4 represents a model of how to develop a Diversity-management strategy.

Figure 3.4 Diversity-management strategy



(Source: Based on Iverson, 2000, p. 36)

The above model is useful in that it recognises that, in order to develop an effective diversity management strategy, diversity needs to be valued. Developing a diversity management strategy will invariably result in a consideration of the appropriateness of the organisational culture and the need to engage the organisation's leaders (Perlmutter, Bailey and Netting, 2001).

Kirton (2003) recognises two types of diversity policy approach, the reactive and the proactive. The reactive policy approach represents a narrow, business-case argument for diversity whereas the proactive approach is more long-term and accepts that the business has ethical and social responsibilities which are important for the organisation's viability and health (Kirton, 2003). However, it is important to remember that an organisation may not fit neatly into either category for two reasons: firstly, equal opportunities initiatives may be downplayed and the language of diversity adopted to suggest neutrality towards diverse social groups and secondly an organisation may have different policies for different groups of employees (Kirton, 2003). The ideology, triggers and characteristics pertaining to reactive and proactive diversity policy approaches are given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Types of diversity policy

	Reactive	Proactive
<i>Ideology</i>	Utilitarian instrumentalism Business case Diversity viewed as cost	Ethical rationality Social Justice Diversity viewed as asset
<i>Triggers</i>	Labour and skills shortages Declining profits Shareholders' needs	Corporate reputation Attract investors Multiple stakeholders' needs
<i>Characteristics</i>	Abandons EOP Legal compliance Focus on recruitment Add-on initiatives Managerial autonomy Mission Statement Dependent on statements of intent Management-led Narrow agenda Short-term	Builds on EOP Goes beyond the law Focus also on promotion blocks Mainstreaming Managerial accountability Ongoing publicity Depends on monitoring and auditing Consultation with stakeholders Broad agenda Long-term

(Source: Kirton, 2003, p. 10-11)

From the above table it is evident that the reactive diversity policy is more associated with a managing diversity approach whereas the proactive diversity approach is more aligned to an equal opportunities approach to achieving workplace equality. In reality, however, an organisation may pursue aspects of both policies at any given time. Moreover, as large organisations, in particular, are complex entities, a particular department, division or business unit may follow a different diversity policy to the rest of the organisation. This may be particularly prevalent where the organisation is highly decentralised.

Cassell (2001) identifies four key issues in relation to diversity management: firstly, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that organisations that effectively manage diversity are more successful than organisations that don't, secondly, the extent to which an essentially North American movement translates to the UK and Europe, thirdly, the likely resistance to change of implementing a diversity management programme and, lastly, the extent to which diversity management is actually new. Although managing diversity has become popular outside its traditional heartland of the USA, and has now infiltrated firms and organisations in Europe, closer integration with the European Union may result in a shift back towards equal opportunities from managing diversity (Noon and Ogbonna, 2001).

An argument for adopting diversity management is that a diverse organisation is better able to satisfy customers' needs and wants. A longitudinal study by Kochan et al (2003) of four firms in the USA revealed that most customers did not care whether the salespeople who served them were of the same gender or race and there is little or no evidence to support the assumption that diversity is either good or bad for business. A potential danger of managing diversity as an equality approach is that it does not challenge structural inequalities in the workplace, instead reflecting the *status quo* (Miller, 1996). This point is noted by

Poggio (2000) who claims that companies possess a superficial understanding of diversity issues which does nothing to alter the prevalence of a fixed reductionist mindset.

One of the few articles written about managing diversity in hotels is Groschl and Doherty's (1999) study of diversity management practices in hotels in San Francisco. This article presented the findings of primary research using interviews and questionnaires conducted in six hotels. The main finding was that most of the hotels implemented a reactive diversification strategy (i.e. a strategy which does not expressly value the diversity of the workforce). Groschl and Doherty's (1999) article raises a number of interesting issues but its application to the British hotel industry is questionable, notwithstanding the limitations of surveying only six hotels. Research conducted by Maxwell, McDougall and Blair (2000) on managing diversity in hotels did focus on hotels in the UK, although no rationale was given for the selection of the hotels. A further limitation of Maxwell, McDougall and Blair's (2000) research was that only managers were interviewed. Using a case-study approach, research by Maxwell, McDougall, Blair and Masson (2003) on equality and managing diversity in UK public-services and hotel organisations found that the two hotel organizations, Scottish Highland Hotels and Stakis, arrived at managing diversity through an application of equal opportunities and were probably more advanced than the public sector organisations under investigation, in this case BBC Scotland and an organization which did not want to be named. Limitations of Maxwell et al's (2003) research include representation of the case study organizations, the focus on qualitative research and the lack of a discernable conceptual framework with regards to managing diversity and equal opportunities.

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to provide insight into organisational policies and practices with a focus on Human Resource Management and hospitality industry employment in the UK and Ireland. Perspectives of Human Resource Management were examined and approaches to the management of Human Resource Management in service organisations were explored using a framework developed by Lashley (1998). The changing nature of work was investigated with a focus on employment relations and employment flexibility. Furthermore, approaches to equal work opportunities and managing diversity were critically discussed and the thin strand of literature on managing diversity in the hospitality industry examined. The following chapter will focus on the research methodology employed in this thesis.

Based upon an examination of relevant literature in chapter one, two and three, the research questions pertaining to this thesis are:

1. How can age discrimination in the workplace be explained?
2. What role do employment policies and practices play in the inclusion or exclusion of older workers?
3. What are managers' perceptions of older workers and how might these affect employment policies and practices?
4. How does an analysis of the accounts of employment given by older workers provide an understanding of age discrimination in the workplace?

Chapter 4. Research Methodology

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that the research paradigm, methodology, methods and analytical techniques are congruent with the research questions and are based on the major themes and issues of age discrimination in employment. The chapter will first discuss matters concerning research approach and philosophy in order to justify the selection of the research paradigm. Furthermore, the chapter will examine the epistemological and ontological repercussions of using a critical realist perspective and consequences for the methodology, methods and analytical techniques. Within a mixed-methods research design, the three principal methods used in this thesis, a case study, interviews and a survey, will be examined and issues regarding validity and reliability discussed.

The research questions, based on a consideration of the literature review in chapters one, two and three, and as stated at the end of chapter 3, are:

1. How can age discrimination in the workplace be explained?
2. What role do employment policies and practices play in the inclusion or exclusion of older workers?
3. What are managers' perceptions of older workers and how might these affect employment policies and practices?
4. How does an analysis of the accounts of employment given by older workers provide an understanding of age discrimination in the workplace?

Furthermore, in relation to the third research question, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- 1) There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of their perceptions of older employees.
- 2) There is no significant difference between UK-based managers and ROI-based managers in terms of their perceptions of older employees.
- 3) There is no significant difference between different age-groups in terms of their perceptions of older employees.

The way in which the research questions are answered will be determined by the research approach and research philosophy, in other words the logic involved in answering the questions, i.e. the approach, and the rules of inquiry related to the particular approach used, i.e. the philosophy (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005).

4.2. Research approach and philosophy

Research is about solving a problem by obtaining information and investigating the unknown (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). In any type of research and field of study, the underlying research philosophy will determine the manner in which reality is viewed and the nature of knowledge related to the subject area. The term “paradigm” or “perspective” also relates to philosophy and, in a research context, refers to an underlying collection of beliefs about the components of a research area and how these fit together, how these can be researched and how discoveries can be interpreted (Wisker, 2001).

Different labels exist to describe different philosophical approaches to research. Indeed, there is debate as to what constitutes a strategy, approach, or philosophy. Robson (1998) categorizes the philosophical approach to research as belonging to one of two standpoints or traditions: the positivistic (or hypothetico-deductive) tradition and the interpretive (or ethnographic) tradition. Similarly, Hussey and Hussey (1997) refers to two main research philosophies (or paradigms): positivist and phenomenological, which, itself can be considered

a synonym of interpretivism. Hart (2001) uses different labels for the two principal philosophies in research: positivism and relativism, although the latter can be considered interpretive in nature. In a later work, Robson (2002) discusses different approaches to research: the scientific approach (with a focus on positivism); relativist approaches and current views on social research such as constructivism, post-positivism and feminism and other emancipatory approaches.

According to Riley et al (2000), positivism encompasses a number of assumptions, namely that a real world exists; this world is tangible and objective; it can be analysed and researched; the methods used in researching this world should be objective and the results of the research should be generalisable. In the social sciences, positivism extends the methods of inquiry which have been successfully employed in the natural sciences (Benton and Crab, 2001). A core belief of positivism is the removal from the metaphysical of that which is taken to be evidence of knowledge (Johnson, 2003). This, however, creates a conundrum as positivism relies on metaphysical knowledge to create a language which is neutral (Johnson, 2003). However, as Woodward (2000) notes in relation to feminist research, the researcher will have been shaped by past events and this may lead to bias.

Riley et al (2000, p.13-14) identify further limitations of positivism in relation to research on business and management, namely that social phenomena are created by human behaviour and interaction and positivism's ability to explain these phenomena is limited; in order to study social behaviour it is necessary to interpret shared meanings and positivism has limited ability in explaining such meanings; it is impossible to be value-free in undertaking research on human behaviour and much "scientific knowledge" is constructed from rhetorical consensus, as well as scientific knowledge. Furthermore, Benton and Craib (2001, p.29-49) outline a number of criticisms of positivism, linked to a belief in

empiricism and the scientific theory: it would appear that not all knowledge is acquired by experience, as empiricists would claim; Incommensurability is commonplace in science and not all arguments can be solved rationally; scientific theory is not always valuable in translating theoretical explanation into prediction; science represents one source of knowledge which is not necessarily superior to any other sources and many authors, such as Weber, Habermans and Winch, have argued against extending methods used in the natural sciences to the study of social sciences.

Despite these limitations, positivism continues to exercise considerable influence on the approach to and execution of research in business and management (Riley et al, 2000) and to the aims and structure of argument and social science thinking (Hart, 2001). Yet the nature of management research means that there are theoretical and practical issues which are not experienced in natural science (Lancaster, 2005). In addition, the scientific approach fails to provide “a means for predicting and controlling individual or social behaviour” (Stringer, 1999, p.6). This has resulted in a focus on much contemporary management research of interpretive research. Whilst positivism is traditionally a powerful and perhaps dominant research paradigm, in recent decades a variety of new research paradigms have become popular which seek to provide illuminating ways of understanding the social world (Stringer, 1999). Variouslly labelled naturalistic, qualitative, constructivist and interpretivist, these research paradigms attempt to describe the complex nature of social life (Stringer, 1999).

A common feature of interpretive approaches is that the perceptions, interpretations, meanings, perceptions and understandings of people are considered the primary sources of data (Mason, 2003). Interpretivism is the name given to approaches which focus on interpreting human actions and associated cultural products (Benton and Craib, 2001). Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p.157) considers positivism and subjectivism as extreme epistemological

positions, placing Interpretivism between Positivism and Subjectivism although closer to the latter. In total, Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p.157) recognise six different research approaches: Positivism, Realism, Critical Realism, Interpretivism, Constructionism and Subjectivism. The approach, or epistemology, ontology and uses, adapted from Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p.157), and supplemented with information from Hart, 2001, p. 95*), is given in Table 4.1. Ontology concerns the study of being (Crotty, 1998) and the assumptions made about the nature and meaning of reality (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2002). Epistemology concerns the knowledge of being (Ackroyd and Fleetwood, 2000), the possibilities of obtaining knowledge about the world which is objective (Travers, 2001) and the assumptions of the best methods of inquiring about phenomena (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2002).

Table 4.1 Approach to Research

Epistemology	Ontology	Uses
Positivism	Objectivist	Where the researcher believes that scientific research can be used to explain phenomena
Realism	Objectivist	Where the researcher believes that reality and truth exist and can therefore be discovered*
Critical Realism	Objectivist	Where the researcher believes that he/she cannot directly know reality, focusing instead on the knowledge of reality
Interpretivism	Subjectivist	Where an attempt is made to understand rather than explain human behaviour
Constructionism	Subjectivist	Where the researcher believes that he/she needs to focus on the collective construction of social phenomena
Subjectivism	Subjectivist	Where the researcher believes in the existence of multiple realities

Having considered the range of research paradigms available, the critical realism paradigm was adopted as "contemporary realism in organisation and management studies is strongly into conceptualising the attitudes, values and cultures of the group of people whose behaviour is discussed" (Ackroyd and Fleetwood, 2000, p.19). Adopting a critical realist perspective has both ontological and epistemological implications. The ontological position adopted is neither fully objective nor subjective. The epistemological position for the critical

realist will be critical. According to Ackroyd and Fleetwood (2000), critical realism assumes the existence of different entities which are independent of us and any investigation into them. Benton and Craib (2001, p.120-121) recognise four key features of critical realism: it assumes that something exists independently; it incorporates representation and the philosophy of reflexivity; it regards surface meaning as being potentially misleading and it is fallibilist in that interpretation will be open to further correction in the light of new evidence. According to Thompson (2002, presentation), critical realists believe that “any methods are in principle capable of explanatory power. The focus is instead on broader issues of research design”.

The rationale for choosing the critical realism paradigm is the need to examine tendencies rather than laws, to examine entities, events and experiences in a natural way, to establish rhetoric versus reality regarding equality in the workplace, to be critical of organisational processes and to recognise that multiple perspectives of truth may exist. Additionally, in undertaking research on age discrimination in employment, the researcher will need to be aware of power and control relations which operate behind the scenes of everyday organisational life (Layder, 1996). Critical realism is an appropriate paradigm for uncovering such relations. As the research is emancipatory in nature, addressing problems of under-representation, alienation and non-inclusion (Truman et al, 2000), critical realism has been chosen because it recognises our role in the maintenance and reproduction of social structures, thereby hindering emancipation but, at least potentially, enabling us to consider alternative, liberating structures (Ackroyd and Fleetwood, 2000).

Research on age discrimination in employment can be considered as research on an identifiable social issue and, as such, critical realism can provide a suitable framework for the design of studies about the real world (Robson, 2002). Furthermore, as research on age discrimination in employment concerns

the interplay of social, economic, legal, technological and organisational instances, critical realism is an appropriate research philosophy for examining the structural contexts of these instances (May, 2002).

4.3. Research methodology

Methodology concerns the overall research process (Hussey and Hussey, 1997) and is about articulating research questions and asking appropriate questions in the field (Clough and Nutbrown, 2002). The major methods employed in this thesis were in-depth interviews with older employees and Personnel and Training managers and a survey of managers' perceptions of older workers and an analysis of age related employee data from a sample of HotelCo properties. These methods were selected because they offered the researcher an appropriate means of answering the research questions and were suitable for research based on a critical realist paradigm. However, there are other methods which could have proven fruitful but were not pursued. For example, experimental and observational research could have been undertaken.

In terms of experimental research, this might have involved the researcher sending carefully-matched C.V.s or standard application forms (SAF) in response to an advertised position, using the methodology employed by Riach and Rich (2002). Thus, C.V.s or SAFs could belong to fictitious individuals in one of two groups: the 50 plus age group and the under 50 age group. For any job vacancy, two C.V.s/SAFs could be sent to the organisation: one from an individual in each age group although the two individuals would have almost identical qualifications, work experience and background. This would be replicated for a number of different jobs in a range of organisations to establish whether age discrimination was taking place. Another experimental method which could have been used to establish the prevalence of age discrimination in the workplace was a methodology used by Peter Riach and Judie Rich of The

University of Portsmouth, as reported in the Panorama programme (9th April 2006). Riach and Rich hired two actors, one 24, the other 50. They were given almost identical CVs, had the same skills and the possessed the same qualifications. The only significant difference was their age. The actors were asked to approach identical, randomly selected businesses to ask for work and the “younger” actor was, in many instances, offered employment whereas the “older” actor was informed that no work was available. Experimental research was considered as part of a mixed-methods approach but was not undertaken because of the difficulties in measuring and varying the independent variable and measuring the change in the dependent variable, as well as measuring any other influencing variables (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005).

Observational research could have been employed by the researcher, for example, observing a selection interview or a promotion panel where “older” workers were represented. This methodology has not been extensively used in researching age discrimination in employment but has been employed in studying marginalised groups, for example, Horowitz’s (1983) study of Mexican immigrants in the USA and her study of American “Teen mothers”(1995), as reported in Gerson and Horowitz (2002) and Schmidt, Jones and Oldfield’s comparison of Manchester city centre and out of town retail centres in implementing the Disability Discrimination Act (2005). Observational research was not utilised for this thesis because it would have not answered the research questions although it may have added to a body of evidence to explain age discrimination in the workplace. Furthermore, McNeill and Chapman (2005) state that observational research which relies on a sole researcher is potentially unreliable.

The methodology used in this thesis was to combine qualitative and quantitative research. Indeed, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies should not be considered as incompatible, as methodologies which cannot be

combined (Flick, 2006). In constructing the research questions, a number of assumptions were made, namely that the research is multidisciplinary in nature, age discrimination exists and is caused by a complex interplay of factors and the research has conflictual and objective/subjective realities. In relation to the first of these assumptions, Ilmarinen (1994, p.48) in Snel and Cremer has stated that “in research on older workers, a multidisciplinary approach is valuable”. In attempting to answer the research questions, a number of research methods were used. These methods consisted of a case study, interviews, a questionnaire and statistical analyses. A mixed methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative research practices, was chosen as being an appropriate methodology for research into age discrimination in employment (Jenkins, 2007), as the use of a qualitative and quantitative research methodology results in a richness of detail not available from a focus on one of these methods alone (Jack and Raturi, 2006). Moreover, combining different methods can lead to a much more holistic view of the research topic and lead to a more rounded piece of research (Devine and Heath, 1999).

Researchers in the social sciences and management often collect data from a variety of different methods, including interviews, observation, experiments and surveys (Root, 1999). Indeed, the use of multiple methods can secure an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003), such as age discrimination in employment. The mixed or multi-method approach was chosen as it provides a means for answering a variety of questions, generating comprehensive and rich data. Furthermore, according to Aldridge and Levine (2001), upon closer examination, all social research has both qualitative and quantitative elements. In utilizing a mixed-methods approach, a number of decisions had to be made, namely whether the approach used an integrated or component design; the importance of qualitative versus quantitative methods and the sequencing of different methods (Greene, Kreider and Mayer, 2005).

In terms of integrated or component design, as different methods focused on different research questions, a decision was taken to use a component design where “data retain their original form and character throughout, and conclusions and inferences seek harmony and connection rather than full blending or integration” (Greene, Kreider and Mayer, 2005, p.276). As far as the relative importance of different methods was concerned, the focus was more on qualitative research and, in relation to sequencing, a survey was undertaken before interviews took place. The rationale for first undertaking a survey of managers’ perceptions of older employees was to establish whether managers possessed a predominantly positive or negative attitude towards older workers and to establish whether these attitudes affected employment practices. However, as this method answered a specific research question, the sequencing did not rely on the interpretation of results from the survey before interviews took place. As the questionnaire (see Appendix 2) contained both open and closed questions, both types of data were collected via the questionnaire (with an emphasis on quantitative data).

According to Brannen (1992), the process of combining qualitative and quantitative research will depend on the relative importance of each, the sequencing of each and the stage in the research process in which they are used. Therefore, in relation to this thesis, more emphasis is placed on qualitative data, as a focus on purely quantitative data would not reveal subtleties, nuances and practices, particularly in relation to indirect discrimination and a survey was used to establish managers’ attitudes and employment practices which could then be investigated further in interviews.

According to Hakim (2000), qualitative research is concerned with peoples’ accounts of their behaviour, motivations and attitudes. Strauss and Corbin (1998) consider qualitative research to mean research that produces data and findings which are not statistical or produced by any means of quantification. As

management research concerns not only organisations but the people who work for them, qualitative research can ascertain an individual's beliefs, feelings, thoughts and meanings to any particular situation in which they are involved (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). According to Mason (2003), good qualitative research should be conducted in a strategic way, yet remain flexible; be conducted in a rigorous and systematic manner; involve self-criticism by the researcher; be accountable for any claims made; produce arguments and explanations which are capable of being generalised; be conducted in a moral and ethical manner and considered not as a unitary philosophical approach. There are many advantages of utilising qualitative research, such as the ability to capture an individual's meanings and beliefs; the authentic and rich source of data obtained and the potential to represent an individual's experiences and views on a given topic (Coolican, 2006, p.97). However, there are also a number of disadvantages which include the difficulty of generalising the findings; the multiplicity of methods for gathering and analysing the data and the possible bias introduced by the researcher, especially concerning data analysis (Coolican, 2006, p.97).

Quantitative research involves the collection of data which, in the process of measurement, is translated into numbers (Punch, 2005). Quantitative research is strongly associated with a fixed research design and theory-driven approach (Robson, 2002). In addition, quantitative research involves the researcher using principally postpositivist claims about knowledge and using strategies such as surveys, observations and experiments to collect statistical data (Creswell, 2003). In terms of research on age discrimination in employment, one of the research questions was answered principally using quantitative research in the form of a postal questionnaire, namely: "What are managers' perceptions of older workers and how might these affect employment policies and practices?". In terms of quantitative data, internal labour market statistics for ten HotelCo properties were analysed to determine the demographic composition of the

workforce. As with qualitative data, there are advantages and disadvantages of this type of data. The advantages include the fact that quantitative data can be used to test hypotheses, the data can be analysed using accepted statistical measures and techniques, it can give a numerical range of responses and it is possible to generalise from a sample to the population (Coolican, 2006, p.97). Disadvantages include a focus on a narrow range of variables at the expense of the individual and his/her thoughts, the separation of variables from the context and person and the potential to give a false impression of the indisputable findings of scientific research (Coolican, 2006, p.97).

4.4. The case study: design issues, method and administration

There is some debate in the literature as to whether case studies represent a research method or strategy or even paradigm. According to Robson (2002), a case study is a strategy for doing research. Gomm, Hammersley and Foster (2000) have commented that the case study is seen by some researchers as a research paradigm. Hamel, Dufour and Fortin (1993, p.1) state that "It would be more appropriate to define the case study as an approach, although the term case method suggests that it is indeed a method". For the purposes of this thesis, case studies were treated as a research method, an empirical inquiry which investigates a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2003). In a sense, all research is case study research as data is always collected in relation to a unit or set of units (Gomm, Hammersley and Foster, 2000). The case study is of value in refining theory, suggesting complexities and establishing the limits of generalizability (Stake, 2003). However, in constructing a case study, the author is aware that it is not a soft option. Indeed, case study research is remarkably difficult (Yin, 2003). According to Riley et al (2000), an important difference between the case study and a statistical analysis from a survey is that generalizations cannot be made from a case study. However, not all authors would agree with Riley et al's point of view. For example, Gomm, Hammersley

and Foster (2000) have discussed the possibilities of being able to generalize from case studies.

A feature of case studies is that the case is analyzed in-depth in its natural setting, whilst recognizing both its complexity and context (Punch, 2005). There are many different types of case study. These include individual case studies, sets of individual case studies, community studies, social group studies, organizational and institutional studies and studies of events, roles and relationships (Robson, 2002, p.181). The case study employed in this study represents an individual case study based on a number of different business units within a profit-making organization. This would correspond to Yin's (2003) single embedded case design where the multiple units of analysis relate to the organization, the different properties, the managers and the subordinates. The rationale for selecting a single embedded case design is that the case represents a "typical" case and the lessons learnt from the case can be assumed to be informative about the experiences of an average individual or organization (Yin, 2003). HotelCo can be considered "typical" from the point of view that it has different branded units covering up-market, mid-market and budget accommodation, and, in common with most other large hotel chains, has expanded by acquisition, resulting in HotelCo becoming one of Europe's fastest-growing hotel groups (www.fame.com).

The case study is an appropriate research method to use given the ontological and epistemological position. Moreover, this method can use both qualitative and quantitative methods (Walliman, 2006). As far as this thesis is concerned, the case study to be constructed is cross-national in nature and includes multiple sources of evidence, which is considered a strength of this method (Yin, 2003). As the research was conducted in the ROI and UK, cross-national research was undertaken where the data collected was similar (Harkness, 1999).

The case study is suitable for cross-national research (Hakim, 2000) but, in utilizing a cross-cultural approach, the researcher needs to be aware of cultural sensitivities and issues (Wisker, 2001). These may include situational meanings of words, the significance of categories and the role of politeness (Ryen, 2000). The ROI and the UK are, perhaps, not dissimilar in terms of culture. They share many things, such as a common heritage, language and literature, notwithstanding the geographical proximity of the two countries. In terms of Hofstede's country clusters, both the UK and ROI belong to the "Anglo" cluster which is characterized by low power distance, low to medium uncertainty avoidance, high individualism and high masculinity (Boella, 2000). Although there were undoubtedly many similarities in terms of planning and undertaking research in the ROI and UK, the research also points to a number of differences: interviewees in the ROI, when requested, tended to elaborate more than their UK compatriots; managers in the ROI were much quicker to respond to e-mails and telephone calls from the researcher and the researcher was more often offered food and drink at hotels and inns in the ROI than hotels and inns in the UK. It is difficult to assess the impact of these differences on the findings as they represent generalizations. However, the sociable nature in which the interviews were conducted in the ROI certainly led to a more relaxed interview environment and may have facilitated a more open exchange between the interviewer and the interviewee.

In conducting cross-national research, careful attention has to be given to design and methodology (Tayeb, 1994). A potential problem of conducting cross-national research is the need to translate interview schedules and questionnaires which may affect meaning as even subtle differences in wording can influence the response (Whitfield, Delbridge and Brown, 1999). This was not an issue as the ROI and UK share a common language and the interview schedules and questionnaire were written in English for both countries. As far as

the interview schedules were concerned, adjustments were made to the final section regarding government initiatives as these were different in the ROI than in the UK. In relation to the questionnaire, no adjustments were made. This is a common approach to cross national surveys where the same questions are asked in the countries surveyed (Harkness, 1999).

In order to produce a good case Study, Yin's (2003, p.161-165) benchmarks for exemplary case studies was used: namely, that the case study is complete; the case study considers alternative perspectives; the case study displays sufficient evidence and it is composed in an engaging manner. One case study is presented. A case study will represent a principal research method for this thesis. Within this method, other sub-methods will be used (Gillham, 2000). These sub-methods include interviews, questionnaires, statistical analysis and document analysis.

4.5. Interviews: design issues, method and administration

Interviews were conducted with older employees (aged fifty and above) and selected managers. Twenty three interviews took place with older employees, eleven in the ROI and twelve in the UK. Ten interviews were held with Human Resource Managers (called Personnel and Training managers in this organisation), five in the ROI and five in the UK. It should be noted that interviewing is extremely complex, requiring highly-developed social skills (Oppenheim, 1992). The interview is a conversation between the interviewer, who asks prepared questions, and the interviewee or respondent who answers these questions (Frey and Mertens Oishi, 1995). One advantage of the interview is that it enables the researcher to explore the opinions of the subjects under research whilst accepting these opinions as statements of reality (Silverman, 2004). The interview is one of the main methods of qualitative research and is a very good method for investigating a person's beliefs, perceptions and views of

reality (Punch, 2005). Other advantages of the interview include the possibility of undertaking a long interview, the ability to ask complex questions, better control over the context of response and the possibility of building rapport with the interviewee (Aldridge and Levine, 2001, p.53-54).

As a research method the interview has a number of disadvantages including the relatively high costs, geographical restrictions, the possible effects of interviewer bias and safety concerns (Aldridge and Levine, 2001, p.53-54). The first disadvantage was of relatively little importance for this research as funding was obtained to visit properties throughout the UK and ROI. Similarly, there were few geographical restrictions as the two countries are geographically, culturally and politically close with few restrictions related to travel and research. Interviewer bias was minimised by constructing the interview protocol in an objective, critical and, as far as possible, unbiased manner though it is the author's belief that research in management is invariably and unavoidably biased. Indeed, as far as research into discrimination is concerned, it is difficult to adopt a neutral position as everybody is part of the complex web of oppression and discrimination (Thompson, 2003). By the very nature of choosing workers aged 50 and above for interview, the author has reverted to reductionism by focusing on chronological age (Riach, 2007). This could have been avoided by asking to interview those workers who categorised themselves as "old" (Riach, 2007) although this strategy was not considered at the time. Finally, there were few safety concerns as the interviews took place in a controlled environment with individuals who might be expected to cooperate in a non-threatening manner, despite the possible sensitive nature of the subject and some of the questions. The interviewer did not experience any anxiety in terms of his personal safety during any of the interviews.

According to Burman (2005, p.50-52), there are four main reasons for conducting interviews: to explore complex issues; to elicit subjective meanings;

to increase the reflexivity of the research and to establish power relationships. All four reasons are valid for research into age discrimination in employment. Issues to be examined were gleaned from a number of sources, namely literature pertaining to age discrimination in employment, an analysis of the data gathered from the questionnaire administered to managers and pilot interviews with managers. Interviews were undertaken as these "...yield rich insights into people's biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes and feelings" (May, 2001, p.120). In conducting an interview there are three major characteristics: it contains interactional rules which are shared by the interviewer and interviewee; it usually concerns a conversation between strangers and it is usually a one-off event (Bechhofer and Paterson, 2000).

In developing a structure to the interview process, Kvale's (1996, p.88) seven stages of an interview investigation was used. This consisted of the following stages: thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying and reporting. Furthermore, different types of interview questions were used, namely introducing questions, follow-up questions, probing questions, specifying questions, direct questions, indirect questions and interpreting questions (Kvale, 1996, p.133-135). In terms of the interview strategy, flexibility is required in responding to the interviewee's interpretation of the social world (May, 2002). Therefore, semi-structured interviews were undertaken. The protocols for these interviews are to be found in Appendix 3 (interviews with employees in Ireland), Appendix 4 (interviews with employees in the UK), Appendix 5 (interviews with Personnel and Training managers in Ireland) and Appendix 6 (interviews with Personnel and Training managers in the UK). The semi-structured interview is "composed of parts which are structured while other parts are relatively unstructured" (Aldridge and Levine, 2000, p.6). A feature of this type of interview is that certain questions are asked the same way each time with freedom to change the sequence of questions and to probe for information (Gilbert, 1999). The semi-structured interview is an appropriate method (or sub-method) in

undertaking case study research as it can produce “the richest single source of data” (Gillham, 2000, p.65). In conducting semi structured interviews, the researcher’s main function is to carefully listen to the respondent, ensuring that improvisations are appropriate to the research questions (Wengraf, 2001). The specific type of semi-structured interview used was the semi-structured life world interview, the purpose of which is to “obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (Kvale, 1996, p.5-6).

Interviews took place with two groups of individuals: a selection of employees aged 50 and above in HotelCo hotels and Inns in the ROI and the UK (twenty three in total) and a selection of Personnel and Training managers of HotelCo in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and the UK (ten in total). The author considered that ten Personnel and Training managers would provide sufficient scope to reflect diversity, with five of the managers being located in properties in the ROI and five in the UK. Diversity was also evident in terms of the size of these properties (in relation to the number of employees) and the type or brand of property, with six Personnel and Training managers representing inns and four hotels. The hotels and inns were purposefully selected to reflect the geographical coverage of hotels and inns in both countries and, furthermore, represent the two major brands. Therefore, in relation to the ROI, hotels were chosen in Dublin (2) and inns in Dublin (1), Cork (1) and Limerick (1). The original intention was to select another hotel outside Dublin in the ROI. Unfortunately, the only other hotel in the ROI outside Dublin had closed for refurbishment and was not due to open for another two years. Interviews took place in June 2005. In relation to the United Kingdom, five hotels and inns were purposefully selected to ensure geographical spread and representation of the two major brands. Therefore, in relation to the UK, hotels and inns were chosen in Glasgow (hotel), Newcastle (inn), Birmingham (inn), Bristol (hotel) and London (inn). Hotels and Inns, both in the ROI and UK, were selected using a

purposive sampling method involving the researcher building up a sample to satisfy specific project needs (Robson, 2002). Although appropriate for qualitative research and the use of the interview method, in common with all non-probability sampling, this sampling technique is not appropriate when generalising from a sample to a population (Robson, 2002). In the case of hotels and inns in the UK, interviews took place in July and August 2005.

The author considered that interviewing three older employees in each of the ten HotelCo properties would provide sufficient scope to reflect diversity. Thus the intention was to interview thirty older employees. However, in one of the Irish inns (CKI), the property's three older workers were on long-term sick leave and were not available for interview. Furthermore, only two older workers were available for interview in four properties: GOH, KEH, LKI and NWI. Therefore, twenty three older employees were interviewed, eleven in properties in the ROI and twelve in the UK. Thirteen older employees worked in hotels in the ROI and UK and ten worked in an inn.

In selecting properties where interviews with older workers and Personnel and Training managers would take place, a condition of selection was that the hotel or inn had to have at least three employees aged 50 and above and have a dedicated Personnel and Training manager. Names, addresses and telephone numbers of Personnel and Training managers were provided by the hotel group's Director of Personnel and Training and telephone contact made with the Personnel and Training manager concerned. As the manager had already received a questionnaire on his/her perceptions of older employees, and as the manager had received an e-mail from the hotel group's director of Personnel and Training about the research, the researcher did not have to make a "cold call" to this person. The Personnel and Training manager was asked if she (there were no men in the sample) was prepared to be interviewed and, if the manager agreed, was asked to make available three employees aged 50 and

above for interview. It was stated that older employees could be female or male, full-time or part-time, disabled or able-bodied and from any department. The manager was told that interviews would concern “older workers in hotels” and was not informed of the specific questions beforehand. This also applied to questions to be used for the interview with the Personnel and Training manager herself.

On average, interviews lasted approximately three quarters of an hour with older workers and one hour with Personnel and Training managers. At the start of each interview, the researcher gave a short introduction and stated that the contents of the interview were confidential and for research purposes only. The interviewee was also offered a copy of the transcript of the interview to check for accuracy, although the offer was declined in all instances. As older workers did not have their own office space per se, interviews with older workers were held in a variety of locations within the hotel or inn. More often than not, this meant a quiet corner of a restaurant, bar, breakfast room or lobby. The researcher was careful to help select a location which was conducive to an in-depth conversation without interruption from guests, managers or colleagues. Despite this, disruption did occasionally occur, usually involving a manager requiring the individual’s help. The situation was somewhat different in relation to Personnel and Training managers as, quite often, the manager did have a designated office space, although this was often shared. Where available, the researcher asked if the interview could be held in the Personnel and Training manager’s office. If the request could not be met, the researcher asked that the interview take place in a quiet location.

The original intention had been to tape-record all interviews and the researcher carefully selected and pre-tested the appropriate equipment. However, at this stage no firm decision had been taken to tape-record all interviews and the researcher also practiced using a form of shorthand to take verbatim notes.

Although the researcher, at the beginning of each interview, asked the interviewee's permission to tape-record the interview, in relation to interviews with Personnel and Training managers, the usual response was that the manager would rather the conversation was not recorded. The interviewer reiterated that the conversation was confidential but, reading non-verbal cues, felt that it would be better to take verbatim notes. The reluctance on the part of the Personnel and Training manager to be tape-recorded could have been the result of one or more of the following reasons:

- The manager may have considered the topic to be sensitive and therefore would not feel comfortable having their views recorded on tape.
- The manager may have (incorrectly) felt that the Hotel Group's Director of Personnel and Training would have access to the tapes and would therefore be able to recognise and attribute views and beliefs.
- The manager may have had experience of in-house research where comments were used against the manager.

In relation to interviews with older employees, the intention at the start of the interview process was also to tape-record all interviews. It quickly became evident that respondents felt uncomfortable in the presence of a tape recorder and the researcher felt that a more open, free and relaxed interview could be obtained from taking verbatim notes, especially since the interviewer was able to take shorthand notes, write quickly and listen to the employee. Additionally, this was possible due to the interviewer's previous research experience in undertaking interviews on a sensitive topic concerning a marginalised group.

However, there are numerous advantages to tape-recording interviews. These include the ability of the interviewer to concentrate on the interview; the production of a permanent and accurate record of the interview which can be accessed at a later date and the ability for direct quotes to be used in the research findings (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003, p.264). The use of a

tape-recorder in an interview also has a number of disadvantages. These include the inability of the interviewee to talk freely in the presence of a tape-recorder and technical difficulties (Stringer, 1999, p.71). In terms of research on a sensitive topic, such as age discrimination in employment, the use of a tape-recorder may make respondents feel anxious and result in the interviewees being less likely to divulge information which may be controversial or confidential (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2003). Furthermore, the social researcher needs to be “sensitive to other people, to physical surroundings, nuances of meaning and to information offered and withheld” (Fennell, Phillipson and Evers, 1991, p.57). The presence of a tape recorder may also arouse rational fears about the context, use and audience for the material (Marvasti, 2004). Therefore, early on in the interview recording stage, a decision was made to take verbatim notes, despite the fact that a small number of interviews had been tape-recorded. This corresponds to Johns and Lee-Ross’ (1998, p.125) advice that the interviewer may take notes, “taking down the most expressive comments in full”.

Careful consideration was given to the method of transcribing as this “involves translating from an oral language, with its own set of rules, to a written language with another set of rules” (Kvale, 1996, p.165). The verbatim notes were word-processed and the content of the transcribed text was then analysed using a hermeneutical approach where an interpretation of meanings is sought (Kvale, 1996). Hermeneutics concerns interpretation and the method is an example of the everyday processes people use in making sense of the world rather than a unique process devoid of human understanding (Reason and Rowan, 1981). Furthermore, an application of Kolb’s 1985 Learning Cycle, as given in Maylor and Blackmon, 2005, was used to analyse the qualitative data (i.e. interviews). This consisted of four steps: checking the data, re-familiarising the data by spending time considering the issues raised and reordering or summarising the data, extracting key concepts from the data and checking for the re-occurrence

of concepts and the emergence of patterns and fit with the data (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005, p.348).

4.6. The survey: design issues, method and administration

There is some debate in the literature as to whether a survey is a methodology, research method or a research strategy. Hussey and Hussey (1997) claim that the survey represents a methodology which is positivistic in nature and involves the study of a sample from a population. Robson (2002) however, claims that surveys are closer to a research strategy than to a method or tactic, a position supported by Aldridge and Levine (2001). Root (1999) considers the survey as a method. Some authors use the terms “strategy” and “method” interchangeably, for example Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000).

The survey is an appropriate research strategy for research which uses a critical realist paradigm. Although age discrimination in employment cannot be meaningfully measured using quantitative surveys (Donovan and Street, 2000), in measuring the attitudes of managers towards older workers, which is itself a psychological construct (Mueller, 1986), the survey is an appropriate research strategy. The survey involves identifying respondents, inducing them to take part, and carefully developing questionnaires and interview questions that will be meaningful (Aldridge and Levine, 2001). The approach used in this thesis was to use a survey to determine the specific issues relating to one of the research questions, focusing on exploratory and descriptive research, and subsequently to undertake in-depth interviews in order to establish possible explanations regarding age discrimination in employment, thereby focusing on explanatory research. This approach is suggested by Aldridge and Levine (2001, p.28) who state that “One frequently used tactic is to employ a survey in the first phase of a project to establish what the general outlines of the researchable problem are and then to use the data collected to design a more

intensive second phase using case studies or other intensive approaches”. Furthermore, this corresponds with Punch’s (1998, p.244) advice that “different research questions require different methods to answer them”. The approach followed in developing a survey consisted of five stages: firstly, survey design and preliminary planning; secondly, pre-testing; thirdly, final survey design and planning; fourthly, data collection and finally data coding, data file construction, analysis and final report (Czaja and Blair, 1996, p.12).

There also seems to be ambiguity as to the precise meaning of the term questionnaire. Indeed, “sometimes it is used to mean a document containing a set of questions for respondents to complete themselves and sometimes to mean the list of questions which an interviewer reads out to respondents” (Gilbert, 1999, p.96). The survey in this thesis used a self-administered questionnaire which is “an instrument used to collect information from people who complete the instrument themselves” (Bourque and Fielder, 1995, p.2). The questionnaire utilised a mix of questions, both open and closed, although, for ease of data analysis, the majority of questions were closed. Questions were constructed from the literature. The main attitude question incorporating forty statements was developed from Shaw and Wright (1967), IPM (1993), Taylor and Walker (1994), and Redman and Snape (2002), Roberts and Stoney (2003) and Duncan, Loretto and White (2003). The statements, and their literature source, are given in Table 4.2. All statements are exactly the same as in the literature, unless otherwise stated.

Table 4.2 Main attitude question: statements and sources

Number:	Statement:	Literature source:
1	Older Workers are slow	Shaw and Wright (1967)
2	They fail to keep up with changing methods of work	Shaw and Wright (1967)
3	They are very productive employees	Taylor and Walker (1994)
4	They are unsure of themselves	Shaw and Wright (1967)
5	They work well in teams	Redman and Snape (2002)
6	They make many errors	Shaw and Wright (1967)
7	They are more reliable than younger workers	Taylor and Walker (1994)
8	They are only interested in putting in their hours	Shaw and Wright (1967)
9	They have no ambition	Shaw and Wright (1967)
10	They are more confident	Shaw and Wright (1967)
11	They cannot supervise others well	Shaw and Wright (1967)
12	They will not take on any additional responsibilities	Shaw and Wright (1967)
13	They have good interpersonal communication skills	Based on Redman and Snape (2002)
14	They are less likely to be promoted in this company	Taylor and Walker (1994)
15	They have higher levels of absenteeism	Duncan, Loretto and White (2003)
16	They are reliable	Duncan, Loretto and White (2003)
17	They just wait for retirement	Shaw and Wright (1967)
18	They are interested in being trained	Redman and Snape (2002)
19	They need longer rest periods more often	Shaw and Wright (1967)
20	They think before they act	Redman and Snape (2002)
21	They cannot concentrate	Shaw and Wright (1967)
22	They are interested more in security than job advancement	Shaw and Wright (1967)
23	They are better with customers	IPM Survey (1993); Roberts and Stoney (2003)
24	They are critical of younger workers	Shaw and Wright (1967)
25	They are more willing to change working hours to fit demands	IPM Survey (1993); Roberts and Stoney (2003)
26	They need more time to learn more operations	Shaw and Wright (1967)
27	They are not physically able to keep up with the work	Shaw and Wright (1967)
28	They have more work-relevant experience	IPM Survey (1993); Roberts and Stoney (2003)
29	They are interested in technological change	Shaw and Wright (1967)
30	They dislike working under younger supervisors	Shaw and Wright (1967)
31	They resist new ways of doing things	Duncan, Loretto and White (2003)
32	They are more committed	IPM Survey (1993); Roberts and Stoney (2003)
33	They are more effective in their job	Redman and Snape (2002)
34	They are conscientious	Shaw and Wright (1967)
35	They are difficult to work with	Redman and Snape (2002)
36	They are loyal to the organization	Redman and Snape (2002)
37	They are able to grasp new ideas	Redman and Snape (2002)
38	They learn quickly	Based on Shaw and Wright (1967)
39	They have limited skills	Based on Shaw and Wright (1967)
40	They are more likely to think before they act	IPM Survey (1993); Roberts and Stoney (2003)

General questions pertaining to demographic data were constructed based on information in the “Living in Britain General Household Survey 2002” and the UK

Census 2001. The main attitude question, which was developed for the present research, was composed of 40 statements about older workers, utilized a summated rating (or Likert) scale (Robson, 2002). A key assumption of the summated rating scale is the existence of favourable and unfavourable attitudes towards the same psychological object (Edwards, 1957). This rating scale was chosen because it was relatively straightforward to develop and the items were thought to be interesting to respondents. According to Ajzen (2003), the use of a multi-item, belief-based scale is appropriate to a multidimensional topic (such as perceptions of age discrimination in employment).

The main attitude question contained forty statements which could be answered according to one of five options: strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree and strongly disagree. These options were given a numerical value for SPSS entry. The numerical values depended on whether the statement was positive or negative. In relation to positive statements, the numerical values attributed to each category were: strongly agree (5), agree (4), neither agree or disagree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). In relation to negative statements, the numerical values attributed to each category were: strongly agree (1), agree (2), neither agree or disagree (3), disagree (4) and strongly disagree (5). Therefore, each statement contained an interval level of measurement where intervals along the scale are equidistant (Clegg, 2004). The statements were randomly ordered. As the questionnaire concerned managers' attitudes to older employees, a range of questions were included as it is important not to rely on single questions to measure attitude (Oppenheim, 1992). Indeed, an attitude is notoriously difficult to measure given its nature and the fact that "its existence and properties must be inferred indirectly" (Gilbert, 1999, p.117). For the purposes of this thesis, attitude is defined as "(1) affect for or against, (2) evaluation of, (3) like or dislike of, or (4) positiveness or negativeness towards a psychological object" (Mueller, 1986, p.3). Attitudes are reinforced by beliefs which may lead to action (Oppenheim, 1992).

In designing the questionnaire, Czaja and Blair's (1996, p.90) guidelines for formatting a self-administered questionnaire were pursued: limiting the instrument to eight pages, pre-coding response categories, providing simple instructions, using a different typeface for questions, response categories and transitions or section headings and use arrows to indicate skip instructions. The questionnaire contained both discrete and continuous variables. Discrete variables vary in kind rather than degree whereas continuous variables vary in level, quantity or degree (Punch, 2005).

The questionnaire was critiqued by a number of academics and hotel managers and pre-tested on a selected number of hotel managers. As a result of pre-testing, a number of questions were changed. For example, the answers in relation to question 3 concerning job responsibilities were reorganised and expanded and the layout in relation to the forty statements for the main attitude question was improved to more clearly establish the response options for each of the statements. Pre-testing of a questionnaire is important as it can demonstrate whether the instrument meets the researcher's needs in providing reliable and valid measures of attitudes and behaviour (Czaja and Blair, 1996). The questionnaire was administered by post.

According to Czaja and Blair (1996), the postal survey has been effectively employed as a method in collecting data about a sensitive topic. The term "sensitive topic" is used in this sense to describe a topic that "potentially poses for those involved a substantial threat, the emergence of which renders problematic for the researcher and/or the researched the collection, holding, and/or dissemination of research data" (Renzetti and Lee, 1993, p.5). It is hoped that research on a sensitive topic, such as age discrimination in employment, will not only produce gains in knowledge but will also be directly beneficial to the participants involved in the research (Renzetti and Lee, 1993). However,

although the goal of any research is to gather information, there is a danger of manipulation and exploitation no matter who is involved in conducting the research (Bhopal, 2000).

Due to time and monetary constraints, it was not possible to send a questionnaire to all managers in all HotelCo hotels and inns in the UK and Republic of Ireland (ROI). Therefore, it was necessary to select and utilise a sampling method. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2003) identify two main groups of sampling strategies or methods: probability and non-probability sampling. With reference to probability sampling, the goal is to ensure the sample is representative of the population with each unit having a known, non-zero and equal chance of being selected and methods include simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling and cluster sampling (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). As far as non-probability sampling is concerned, some units are given preference over others and methods include convenience sampling, volunteer sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005).

After careful consideration, a non-probability sampling method was chosen as the researcher wished to purposefully select managers according to job title and whether the manager had a line or staff position. Once this had been achieved, all managers within the sample were sent a questionnaire. Managers were chosen from a database supplied by HotelCo's Director of Personnel and Training. The following were selected:

- All General Managers
- All Deputy General Managers
- All Food and Beverage Managers
- All Personnel and Training Managers
- All Financial Controllers or the Accounts Managers

These managers were selected because they represented a range of management from senior unit managers concerned with strategy making and implementation to departmental managers responsible for functional areas (such as Food and Beverage) and managers of support services such as Finance and Human Resource Management (in this organisation, the title “Personnel and Training Manager” was used).

The questionnaire, together with a covering letter and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope, was sent to the selected managers of HotelCo hotels in the UK and ROI. As the individuals’ names were provided by the Director of Personnel and Training, the questionnaire, together with a covering letter and a stamped addressed envelope (for UK addresses), were sent to the individual concerned. The questionnaire was distributed in October 2004. From 116 questionnaires sent, 42 were completed in full. This represents a response rate of 36%.

A postal questionnaire was chosen as a suitable method because it is very efficient in obtaining large amounts of data, it is cost and time-effective, it allows anonymity and encourages openness, especially where a sensitive topic is concerned, and it is often the only method for obtaining information about past events of a large group of people (Robson, 2002, p.234). However, the method also has a number of disadvantages, including the (typically) low response rate, possible misunderstandings in the interpretation of questions and the seriousness with which the respondent completes the questionnaire (Robson, 2002, p.233). Typically most surveys achieve a 10 to 15% response rate (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). With respect to research on age discrimination in the hospitality industry, Martin and Gardiner’s (2007) postal survey on hospitality industry firms’ compliance regarding age discrimination legislation introduced in October 2006 achieved an overall response rate of 12%. Furthermore, Burgess’

(2003) postal survey of financial controllers' careers and salaries in the hospitality industry achieved a response rate of 22.5%.

The relatively high response rate of 36% for the survey in this thesis was achieved in a number of ways: firstly, the questionnaire was designed in such a way as to be interesting and relevant to the respondent. Secondly, all respondents were contacted by the Director of Personnel and Training of HotelCo to inform them that they would shortly be receiving a questionnaire about older workers and to please complete and return the questionnaire to the researcher. Managers were also informed that the results of the questionnaire would be used for research purposes only. Thirdly, all UK respondents received a stamped addressed envelope with the questionnaire, thereby facilitating a higher response rate. Unfortunately, this approach was not possible for respondents from the ROI as the researcher was unable to obtain Irish stamps in the UK. Lastly, the questionnaire was mailed at a perceived judicious time when respondents would have more time to complete the questionnaire. Thus questionnaires were posted on a Monday to ensure that respondents would receive them mid-week. According to the Director of Personnel and Training, managers would be slightly less busy mid-week. The specific week was chosen to corresponded to a week when no major corporate events or training were taking place and when no major peaks of demand were expected. This week was selected after a discussion with the Director of Personnel and Training.

In terms of possible misunderstandings in the interpretation of questions, all questions were carefully scrutinised, formulated, pre-tested and, where necessary, re-formulated. Despite this, a number of statements on the main attitude question were, after collection of the data, considered ambiguous. In terms of the seriousness with which the respondent completed the questionnaire, the covering letter outlined the importance of the research and instructions reiterated the importance of completing the questionnaire in a quiet

environment free of disturbance. Self-completed questionnaires, rather than interviewer-administered questionnaires, were used because of the advantages of the former, namely: the lower cost, the speed of distributing and returning the questionnaire, the ability to survey large samples of the population in geographically diverse areas and the lack of interviewer bias (Aldridge and Levine, 2001, p. 51-52).

In terms of the possible disadvantages of using self-completed questionnaires, a strategy was devised to minimize these. Firstly, the questionnaire only included relevant, necessary questions in order to be as short as possible to facilitate response. Secondly, questions were constructed in a straightforward manner, avoiding unnecessary jargon and complicated words. Open questions were also kept to a minimum as these can take a long time to answer. Thirdly, both the letter from the Director of Personnel and Training and the covering letter from the researcher contained information about the nature and importance of the research. Fourthly, every effort was made to avoid projecting personal biases into questions and possible answer categories (Bourque and Fielder, 1995). Finally, although “the researcher often has no control over who fills out the questionnaire, nor the spirit in which they do so” (Aldridge and Levine, 2001, p. 52), the questionnaire was mailed to the manager concerned (by name) and the manager was asked to complete the questionnaire in a quiet environment. Furthermore, all managers were pre-warned, by the Director of Personnel and Training, of the arrival of the questionnaire and guarantees were given that all managers would be given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire.

As with any research method, the questionnaire has limitations and the researcher has to be aware of common errors that occur. These include measurement errors, nonresponse bias and sampling errors (Kervin, 1992). In terms of measurement, errors were minimised by constructing items from the

literature which incorporated scales and measures of social psychological attitudes (Robinson and Shaver, 1973). In terms of nonresponse bias, as the two main sources of non-response are non-contacts and refusals (Arber, 2003), non-contacts were minimised by following-up non-responses and refusals were minimised by attempting to demonstrate the importance of the subject in the covering letter and in an e-mail to all managers from HotelCo's Director of Personnel and Training. Sampling errors are associated with the way in which a sample has been selected from a population given the possible sampling options (Arber, 2003). However, as a non-probability sampling method was used it is not possible to calculate the standard error for the survey.

In analysing data from the questionnaire, all questions used frequencies and percentages. However, as far as the main attitude question was concerned (Question 9), the mean, mode and standard deviation was calculated for each statement and means were calculated for the following groups: males, females, UK based-managers, ROI-based managers and the different age-groups. In addition, where cross-tabulation was undertaken, a relevant test of significance was employed. Thus, in relation to perceptions of older employees and gender and in relation to perceptions of older employees and the location of the property (either the ROI or UK), an independent t-test was calculated, obtaining a t score, a df score a *p* score. In order to establish whether significant differences exist in terms of respondent age-groups and perceptions of older employees, a one way ANOVA was calculated resulting in a df score, an F score a *p* score. Both the independent t-test and the ANOVA test are suitable statistical tests to establish whether significant differences exist between subgroups in the data (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005).

4.7. Using a case study and mixed-methods approach within a critical realist paradigm: reliability and validity issues

It is virtually impossible to achieve perfect reliability and validity in social research although the researcher's aim should be to strive for it (Neuman, 2006). Reliability and validity have been defined in different ways. For example, Maylor and Blackmon (2005) state that reliability refers to the degree to which the findings would be the same if the research was to be repeated whereas Procter (2003) claims that reliability is about the consistency of a measure. Lewin (2005) comments that validity concerns whether the research answers the research question whereas Gilbert (2003) asserts that validity is about the accuracy in measuring a concept. One reason why differences occur in definitions regarding reliability and validity is that they mean different things according to the research method used.

According to Riege (2003, p. 84), there are eight tests that can be applied to establish the validity and reliability of case study research within a realist paradigm, namely construct validity, internal validity, external validity, reliability, credibility, trustworthiness, confirmability and dependability. Construct validity refers to a test of the appropriateness of the operational measures to the concepts under investigation; internal validity concerns the establishment of causal relationships; external validity is about the generalisability of the findings and reliability relates to the whether the research, if repeated, would generate the same results (Yin, 2003, p. 34). Confirmability is a test of whether the data is interpreted in an unbiased manner; credibility refers to the sanctioning of research findings by peers or interviewees; transferability is about where the findings achieve analytical generalisation and dependability demonstrates consistency and stability in the research process (Riege, 2003, p. 81).

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) recognise two major reliability issues related to the use of interviews. Firstly, interviewer bias exists where the

interviewer uses a comment, tone or non-verbal cue to create bias, thereby influencing the interviewee to respond in a particular way (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003). Secondly, interviewee bias means that the respondent, for example, chooses to conceal certain information (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003). In terms of the interviews used in this research, reliability was enhanced by thorough pre-testing of interview schedules (for older employees and Personnel and Training managers), comprehensive training of interviewers (in this case, the interviewer had many years' experience of undertaking interviews), greater use of fixed-choice answers and checks on coding of answers to open-ended questions (Silverman, 2001, p.229). All questions in the interview protocols (see appendices 3, 4, 5 and 6) were carefully screened to establish their clarity, objectivity and non-bias and throughout the interviews the interviewer was careful with the tone used, comments given and non-verbal cues.

In relation to quantitative research methods, Creswell (2003, p. 157) recognises three traditional types of validity: content validity, predictive validity and construct validity. Content validity concerns the extent to which items chosen for measurement actually measure the content; predictive validity relates to correlation with other results and construct validity assesses whether the items measure concepts or hypothetical constructs (Creswell, 2003, p. 157). Neuman (2006, p.189-190) recognises three different types of reliability with reference to quantitative research: stability reliability, which is a measure of reliability across time; representative reliability, which represents reliability across groups of people and equivalence reliability which concerns consistency across different indicators for the same construct.

As far as the main quantitative method used in this research was concerned, the survey, reliability was improved by carefully designing the questionnaire (using Czaja and Blair's 1996 guidelines for formatting a self-administered

questionnaire), pre-testing the questionnaire, using an appropriate sampling technique and taking care when inputting data and applying appropriate statistical tests to analyse the data. Furthermore, the reliability of the survey was improved by clearly conceptualising the constructs, using a precise level of measurement, using multiple indicators and pre-testing the questionnaire (Neuman, 2006, p. 190).

Creswell (2001, p.196-197) recommends eight strategies for improving the validity of mixed-methods research: triangulating different evidence; use number-checking; use rich, thick description; clarify any research bias; present negative or discrepant information; spend a prolonged amount of time in the field; use peer debriefing and use an external auditor to review the project. In relation to this strategy triangulation of data and methods was used. The process of triangulation increases the validity of the research (Dockery, 2000). From a social research perspective, the concept of triangulation involves two or more techniques being employed to collect data which is subsequently compared to establish accuracy (Johns and Lee-Ross, 1998). Where possible, numbers were used to check statements, rich, thick description was used to describe the phenomenon, organisation and individuals concerned by means of interviews with older employees and Personnel and Training managers, the researcher's own bias was identified and discussed, contradictory findings were presented and analysed, a limited amount of time was spent in the field (especially with regards to the ROI), peer debriefing was used in several stages during the research process and external auditors reviewed the project in its totality.

4.8. Research context and potential researcher bias

In order to understand the focus on age discrimination in employment, it is useful to describe the context in which the research developed. Throughout the

project, the researcher was employed as a Senior Lecturer in Hospitality Management at the University of Huddersfield. An interest in managing diversity, which had developed whilst coordinator of an international university faculty in the Netherlands, and resulted in a journal article on diversity and tourism marketing, led to the submission of a DBA research proposal at the beginning of 2002. Initially, the intention was to examine managing diversity initiatives in the international hotel industry but this proved too broad an area. Subsequent research resulted in a focus on age diversity and perceptions of age discrimination in the workplace as the area was under-researched and was considered a major issue and problem by the UK and Irish governments, employers, employees and the researcher.

According to Creswell (2001) it is important to clarify any research bias when undertaking mixed methods research. Moreover, Healey and Perry (2000) state that an epistemological consideration of using a case study approach within a realist research paradigm is to be aware of the researcher's values. Thus it is necessary to state the values and any potential bias that the researcher may have in relation to the research topic. Over twenty years of exposure to the hospitality industry has resulted in the researcher developing a somewhat negative view of employment conditions, particularly with respect to small hospitality businesses, although the researcher has witnessed examples of good employment practice over the years.

With respect to the employment of older workers, prior to commencing research on age discrimination in employment, the researcher was of the opinion that older people were generally disadvantaged in the workplace. This view had developed over a number of years and was reinforced by the experiences of family and friends regarding their treatment as older workers. The researcher believes that, in general, society valorises youth and, in today's image-conscious world, places too much emphasis on aesthetics. This, the researcher

believes, also disadvantages older people. In undertaking research on older people, defined in this research as fifty and above, the researcher is aware that he does not belong to this group and, therefore, cannot fully appreciate the experiences of the older worker. However, the researcher is sympathetic to the needs of the older worker in the hospitality industry and has knowledge and experience of the ageing process. In relation to the company under investigation, prior to commencing the project, the researcher did have some knowledge of the company but had not worked for this firm in any capacity. The researcher did not have any strong opinions about HotelCo prior to commencing the research.

4.9. Limitations

In conducting cross-cultural research, the researcher needs to be aware of cultural sensitivities and issues (Wisker, 2001). The researcher's knowledge of the UK hospitality industry, the national culture, working conditions and the political, economic, socio-cultural and technological environment was well-developed through placement visits, consultancy, teaching and contacts. However, the researcher spent less time in Ireland and possessed less knowledge about the country, working conditions in the hospitality industry and the political, economic, socio-cultural and technological environment.

Where the emphasis is on establishing change or development over time, longitudinal research is the most appropriate method (Robson, 1998). Furthermore, in using a longitudinal research design it may be possible to establish causation amongst variables in successive surveys (Walliman, 2006) and to establish patterns during the process of change (Lemons and Jones, 2001). Thus, in following a group of people over many years it may be possible to examine how age affects their treatment in the workplace. However, this type

of research is both time-consuming and expensive (Walliman, 2006) and, therefore, was not used in this thesis.

A number of limitations pertain to the use of a questionnaire in attempting to measure managers' perceptions of older workers. Firstly, in using a questionnaire to measure attitude, social reality is divided into discrete components in a sequential manner (Bechhofer and Paterson, 2000). Secondly, as research on age discrimination in employment needs to expose underlying causal mechanisms, the use of statistical methods and techniques will not uncover such mechanisms (Johnson, 2003). Thirdly, according to Riach and Rich (2002, p. 481), the survey may produce socially-desirable responses as "surveys of attitudes towards minority groups are not likely to produce honest and accurate responses". Fourthly, in relation to the sampling technique used in the selection of managers to receive a questionnaire in this thesis, care must be taken when generalising from the sample to the population (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005) as a non-probability sampling method was used. With hindsight, it may have been better to use a probability sampling technique, such as simple random sampling. Fifthly, of the 40 statements in relation to the main attitude question, twenty statements were positive; twenty negative. However, Statement 14 referred to the likelihood of the company promoting older workers and so does not specifically relate to the qualities of older workers. From a critical reflection, it would also appear that some ambiguity exists in the interpretation of Statement 20, "They think before they act", this could be considered as positive or negative. As far as Statement 24, "They are critical of younger workers" was concerned, the manager could believe this to be a positive or negative "quality". In relation to Statement 40, "They are more likely to think before they act", this is very similar to Statement 20 which is, in itself, ambiguous.

As far as the interviews were concerned, the majority of interviews were recorded using verbatim notes rather than tape-recorded. As such, a full and complete word-for-word record of most interviews does not exist. Some duplication also exists in the results from interviews and the questionnaire as Personnel and Training Managers were sent a questionnaire and were interviewed. In relation to the ten HotelCo properties where interviews took place, Personnel and Training managers were asked to identify at least three “older workers” in their property and approach these workers to establish whether they would be interested in being interviewed. Thus, the Personnel and Training managers made available (usually three) older workers for interview. It may have been the case that the manager was not able to choose between workers as the property employed a small number of older workers (e.g. CKI, KEH, LKI and NWI). However, where more than three older workers were potentially available for interview, rather than allowing the Personnel and Training manager to select these workers, it would have been better for the researcher to randomly select three older workers in these properties.

4.10. Conclusion

This chapter has explored the methodological issues concerning the research. It commenced by outlining the approach and research philosophy which was related to the literature review and research questions. Furthermore, epistemological and ontological assumptions underlying the choice of a critical realist paradigm were examined and an in-depth discussion was presented of a mixed-methods research design using qualitative and quantitative research. The main methods utilized in this research, namely a case study, interviews and a survey were discussed and issues pertaining to reliability and validity were examined. Finally, the research context and possible researcher bias were considered before discussing limitations to the methodology employed in this thesis. The following chapter will discuss the research findings.

Chapter 5. The case study organization (HotelCo)

5.1. Introduction

The case study will focus on a discussion and analysis of the firm under investigation, HotelCo, starting with the historical development of the firm before assessing the company's operations and strategies. Thereafter, the firm's approach to managing its human resources will be ascertained and age related data concerning ten HotelCo properties will be analysed to establish the number of employees in each property, the average age of all employees in each property, the age of the youngest employee in each property, the age of the oldest employee in each property, the percentage of employees aged 50 and above in each property and the age composition of the property's workforce in terms of age-bands. These ten properties are the same properties where interviews with older employees and Personnel and Training managers took place.

5.2. Historical development of HotelCo

HotelCo can trace its origins back to the mid nineteenth century but it was not until the 1970s that the company expanded outside its original base of Dublin with the purchase of hotels in Cork and Limerick (HotelCo Company History, 2006). HotelCo became a public limited company in 1986 and the firm's first hotel outside Ireland (Glasgow) was acquired in 1990 (HotelCo Company History, 2006). A major strategic development for HotelCo came in 1999 when it acquired a private Irish hotel company with seven hotels in Ireland, one in the UK and three in the USA (HotelCo Company History, 2006). In March 2006 HotelCo was de-listed from the London and Dublin stock exchanges and was re-registered as a private limited company (HotelCo Company History, 2006). As of the 1st of December 2006, HotelCo had eight hotels in Ireland, six inns in Ireland, five hotels in the UK, fourteen inns in the UK and four hotels in the USA, three of which were located in Washington DC (HotelCo Company

History, 2006). Three UK inns are due to open in 2007 and early 2008 (Company website, 2006).

5.3. Operations and strategy of HotelCo

HotelCo's stated Mission Statement is to provide exceptional guest service "with genuine friendliness and integrity, while delivering profits through ongoing investment in our people and product" (HotelCo's Employee Handbook). In achieving the company's mission, the Employee Handbook mentions five core values: people, product, personality, profit and patrons. In order to achieve this mission, HotelCo has five brands: hotels, inns and three brands which each corresponds to a luxury hotel in Dublin (Company website, 2006). The hotels represent three or four star accommodation in city centre locations which have a range of conference, leisure and dining facilities (Company website, 2006). The inns represent budget-style accommodation in key cities throughout the UK and Ireland with the benefits of a central location, contemporary bar and restaurant and a fixed room rate (Company website, 2006). The Times newspaper (20/01/2007) reported that HotelCo had hired advisors to examine the possible sale of the Inn brand and the sale of the brand was finalised on June 9th 2007 for a reported sum of £750 million (The Telegraph, 14/06/2007).

In 2004, HotelCo made a pre-tax profit of £32 million on turnover of just over £200 million (www.fame.com). For 2004 the profit margin was 15.98%, the liquidity ration was 4.3 and the gearing ratio was 61.34% (www.fame.com). According to the 2004 Annual Report and Accounts, the hotel group's turnover increased by 12% from 2003 to 2004 and operating profit increased by 17%. A breakdown of financial figures according to brand and location for 2004 reveal the following (see Table 5.1):

Table 5.1 Turnover and trading profit (in euros)

	2004 (million)	2003 (million)	% change
Hotels in Ireland			
Turnover	94.2	99.5	-5%
Trading Profit	20.0	22.2	-10%
Inns in Ireland			
Turnover	29.6	26.4	+12%
Trading Profit	12.2	11.6	+5%
Hotels in the UK			
Turnover	35.6	33.3	+7%
Trading Profit	14.3	13.0	+10%
Inns in the UK			
Turnover	53.3	39.1	+36%
Trading Profit	23.4	17.1	+37%

(source: HotelCo Annual Report and Accounts, 2004)

It is evident from Table 5.1 that HotelCo made a larger trading profit in 2004 in the UK than in Ireland with the Inns in the UK performing particularly strongly. It is therefore, perhaps, not surprising that all three “new projects” (properties due for completion in 2007 and early 2008) are Inns located in the UK (HotelCo Company History, 2006). Although an Irish company, HotelCo now has more hotels and inns in the UK than in Ireland (fourteen in Ireland, ten of which are located in Dublin, and twenty in the UK) (HotelCo Company History, 2006). In terms of the number of rooms in HotelCo properties, 1,899 are in Irish hotels, 1,088 in Irish Inns, 934 in British hotels and 3,706 in British Inns (HotelCo Company History, 2006).

5.4. Managing human resources at HotelCo

HotelCo claims that “our people are critical to our continued success and we recognise their importance in delivering a quality service to customers” (HotelCo Annual Report and Accounts, 2004). Furthermore, the company states that “our continued investment in the ongoing training and development of our people is at the core of our Human Resources strategy” (HotelCo Annual Report and Accounts, 2004) and the Chief Executive, quoted in HotelCo’s Employee Handbook, states that “The single most important asset we have is our people

and I intend to nurture this resource”. Interestingly, there is no mention of equal opportunities, managing diversity or older workers in the HotelCo Annual Report and Accounts of 2004. However, section 5.7. of HotelCo’s Employee Handbook states that “HotelCo is committed to providing a harmonious and fair working environment with real and equal opportunities for all in which no form of intimidation or discrimination is tolerated. We enjoy and take pride in the diversity of our workforce”. HotelCo’s Employee Handbook gives a number of grounds for discrimination, including age, and the HR policies and procedures, it is claimed, are continually monitored in the areas of recruitment and selection, training and development, discipline, terms and conditions of employment and termination of employment. HotelCo’s Employee Handbook also gives five commitments with respect to equal opportunities, these being:

1. “Promoting equality of opportunity in all of the above areas (recruitment and selection, training and development, discipline, terms and conditions of employment and termination of employment) and preventing any form of direct or indirect discrimination or victimisation
2. Ensuring the criteria for recruitment, training and promotion are objective and relevant
3. Informing all employees/potential employees of their responsibility to promote the maintenance of a non-discriminatory working environment
4. Ensuring the appropriate affirmative action including disciplinary action will be taken to ensure the above is maintained
5. The Company will also keep under review the operation of the Equal Opportunities Policy”

HotelCo’s Employee Handbook has an extensive and explicit “Grooming Policy” which includes standards in relation to personal hygiene, hair, jewellery, uniforms and male/female workers. For example, in relation to jewellery, “Eyebrow, tongue, nose, multiple ear or other forms of visible body piercing are not permitted while on duty” and “Tattoos or other forms of body decoration

must not be visible". As far as "ladies" are concerned "Tights must be worn at all times by employees wearing skirts and confined to natural coloured tights or stockings. Patterns, seams, pop socks and thick (opaque) tights are not appropriate".

In the period January 1st to January 15th 2007, there were 15 vacancies in HotelCo properties in the UK and Ireland. An examination of these vacancies on the company website revealed that none of the vacancies mentioned any age limits or personal characteristics related to age such as "youthful", "dynamic" or "energetic". Instead, the job vacancies mentioned age neutral attributes such as "enthusiastic", "highly motivated", "hardworking" and "attention to detail". All job adverts on HotelCo's website stated that "HotelCo is an equal opportunities employer". An analysis of the same fifteen jobs revealed that only two stated any requirements re qualifications. These jobs, both in Ireland, required the candidate to "have either completed a Trainee Management Development programme or hold a relevant college qualification" and "a third level qualification in hotel management or a recognised on the job training programme". It is difficult to assess whether these qualifications are actually necessary for these jobs.

HotelCo has two Graduate programmes: the Graduate Opportunities programme and the Graduate Accounts programme. On HotelCo's company website, the photographs used to accompany written information on the programmes are clearly of people under the age of thirty although no mention is made of an age limit. Therefore, a phone-call was made to HotelCo's UK Personnel and Training department and the following question was asked: "I have a number of mature students in their 30s, 40s and 50s who may be interested in joining HotelCo's graduate programmes. Is there an upper age limit?". The response, after checking with a colleague, was "The programmes

are open to any graduate. I don't see why someone in their 30s, 40s or 50s couldn't apply".

5.5. Product characteristics of ten HotelCo properties

Interviews with older workers and Personnel and Training managers were conducted in ten HotelCo properties, five in the ROI and five in the UK. Six properties were Inns; four were hotels. The characteristics pertaining to these units is summarised in the following table.

Table 5.2 HotelCo property characteristics

Property Name	Nr. Rooms	Restaurant	Bar/Pub	Cafe	Nr. Meeting rooms	Maximum delegates all rooms	Notes
BBH	293	Yes	Yes	Yes	18	2337	Owned by HotelCo
BHI	445	Yes	Yes	No	41	1665	Sold in June 2007
CKI	133	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	35	Sold in June 2007
BRH	192	Yes	Yes	No	13	1525	Owned by HotelCo
CHI	239	Yes	Yes	Yes	6	210	Sold in June 2007
GOH	137	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	140	Sold in the summer of 2006
KEH	173	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	270	Owned by HotelCo
LKI	151	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	40	Sold in June 2007
MNT	175	Yes	Yes	Yes	8	560	Sold in February 2007
NWI	274	Yes	Yes	Yes	9	440	Sold in June 2007

(Source: HotelCo website; www.rte.ie and www.christiecorporate.com)

5.6. Employee age characteristics of ten HotelCo properties

Following a request for age-related employee data from the Group's Director of Personnel and Training, the author was supplied with the numerical age of all employees, whether full-time or part-time, on the payroll of the ten properties in which interviews with older employees and Personnel and Training managers took place. The data were generated on the 24th of April 2006 and made available on Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. The data were subsequently analysed to determine:

- The number of employees in each property
- The average age of all employees in each property
- The age of the youngest employee in each property
- The age of the oldest employee in each property
- The percentage of employees aged 50 and above in each property
- The age composition of the property's workforce in terms of the following standard age-bands:
16-24; 25-34; 35-44; 45-54; 55-64; 65-74 and 75+

The number of employees in each property

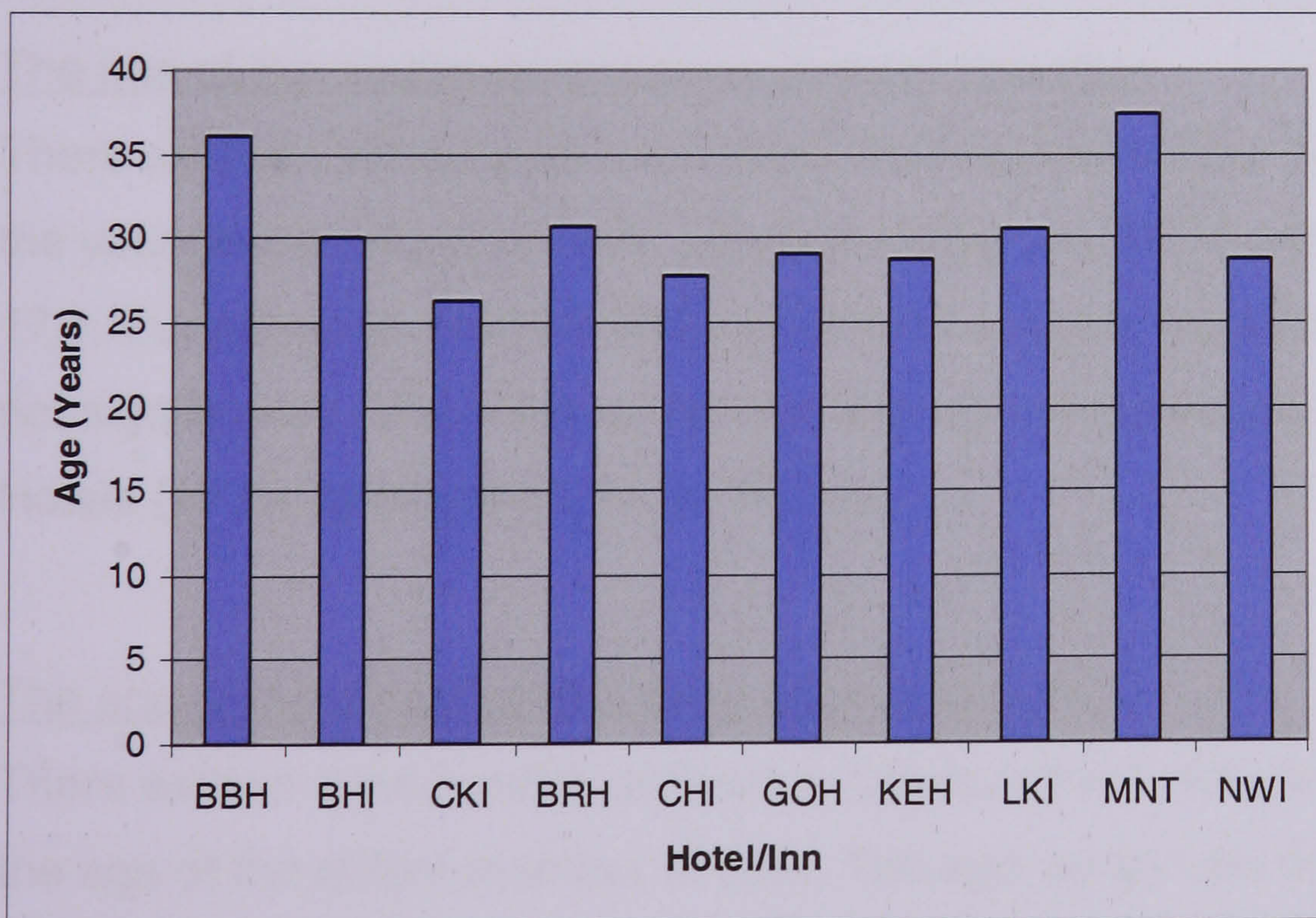
Eight out of ten units had between 50 and 100 employees on their respective payrolls on the 24th April 2006. One hotel (BBH), a hotel in the Republic of Ireland, had 470 employees on the payroll, more than two and a half times as many as the hotel with the second largest number of employees. Hotels tended to have a larger number of employees on their payroll than Inns. This is demonstrated by the fact that the average number of employees per hotel in the sample was 196 compared to 96 for Inns. The reason for the difference lies, essentially, in the larger number of facilities offered in the more "full-service" hotel offering with such features as differentiated rooms (Standard, Executive and Suites), restaurants, guest service and leisure facilities. There seemed to be little correlation between the size of the property, in terms of the number of rooms, and the number of employees. The average hotel possessed 236 rooms compared to 261 for Inns. However, the average Inn employed approximately

half as many workers as a hotel. The average number of employees per room in a hotel was 0.83 compared to 0.37 for Inns.

The average age of all employees in the Hotels and Inns

Considerable and significant variation was found in the average age of all employees in the ten properties under investigation. In MNT (a hotel in the Republic of Ireland) the average age of employees on the payroll was 37.32. This compared to an average age of 26.29 which was recorded for CKI, the hotel with the lowest average age of employees. This property, an Inn, was also located in the Republic of Ireland. The average age of employees in all ten properties was 30.37. The average age of employees in the hotels was 33.2; for inns the average age was approximately five and a half years younger at 28.7. Figure 5.1 represents, in chart form, the average age of employees at the ten properties where interviews took place.

Figure 5.1 Average Age of Employees in ten properties



The Standard Deviations for age data pertaining to the abovementioned properties is shown in Table 5.3:

Table 5.3 The standard deviation of ten HotelCo properties

Property Label:	Type of Property:	Standard Deviation:
BBH	Hotel	14.06
BHI	Inn	10.07
CKI	Inn	7.34
BRH	Hotel	12.85
CHI	Inn	7.42
GOH	Hotel	11.85
KEH	Hotel	8.04
LKI	Inn	7.49
MNT	Hotel	13.56
NWI	Inn	8.87

From Table 5.3 it is evident that the standard deviation for hotels is, on average, higher than the average for inns. Thus, for the five hotels in the sample, the mean is 12.072 whereas for the five inns in the sample the mean is 8.238. Therefore, in relation to the hotels in Table 5.3, the average distance of all age scores from the mean of scores in the set is just above 12 whereas, in relation to the inns in Table 5.3, the average distance of all age scores from the mean of scores in the set is just over 8.

The age of the youngest employee in each Hotel/Inn

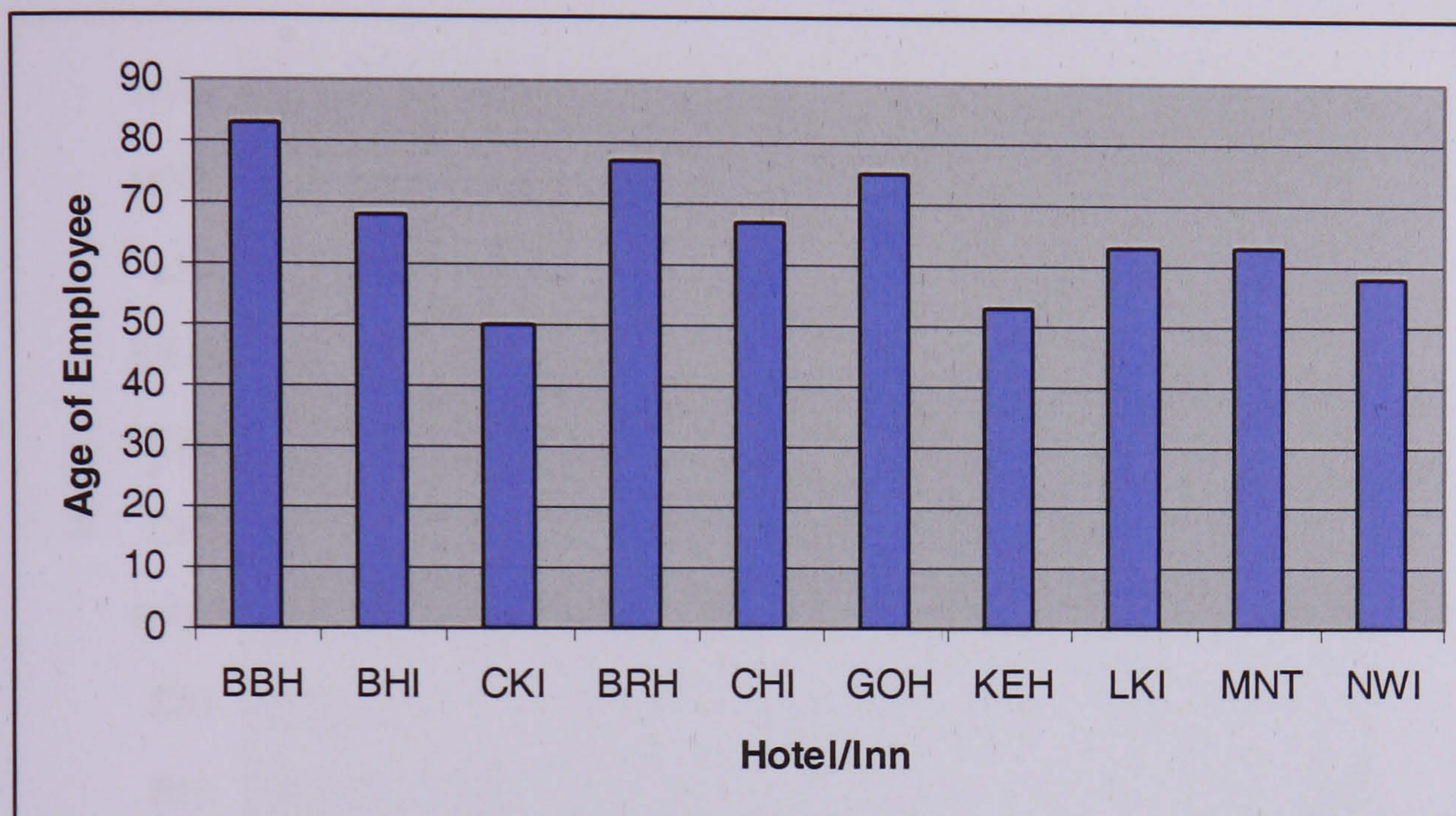
There existed little difference between the hotels and inns in terms of the age of the youngest member of staff. The age range was 16-19 with an average age of 17.1. Furthermore, the average age of the youngest employee in the Inns was not significantly different from the average age of the youngest employee in the Hotels (17 for Inns and 17.25 for Hotels).

The age of the oldest employee in each Hotel/Inn

There existed considerable difference between the hotels and inns in terms of the age of the oldest member of staff. The age range was 50-83 with an average age of 65.7. The average age of the oldest employee in the Inns was

63.5; the corresponding figure for Hotels was 69. Figure 5.2 shows the age of the oldest employee in the ten properties.

Figure 5.2 Age of the oldest employee.

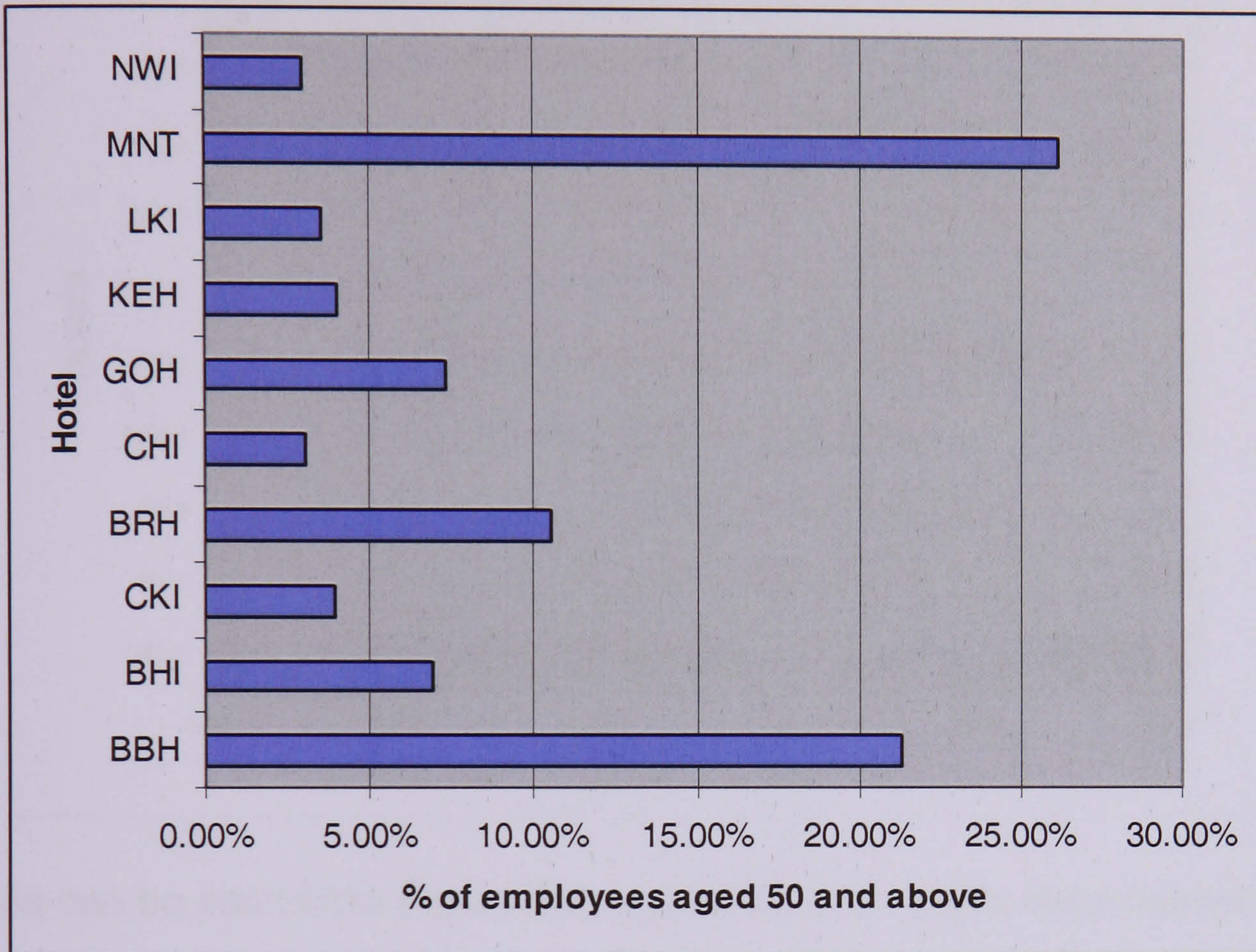


The percentage of employees aged 50 and above in each property

There was considerable variation between the hotels and inns in Ireland and the UK in terms of the percentage of employees aged 50 and above. The property with the greatest percentage of “older” employees was MNT, a hotel in the Republic of Ireland, with 26.17% of its employees in this age category. At the opposite end of the spectrum, NWI, an Inn in the United Kingdom, had only 3% of its employees in this category. The average percentage of employees aged 50 and above in all Hotels and Inns was 8.99%. There existed a major difference between Hotels and Inns in terms of the average percentage of employees aged 50 and above. For Hotels, 15.51% of workers were aged 50 and above; for Inns the figure was only 4.64%. At the national level, the average percentage of employees aged 50 and above in the five Hotels and Inns in the Republic of Ireland was 11.6%. For the five UK hotels and inns the figure was

6.37%. Figure 5.3 displays the percentage of employees aged 50 and above in each hotel or inn.

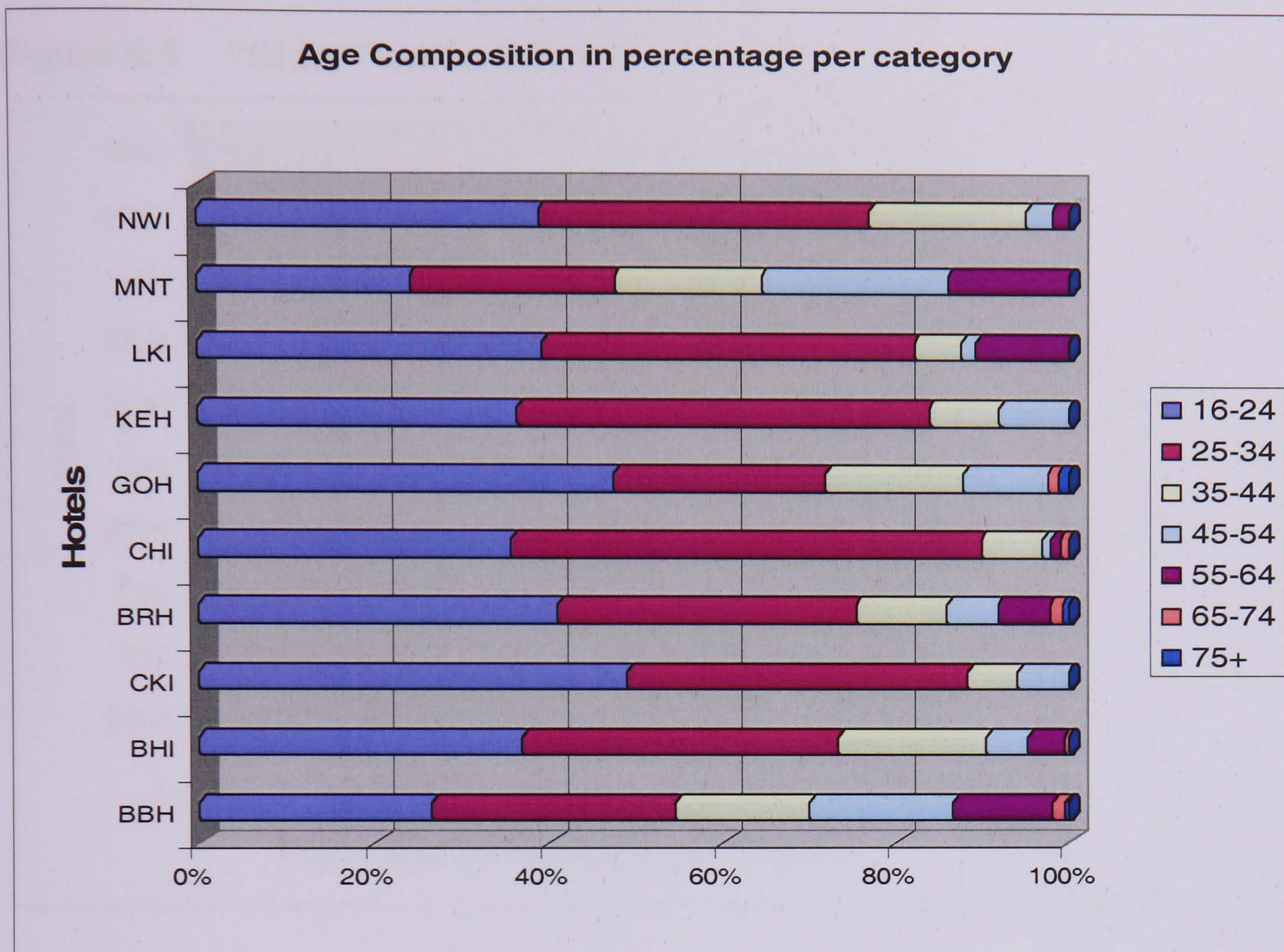
Figure 5.3 The percentage of employees aged 50 and above in each property.



The age composition of the property's workforce

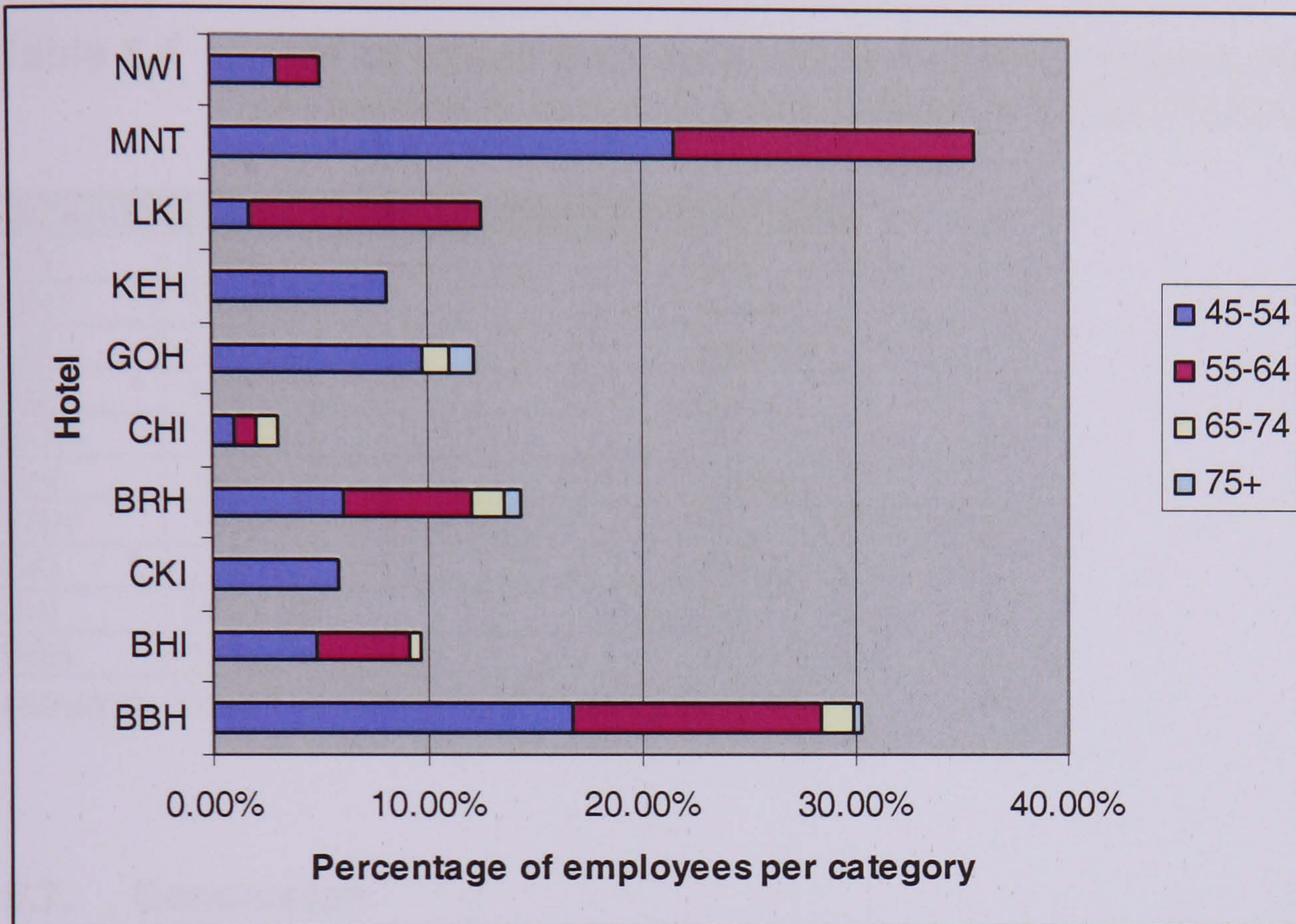
Data on the chronological age of each employee in ten hotels ($n=1363$) was analysed to determine the age composition of the property's workforce. Seven standard age-bands were used to differentiate age groups, these being 16-24; 25-34; 35-44; 45-54; 55-64; 65-74 and 75+. Figure 5.4 displays the percentage of employees in different age categories in the ten units.

Figure 5.4 Age composition of the workforce



As can be seen from Figure 5.4, significant differences exist between Hotels and Inns in terms of the age composition of the workforce. For example, 47.56% of employees in GOH, an Inn in the UK, were aged between 16 and 24 compared to 24.30% in MNT, a hotel in the Republic of Ireland. However, the focus of this research concerns “older” employees rather than “younger” employees and a detailed examination of only four age groups will be undertaken, namely 45-54; 55-64; 65-74 and 75+. A limitation of age bands used in this way is that the 45-54 band includes employees not defined in this research as “older employees” since the category “50 and above” has been employed throughout the primary data collection stage. However, the three other age-bands, 55-64; 65-74 and 75+, all incorporate employees defined in this thesis as “older workers”. Figure 5.5 represents a chart displaying the percentage of “older” employees per hotel.

Figure 5.5 “Older” workers in ten properties



It is evident from Figure 5.5 that workers aged 75 and above are scarce. Indeed, in seven of the ten properties, there were no employees to be found in properties belonging to this age category. Employees aged 65-74 also represent a small minority and were completely absent in 50% of the units whereas workers aged 55-64 consisted 10-15% of staff in three properties: BBH (a hotel in Ireland); LKI (an Inn in Ireland) and MNT (a hotel in Ireland). As far as employees aged 45-54 is concerned, considerable variation exists between the properties. For example, 21.5% of MNT’s workforce were aged 45-54 whereas only 1.03% of CHI’s employees (an Inn in Ireland) belonged to this age category.

The age of the property

It is necessary to establish the year in which each of the ten properties opened or were acquired as this may affect the age composition of the workforce. For

the ten properties discussed in this section, the year of opening or acquisition is given in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 Year of opening or acquisition of the ten case study properties in HotelCo and location of these properties

Property:	Year opened (o)/acquired (a)	Location
NWI	2003 (o)	UK
MNT	1999 (a)	Ireland
LKI	1997 (o)	Ireland
KEH	1993 (o)	UK
GOH	1990 (a)	UK
CHI	1996 (o)	Ireland
BRH	1994 (a)	UK
CKI	1994 (o)	Ireland
BHI	2001 (a)	UK
BBH	1972 (a)	Ireland

(source: HotelCo Company History, 2006)

5.7. Conclusion

HotelCo is a hotel group with two primary brands: hotels and inns. The company operates in three countries, namely the Republic of Ireland (ROI), the UK and the USA, although all but three of the properties are located in the ROI and the UK. The chain is one of the fastest growing hotel chains in Europe and much of its expansion in this decade has been in the UK with the opening of a number of inns. An analysis of age related employee data for ten HotelCo properties, five in the ROI and five in the UK, revealed major differences between properties in the number and percentage of older workers employed. Furthermore, significant differences were found to exist between hotels and inns within the sample in terms of the number and percentage of older workers employed and according to whether the property was located in the ROI or UK.

Chapter 6. Findings

6.1. Introduction

This chapter will report on the major findings related to the research questions which are:

1. How can age discrimination in the workplace be explained?
2. What role do employment policies and practices play in the inclusion or exclusion of older workers?
3. What are managers' perceptions of older workers and how might these affect employment policies and practices?
4. How does an analysis of the accounts of employment given by older workers provide an understanding of age discrimination in the workplace?

The first research question was answered through an analysis of the literature pertaining to ageism and age discrimination with a focus on discrimination in the workplace. This was discussed ostensibly in Chapter 2 of the thesis. This research question will also be answered by an analysis of primary data collected in a survey and interviews conducted with older workers and Personnel and Training managers. Specifically, the second research question was answered through an analysis of literature on organizational employment policies and practices presented in Chapter 3 of the thesis. This research question will also be answered principally by an analysis of interviews with Personnel and Training managers but primary data from interviews with older workers and results from a survey of managers' perceptions of older workers will also be incorporated. The third research question will chiefly be answered through an analysis of results from a survey conducted with HotelCo managers regarding their perception of older workers and the fourth research question will be answered

mainly through an analysis of interviews held with a selection of older workers in ten HotelCo properties.

In order to establish managers' perceptions of older employees, a survey was undertaken. The survey used a self-administered questionnaire with a mixture of questions, both open and closed, although, for ease of data analysis, the majority of questions were closed. The questionnaire, together with a covering letter and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope, was sent to selected managers of HotelCo hotels in the UK and Ireland. These managers were selected because they represented a range of management from senior unit managers concerned with strategy making and implementation to departmental managers responsible for functional areas (such as Food and Beverage) and managers of "support" services such as Finance and Human Resource Management (in this organisation, the title "Personnel and Training Manager" was used).

6.2. Results of the survey

6.2.1. Respondent characteristics

In terms of the respondent's age, 71.4% were aged 25-34; 11.9% were 35-44; 11.9% were 16-24 and 4.8% were 45-54. There were no managers in the following age-bands: 55-64; 65-74 and 75 and over. Of the 42 respondents, two (4.8%) classified themselves as disabled. In terms of gender, 23 respondents were female (54.8%) and 19 respondents male (45.2%). As far as qualifications were concerned, 35.7% of respondents had at least one O level/CSE/GCSE (any grade) or leaving certificate at ordinary/standard level. 47.6% had at least one A level/AS level or leaving certificate at higher/honours level. 40.5% had an HND/HNC/Foundation degree or National diploma National Vocational Certificate. 52.4% of managers possessed an undergraduate degree whereas

11.9% had a postgraduate degree. Thirty one percent had other qualifications such as City and Guilds/BTEC/Edexcel qualifications and 2.4% said they did not possess any qualifications. Twelve managers (28.6%) worked at an Inn in the UK. The same number and percentage were employed in a hotel in the UK. Eleven (26.2%) managers worked in a hotel in Ireland. Six (14.3%) respondents were employed in an Inn in Ireland. One manager stated that he/she worked for a hotel and Inn in the UK although this was not an option. It is possible that this person had a specialist job which involved working at more than one hotel in the group. All forty two respondents categorised themselves as "White". Fourteen (33.3%) responses were completed by Personnel and Training managers, ten (23.8%) by Financial controllers/Accounts managers, five (11.9%) by General Managers, five (11.9%) by Food and Beverage managers, four (9.5%) by Assistant General Managers and one by a Front Office manager (2.4%), although Front Office Managers were not included in the sample. Three respondents (7.1%) did not state their job title. In terms of the length of time the respondent had been doing the job with the company (HotelCo), nineteen (45.2%) had been in the job for one year or less, seven (16.7%) for 13-24 months, two (4.8%) for 25-36 months, eight (19%) for 37-48 months and one (2.4%) for each of the following categories: 49-60 months, 61-72 months and 73-84 months. Three respondents (7.1%) did not answer the question.

6.2.2. Human resource and equality practices

Respondents were asked if they were responsible for a variety of HR practices from a prescribed list and the manager was able to select as many responsibilities as related to his/her job. Twenty five managers (59.5%) were responsible for pay or conditions of employment, thirty seven (88.1%) for recruitment or selection of employees, thirty nine (92.9%) for training of employees, seventeen (40.5%) for systems of payment , thirty one (73.8%) for handling grievances, thirty one (73.8%) for staffing or manpower planning, twenty four (57.1%) for equal opportunities, thirty four (81%) for health and

safety, thirty nine (92.9%) for performance appraisals and thirty three (73.6%) for performance management assessment/decisions regarding promotion. Three managers (7.1%) did not answer this question.

Managers were asked when filling vacancies, what special initiatives did they have to encourage applicants from different groups. This question was divided into special initiatives for the following groups: women returning to work after having children, members of ethnic minorities, older workers, disabled people and people who had been unemployed for 12 months or more. Special Initiatives mentioned (n>1) for women returning to work after having children included part-time work (n=2) and flexible work times (n=10). Initiatives for members of ethnic minorities included training (n=2) and being treated equally (n=3), although it is difficult to see how this could be considered a “special initiative”. For older workers, only one initiative was mentioned more than once: part-time hours (n=2). Two initiatives for disabled people were mentioned more than once: disabled-compliant new building (n=2) and facilities (n=2). As far as people who had been unemployed for 12 months or more was concerned, initiatives included special training schemes (n=5) and advertising positions in the Job Centre (n=3).

Where a response was given (41 of the 42 respondents), all managers stated that the workplace had a formal written policy on equal opportunities or managing diversity. This policy included Sex/Gender in 92.1% of the policies, Ethnicity in 89.5% of the policies, Religion in 91.9% of the policies, Marital Status in 89.2% of the policies, Disability in 91.9% of the policies, Age in 88.6% of the policies and Sexual Orientation in 84.2% of the policies. 14.6% of employees were informed of the policy in the letter of appointment and 26.8% informed via the notice board. Only 10% of employees were informed by the manager. The most popular methods were to inform staff by means of the staff handbook (95.1%) and during the induction programme (73.2%). Eighty two

percent of managers had not attempted to measure the effects of their equal opportunities or managing diversity policies. Of those who had not attempted to measure the effects, two managers stated that it was something dealt with by the HR department, two managers stated that the large volume of applicants made measurement difficult, two managers commented that there had been no issues and two managers stated that it would be a Head Office initiative.

6.2.3. Perceptions of “older” employees

Managers were asked to give their opinion on forty statements related to older employees which, for the purposes of this research, were all employees aged 50 and above. The respondent was required to tick one box only for each statement, corresponding to one of the following options: strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree and strongly disagree. The number and percentage relating to each statement is given in table 6.1.

Of the 40 statements in relation to Table 6.1, twenty statements were positive; twenty negative. However, Statement 14 referred to the likelihood of the company promoting older workers and so does not specifically relate to the qualities of older workers. Therefore, the mean for this statement has not been included in calculations to determine the overall score of managers' perceptions of older workers. From a critical reflection, it would also appear that some ambiguity exists in the interpretation of Statements 20, 24 and 40 and these have also been omitted from the final calculation. In relation to Statement 20, “They think before they act”, this could be considered as positive or negative. As far as Statement 24, “They are critical of younger workers” is concerned, the manager could believe this to be a positive or negative “quality”. In relation to Statement 40, “They are more likely to think before they act”, this is very similar to Statement 20 which is, in itself, ambiguous.

Table 6.1 Managers' perceptions of "older" employees

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Mode	Standard deviation	Missing
1	Older Workers are slow	0 (0%)	4 (9.5%)	9 (21.4%)	18 (42.9%)	11 (26.2%)	3.86	Disagree	.926	0 (0%)
2	They fail to keep up with changing methods of work	0 (0%)	6 (14.3%)	12 (28.6%)	16 (38.1%)	8 (19.0%)	3.62	Disagree	.962	0 (0%)
3	They are very productive employees	7 (16.7%)	25 (59.5%)	9 (21.4%)	1 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	3.90	Agree	.692	0 (0%)
4	They are unsure of themselves	0 (0%)	2 (4.8%)	8 (19%)	23 (54.8%)	9 (21.4%)	3.93	Disagree	.778	0 (0%)
5	They work well in teams	3 (7.1%)	28 (66.7%)	8 (19%)	2 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	3.78	Agree	.652	0 (0%)
6	They make many errors	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (19%)	20 (47.6%)	13 (31%)	4.12	Disagree	.652	1 (2.4%)
7	They are more reliable than younger workers	11 (26.2%)	15 (35.7%)	14 (33.3%)	2 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	3.83	Agree	.881	0 (0%)
8	They are only interested in putting in their hours	2 (4.8%)	9 (21.4%)	11 (26.2%)	15 (35.7%)	5 (11.9%)	3.29	Disagree	1.088	0 (0%)
9	They have no ambition	0 (0%)	2 (4.8%)	10 (23.8%)	19 (45.2%)	11 (26.2%)	3.93	Disagree	.838	0 (0%)
10	They are more confident	2 (4.8%)	20 (47.6%)	16 (38.1%)	4 (9.5%)	0 (0%)	3.48	Agree	.740	0 (0%)
11	They cannot supervise others well	0 (0%)	4 (9.5%)	6 (14.3%)	30 (71.4%)	2 (4.8%)	3.71	Disagree	.708	0 (0%)
12	They will not take on any additional responsibilities	0 (0%)	5 (11.9%)	10 (23.8%)	25 (59.5%)	2 (4.8%)	3.57	Disagree	.770	0 (0%)
13	They have good interpersonal communication skills	3 (7.1%)	28 (66.7%)	10 (23.8%)	1 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	3.79	Agree	.606	0 (0%)
14	They are less likely to be promoted in this company	0 (0%)	7 (16.7%)	12 (28.6%)	17 (40.5%)	6 (14.3%)	2.48	Disagree	.943	0 (0%)
15	They have higher levels of absenteeism	0 (0%)	2 (4.8%)	7 (16.7%)	24 (57.1%)	9 (21.4%)	3.95	Disagree	.764	0 (0%)
16	They are reliable	4 (9.5%)	32 (76.2%)	6 (14.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3.95	Agree	.492	0 (0%)
17	They just wait for retirement	0 (0%)	2 (4.8%)	14 (33.3%)	17 (40.5%)	8 (19%)	3.76	Disagree	.830	1 (2.4%)
18	They are interested in being trained	2 (4.8%)	25 (59.5%)	9 (21.4%)	6 (14.3%)	0 (0%)	3.55	Agree	.803	0 (0%)
19	They need longer rest periods more often	0 (0%)	3 (7.1%)	13 (31.0%)	23 (54.8%)	3 (7.1%)	3.62	Disagree	.731	0 (0%)
20	They think before they act	0 (0%)	23 (54.8%)	16 (38.1%)	3 (7.1%)	0 (0%)	3.48	Agree	.634	0 (0%)
21	They cannot concentrate	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (16.7%)	29 (69%)	6 (14.3%)	3.98	Disagree	.563	0 (0%)
22	They are interested more in security than job advancement	1 (2.4%)	20 (47.6%)	11 (26.2%)	9 (21.4%)	1 (2.4%)	2.74	Agree	.912	0 (0%)
23	They are better with customers	0 (0%)	20 (47.6%)	19 (45.2%)	3 (7.1%)	0 (0%)	3.40	Agree	.627	0 (0%)

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Mode	Standard deviation	Missing
24	They are critical of younger workers	1 (2.4%)	7 (16.7%)	16 (38.1%)	17 (40.5%)	1 (2.4%)	2.76	Disagree	.850	0 (0%)
25	They are more willing to change working hours to fit demands	0 (0%)	8 (19%)	23 (54.8%)	10 (23.8%)	1 (2.4%)	2.90	Neither Agree or Disagree	.726	0 (0%)
26	They need more time to learn more operations	0 (0%)	12 (28.6%)	9 (21.4%)	18 (42.9%)	3 (7.1%)	3.29	Disagree	.970	0 (0%)
27	They are not physically able to keep up with the work	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)	10 (23.8%)	27 (64.3%)	4 (9.5%)	3.81	Disagree	.634	0 (0%)
28	They have more work-relevant experience	2 (4.8%)	24 (57.1%)	13 (31.0%)	3 (7.1%)	0 (0%)	3.60	Agree	.701	0 (0%)
29	They are interested in technological change	0 (0%)	8 (19%)	25 (59.5%)	9 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	2.98	Neither Agree or Disagree	.643	0 (0%)
30	They dislike working under younger supervisors	1 (2.4%)	9 (21.4%)	19 (45.2%)	11 (26.2%)	2 (4.8%)	3.10	Neither Agree or Disagree	.878	0 (0%)
31	They resist new ways of doing things	0 (0%)	9 (21.4%)	13 (31.0%)	18 (42.9%)	2 (4.8%)	3.31	Disagree	.869	0 (0%)
32	They are more committed	3 (7.1%)	21 (50.0%)	15 (35.7%)	2 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	3.61	Agree	.703	1 (2.4%)
33	They are more effective in their job	0 (0%)	8 (19.0%)	30 (71.4%)	4 (9.5%)	0 (0%)	3.10	Neither Agree or Disagree	.532	0 (0%)
34	They are conscientious	2 (4.8%)	27 (64.3%)	11 (26.2%)	2 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	3.69	Agree	.643	0 (0%)
35	They are difficult to work with	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)	9 (21.4%)	28 (66.7%)	4 (9.5%)	3.83	Disagree	.621	0 (0%)
36	They are loyal to the organization	1 (2.4%)	24 (57.1%)	15 (35.7%)	2 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	3.57	Agree	.630	0 (0%)
37	They are able to grasp new ideas	1 (2.4%)	19 (45.2%)	20 (47.6%)	2 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	3.45	Neither Agree or Disagree	.633	0 (0%)
38	They learn quickly	0 (0%)	10 (23.8%)	30 (71.4%)	1 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	3.22	Neither Agree or Disagree	.475	1 (2.4%)
39	They have limited skills	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (23.8%)	26 (61.9%)	6 (14.3%)	3.90	Disagree	.617	0 (0%)
40	They are more likely to think before they act	0 (0%)	24 (57.1%)	15 (35.7%)	2 (4.8%)	1 (2.4%)	3.48	Agree	.707	0 (0%)

Therefore, calculations are based on 36 statements, 17 Positive and 19 Negative (see Table 6.2). The total score will be calculated from the mean of the 36 statements. An overall figure of 3 would represent an overall position which is neither favourable nor unfavourable with respect of managers' perceptions of older workers. A figure above 3 would represent an overall position which is favourable with respect of managers' perceptions of older workers (with a maximum score of 5). A figure below 3 would represent an overall position which is unfavourable with respect of managers' perceptions of older workers (with a minimum score of 1). The rationale for calculating the mean for all statements is to present an overall picture regarding the measure of central tendency to determine, overall, whether managers' views of older employees are positive, neutral or negative. The mean of the 36 statements (1 to 40 excluding 14, 20, 24 and 40) is 3.6 with a standard deviation of 0.35. This would suggest that managers, overall, possess a rather positive disposition towards older workers.

Table 6.2 Means for statements 1-40

Statement Nr:	Mean:	Positive	Negative
1	3.86		✓
2	3.62		✓
3	3.90	✓	
4	3.93		✓
5	3.78	✓	
6	4.12		✓
7	3.83	✓	
8	3.29		✓
9	3.93		✓
10	3.48	✓	
11	3.71		✓
12	3.57		✓
13	3.79	✓	
14	2.48		✓
15	3.95		✓
16	3.95	✓	
17	3.76		✓
18	3.55	✓	
19	3.62		✓
20	3.48		✓
21	3.98		✓

Statement Nr:	Mean:	Positive	Negative
22	2.74		✓
23	3.40	✓	
24	2.76		✓
25	2.90	✓	
26	3.29		✓
27	3.81		✓
28	3.60	✓	
29	2.98	✓	
30	3.10		✓
31	3.31		✓
32	3.61	✓	
33	3.10	✓	
34	3.69	✓	
35	3.83		✓
36	3.57	✓	
37	3.45	✓	
38	3.22	✓	
39	3.90		✓
40	3.48	✓	

A summary of the results for the forty statements about older workers reveal that at least two thirds of HotelCo managers strongly agreed or agreed with the following statements: They (older workers) are very productive employees, they work well in teams, they have good interpersonal communication skills, they are reliable and they are conscientious. In addition, between 50% and 65% of managers strongly agreed or agreed that older employees are more confident, they are interested in being trained, they are interested more in security than job advancement, they have more work-related experience, they are more committed, they are loyal to the organization and they are more likely to think before they act. At least two thirds of HotelCo managers strongly disagreed or disagreed with the following statements: older workers are slow, they are unsure of themselves, they make many errors, they have no ambition, they cannot supervise others well, they have higher levels of absenteeism, they cannot concentrate, they are not physically able to keep up with the work, they are difficult to work with and they have limited skills. In addition, between 50% and 65% of managers strongly disagreed or disagreed that older workers fail to keep up with changing methods of work, they will not take on any additional

responsibilities, they need longer rest periods more often and they need more time to learn more operations.

In order to establish whether significant differences existed between male and female managers in terms of their perceptions of older employees, cross-tabulation of data was performed. This procedure resulted in the data contained in Table 6.3. Furthermore, in order to give an overall score for males and females in terms of their perceptions of older workers, the mean of each male and female was calculated and the means of all females and males was subsequently established. Thus, for males the mean score of all means for the 36 statements was 3.66 with a standard deviation of 0.33; for females 3.52 with a standard deviation of 0.36. Similarly, in order to establish whether significant differences exist between a manager's age and their perceptions of older employees, cross-tabulation of data was performed. The age groups were: 16-24 (d), 25-34(c), 35-44(b), 45-54(a), 55-64, 65-74 and 75 and above. This procedure resulted in the data contained in Table 6.4 (frequencies) and Table 6.5 (percentages). The mean score of all means for the 36 statements in relation to age groups was 3.74 for the 16-24 group with a standard deviation of 0.39; 3.55 for the 25-34 group with a standard deviation of 0.34; 3.49 for the 35-44 group with a standard deviation of 0.19 and 3.74 for the 45-54 age group with a standard deviation of 0.02. The tables do not contain data related to managers in the 55-64, 65-74 and 75 and above age groups as the sample did not contain any managers in these groups. Finally, in order to establish whether significant differences exist between managers in the Republic of Ireland and managers in the UK with respect to their perceptions of older workers, cross-tabulation of data was performed and the results displayed in Table 6.6. The mean score of all means for the 36 statements in relation to managers in the UK was 3.75 with a standard deviation of 0.29; for managers in the ROI the mean was 3.36 with a standard deviation of 0.31.

In relation to the cross-tabulation of statistics pertaining to perceptions of older employees (from the 36 statements) and gender, an independent t-test was calculated resulting in a t score of -1.296, a df score of 40 and a p score of .202. Therefore, as the p score is above 0.05, there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of their perceptions of older employees. In terms of perceptions of older employees, again related to the 36 statements, and the location of the property (either the ROI or UK), an independent t-test was also calculated resulting in a t score of -4.051, a df score of 39 and a p score of .000. Therefore, as the p score is <0.05 , there is a significant difference between UK-based managers and ROI-based managers in terms of their perceptions of older employees. In order to establish whether significant differences exist in terms of respondent age-groups and perceptions of older employees, a one way ANOVA was calculated resulting in a df score of 3, an F score of 1.072 and a p score of .373. Therefore, as the p score is above 0.05, there is no significant difference between different age-groups in terms of their perceptions of older employees.

Table 6.3 Managers' perceptions of "older" employees according to gender

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree or Disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Missing
		Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
1	Older Workers are slow	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (8.7%)	2 (10.5%)	4 (17.4%)	5 (26.3%)	12 (52.2%)	6 (31.6%)	5 (21.7%)	6 (31.6%)	0 (0%)
2	They fail to keep up with changing methods of work	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (13.0%)	3 (15.8%)	6 (26.1%)	6 (31.6%)	10 (43.5%)	6 (31.6%)	4 (17.4%)	4 (21.1%)	0 (0%)
3	They are very productive employees	4 (17.4%)	3 (15.8%)	13 (56.5%)	12 (63.2%)	6 (26.1%)	3 (15.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
4	They are unsure of themselves	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	7 (30.4%)	1 (5.3%)	9 (39.1%)	14 (73.7%)	6 (26.1%)	3 (15.8%)	0 (0%)
5	They work well in teams	2 (8.7%)	1 (5.6%)	14 (60.9%)	14 (77.8%)	6 (26.1%)	2 (11.1%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
6	They make many errors	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (17.4%)	4 (22.2%)	12 (52.2%)	8 (44.4%)	7 (30.4%)	6 (33.3%)	1 (2.4%)
7	They are more reliable than younger workers	7 (30.4%)	4 (21.1%)	7 (30.4%)	8 (42.1%)	8 (34.8%)	6 (31.6%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
8	They are only interested in putting in their hours	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	3 (13.0%)	6 (31.6%)	8 (33.8%)	3 (15.8%)	7 (30.4%)	8 (42.1%)	3 (13.0%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)
9	They have no ambition	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	7 (30.4%)	3 (15.8%)	10 (43.5%)	9 (47.4%)	5 (21.7%)	6 (31.6%)	0 (0%)
10	They are more confident	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	9 (39.1%)	11 (57.9%)	11 (47.8%)	5 (26.3%)	2 (8.7%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
11	They cannot supervise others well	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	3 (15.8%)	4 (17.4%)	2 (10.5%)	16 (69.6%)	14 (73.7%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
12	They will not take on any additional responsibilities	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (13.0%)	2 (10.5%)	6 (26.1%)	4 (21.1%)	12 (52.2%)	13 (68.4%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
13	They have good interpersonal communication skills	1 (4.3%)	2 (10.5%)	12 (52.2%)	16 (84.2%)	9 (39.1%)	1 (5.3%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
14	They are less likely to be promoted in this company	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (17.4%)	3 (15.8%)	6 (26.1%)	6 (31.6%)	10 (43.5%)	7 (36.8%)	3 (13.0%)	3 (15.8%)	0 (0%)
15	They have higher levels of absenteeism	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	6 (26.1%)	1 (5.3%)	10 (43.5%)	14 (73.7%)	5 (21.7%)	4 (21.1%)	0 (0%)
16	They are reliable	2 (8.7%)	2 (10.5%)	15 (65.2%)	17 (89.5%)	6 (26.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree or Disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Missing
		Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
17	They just wait for retirement	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	9 (39.1%)	5 (27.8%)	9 (39.1%)	8 (44.4%)	3 (13.0%)	5 (27.8%)	1 (2.4%)
18	They are interested in being trained	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	10 (43.5%)	15 (78.9%)	8 (34.8%)	8 (34.8%)	4 (17.4%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
19	They need longer rest periods more often	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	2 (10.5%)	8 (34.8%)	5 (26.3%)	13 (56.5%)	10 (52.6%)	1 (4.3%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)
20	They think before they act	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (43.5%)	13 (68.4%)	11 (47.8%)	5 (26.3%)	2 (8.7%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
21	They cannot concentrate	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (21.7%)	2 (10.5%)	15 (65.2%)	14 (73.7%)	3 (13.0%)	3 (15.8%)	0 (0%)
22	They are interested more in security than job advancement	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	11 (47.8%)	9 (47.4%)	6 (26.1%)	5 (26.3%)	4 (17.4%)	5 (26.3%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
23	They are better with customers	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (39.1%)	11 (57.9%)	11 (47.8%)	8 (42.1%)	3 (13.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
24	They are critical of younger workers	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	4 (17.4%)	3 (15.8%)	9 (39.1%)	7 (36.8%)	8 (34.8%)	9 (47.4%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
25	They are more willing to change working hours to fit demands	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (13.0%)	5 (26.3%)	16 (69.6%)	7 (36.8%)	3 (13.0%)	7 (36.8%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
26	They need more time to learn more operations	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (17.4%)	8 (42.1%)	7 (30.4%)	2 (10.5%)	10 (43.5%)	8 (42.1%)	2 (8.7%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)
27	They are not physically able to keep up with the work	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.3%)	6 (26.1%)	4 (21.1%)	14 (60.9%)	13 (68.4%)	3 (13.0%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)
28	They have more work-relevant experience	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	12 (52.2%)	12 (63.2%)	8 (34.8%)	5 (26.3%)	2 (8.7%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
29	They are interested in technological change	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	7 (36.8%)	17 (73.9%)	8 (42.1%)	5 (21.7%)	4 (21.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
30	They dislike working under younger supervisors	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	4 (17.4%)	5 (26.3%)	14 (60.9%)	5 (26.3%)	3 (13.0%)	8 (42.1%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)
31	They resist new ways of doing things	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (26.1%)	3 (15.8%)	9 (39.1%)	4 (21.1%)	6 (26.1%)	12 (63.2%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
32	They are more committed	3 (13.6%)	0 (0%)	9 (40.9%)	12 (63.2%)	9 (40.9%)	6 (31.6%)	1 (4.5%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)
33	They are more effective in their job	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (13.0%)	5 (26.3%)	18 (78.3%)	12 (63.2%)	2 (8.7%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
34	They are conscientious	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	13 (56.5%)	14 (73.7%)	7 (30.4%)	4 (21.1%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree or Disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Missing
		Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
35	They are difficult to work with	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	8 (34.8%)	1 (5.3%)	11 (47.8%)	17 (89.5%)	3 (13.0%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)
36	They are loyal to the organization	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	11 (47.8%)	13 (68.4%)	10 (43.5%)	5 (26.3%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
37	They are able to grasp new ideas	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	6 (26.1%)	13 (68.4%)	14 (60.9%)	6 (31.6%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
38	They learn quickly	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (13.0%)	7 (38.9%)	19 (82.6%)	11 (61.1%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)
39	They have limited skills	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (30.4%)	3 (15.8%)	12 (52.2%)	14 (73.7%)	4 (17.4%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)
40	They are more likely to think before they act	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (47.8%)	13 (68.4%)	10 (43.5%)	5 (26.3%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.3%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Table 6.4 Managers' perceptions of "older" employees according to the manager's age (frequencies)

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree				Agree				Neither Agree or Disagree				Disagree				Strongly disagree				Missing		
		a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d			
1	Older Workers are slow	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	9	0	1	4	12	1	1	0	6	4	0	0	
2	They fail to keep up with changing methods of work	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	2	9	1	2	2	10	2	0	0	6	2	0	0	
3	They are very productive employees	0	0	4	3	2	4	17	2	0	1	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	They are unsure of themselves	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	1	2	3	15	3	0	0	2	6	1	0	0	
5	They work well in teams	0	0	2	1	1	4	19	4	0	1	7	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	They make many errors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	1	1	3	14	2	0	1	10	2	1	0	1
7	They are more reliable than younger workers	0	2	7	2	2	1	11	1	0	2	10	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	They are only interested in putting in their hours	0	0	2	0	1	1	7	0	0	1	9	1	1	3	7	4	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
9	They have no ambition	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	8	1	2	3	13	1	0	1	7	3	0	0	0
10	They are more confident	0	0	2	0	2	4	12	2	0	1	13	2	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	They cannot supervise others well	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	5	0	1	4	21	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree				Agree				Neither Agree or Disagree				Disagree				Strongly disagree				Missing			
		a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d				
12	They will not take on any additional responsibilities	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	9	1	2	4	15	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
13	They have good interpersonal communication skills	0	0	3	0	2	3	19	4	0	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	They are less likely to be promoted in this company	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	1	0	10	1	1	1	4	9	3	0	1	4	1	4	1	0
15	They have higher levels of absenteeism	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	6	1	2	2	17	3	3	0	1	7	1	1	7	1
16	They are reliable	1	0	3	0	1	4	22	5	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	They just wait for retirement	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	11	1	2	1	12	2	2	0	1	5	2	1	5	2
18	They are interested in being trained	0	0	0	2	2	1	20	2	0	2	7	0	0	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	They need longer rest periods more often	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	12	0	2	4	14	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
20	They think before they act	0	0	0	0	2	3	15	3	0	2	12	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	They cannot concentrate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	2	4	20	3	0	1	3	2	0	1	3	2
22	They are interested more in security than job advancement	0	0	1	0	1	4	12	3	0	0	11	0	1	1	5	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
23	They are better with customers	0	0	0	0	1	3	15	1	1	1	14	3	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	They are critical of younger workers	0	1	0	0	0	1	6	0	0	1	11	4	2	2	12	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
25	They are more willing to change working hours to fit demands	0	0	0	0	2	0	5	1	0	4	16	3	0	0	0	9	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
26	They need more time to learn more operations	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	1	0	1	8	0	2	2	10	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	0
27	They are not physically able to keep up with the work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	9	0	2	3	18	4	0	0	1	3	0	1	3	0
28	They have more work-relevant experience	0	1	1	0	2	3	17	2	0	0	11	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	They are interested in technological change	0	0	0	0	1	0	7	0	1	3	16	5	0	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	They dislike working under younger supervisors	0	1	0	0	0	1	7	1	0	1	14	4	2	2	1	8	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
31	They resist new ways of doing things	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	1	0	1	12	0	2	2	10	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
32	They are more committed	0	0	1	2	2	2	16	1	0	1	12	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
33	They are more effective in their job	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	1	1	2	23	4	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Disagree				Disagree				disagree				g	
	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d		
34	0	0	2	0	2	3	19	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
35	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	6	0	2	0
36	0	0	1	0	2	4	15	3	0	1	12	2	0	0
37	0	0	1	0	2	4	10	3	0	1	17	2	0	0
38	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	2	0	4	23	3	0	1
39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	8	0	2	0
40	0	0	0	0	2	3	17	2	0	2	11	2	0	0

Table 6.5 Managers' perceptions of "older" employees according to the manager's age (percentages)

Nr.	Statement	Strongly Agree (%)				Agree (%)				Neither Agree or Disagree (%)				Disagree (%)				Strongly disagree (%)					
		a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d		
1	Older Workers are slow	0	0	0	0	0	20	10	0	0	30	0	0	50	80	40	20	50	0	20	80	0	
2	They fail to keep up with changing methods of work	0	0	0	0	0	20	16.7	0	0	40	20	30	100	40	33.3	40	0	0	20	40	0	
3	They are very productive employees	0	0	13.3	60	100	80	56.7	40	0	20	26.7	0	0	0	3.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	They are unsure of themselves	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.7	0	0	23.3	20	0	100	60	50	60	0	40	20	20	0	
5	They work well in teams	0	0	6.7	20	100	80	63.3	80	0	20	23.3	0	0	0	6.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	They make many errors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	100	100	60	46.7	40	0	20	33.3	40	0	
7	They are more reliable than younger workers	0	40	23.3	40	100	20	36.7	20	0	40	33.3	40	0	0	6.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	They are only interested in putting in their hours	0	0	6.7	0	50	20	23.3	0	0	20	30	20	50	60	23.3	80	0	0	16.7	0	0	0
9	They have no ambition	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.7	0	0	26.7	20	20	100	60	43.3	20	0	20	23.3	60	0	0
10	They are more confident	0	0	6.7	0	100	80	40	40	0	20	43.3	40	0	0	10	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	They cannot supervise others well	0	0	0	0	50	0	6.7	20	0	20	16.7	0	50	80	70	80	0	0	6.7	0	0	0
12	They will not take on any additional responsibilities	0	0	0	0	0	20	13.3	0	0	30	20	100	80	50	50	80	0	0	6.7	0	0	0

Nr.	Statement	Strongly Agree (%)				Agree (%)				Neither Agree or Disagree (%)				Disagree (%)				Strongly disagree (%)				
		a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	
13	They have good interpersonal communication skills	0	0	10	0	100	60	63.3	80	0	40	26.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	They are less likely to be promoted in this company	0	0	0	0	0	0	23.3	0	50	0	33.3	20	50	80	30	60	0	20	13.3	20	0
15	They have higher levels of absenteeism	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	0	0	0	20	20	100	40	56.7	60	0	20	23.3	20	0
16	They are reliable	5	0	10	0	50	80	73.3	100	0	20	16.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	They just wait for retirement	0	0	0	0	0	20	3.4	0	0	40	37.9	20	100	20	41.4	40	0	20	17.2	40	0
18	They are interested in being trained	0	0	0	40	100	20	66.7	40	0	40	23.3	0	0	40	10	20	0	0	0	0	0
19	They need longer rest periods more often	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.3	40	0	20	40	0	100	80	46.7	60	0	0	10	0	0
20	They think before they act	0	0	0	0	100	60	50	60	0	40	40	40	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	They cannot concentrate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23.3	0	100	80	66.7	60	0	20	10	40	0
22	They are interested more in security than job advancement	0	0	3.3	0	50	80	40	60	0	0	36.7	0	50	20	16.7	40	0	0	3.3	0	0
23	They are better with customers	0	0	0	0	50	60	50	20	50	20	46.7	60	0	20	3.3	20	0	0	0	0	0
24	They are critical of younger workers	0	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	0	20	36.7	80	100	40	40	20	0	0	3.3	0	0
25	They are more willing to change working hours to fit demands	0	0	0	0	100	0	16.7	20	0	80	53.3	60	0	0	30	20	0	20	0	0	0
26	They need more time to learn more operations	0	0	0	0	0	40	30	20	0	20	26.7	0	100	40	33.3	80	0	0	10	0	0
27	They are not physically able to keep up with the work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	20	30	0	100	60	60	80	0	20	10	0	0
28	They have more work-relevant experience	0	20	3.3	0	100	60	56.7	40	0	0	36.7	40	0	20	3.3	20	0	0	0	0	0
29	They are interested in technological change	0	0	0	0	50	0	23.3	0	50	60	53.3	100	0	40	23.3	0	0	0	0	0	0

Nr.	Statement	Strongly Agree (%)				Agree (%)				Neither Agree or Disagree (%)				Disagree (%)				Strongly disagree (%)			
		a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d
30	They dislike working under younger supervisors	0	20	0	0	0	20	23.3	20	0	20	46.7	80	100	20	26.7	0	0	20	3.3	0
31	They resist new ways of doing things	0	0	0	0	40	20	20	20	0	20	40	0	100	40	33.3	80	0	0	6.7	0
32	They are more committed	0	0	3.3	40	100	50	53.3	20	0	25	40	40	0	25	3.3	0	0	0	0	0
33	They are more effective in their job	0	0	0	0	50	40	13.3	20	50	40	76.7	80	0	20	10	0	0	0	0	0
34	They are conscientious	0	0	6.7	0	100	60	63.3	60	0	40	23.3	40	0	0	6.7	0	0	0	0	0
35	They are difficult to work with	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.3	0	0	60	20	0	100	40	66.7	80	0	0	10	20
36	They are loyal to the organization	0	0	3.3	0	100	80	50	60	0	20	40	40	0	0	6.7	0	0	0	0	0
37	They are able to grasp new ideas	0	0	3.3	0	100	80	33.3	60	0	20	56.7	40	0	0	6.7	0	0	0	0	0
38	They learn quickly	0	0	0	0	100	20	20	40	0	80	76.7	60	0	0	3.3	0	0	0	0	0
39	They have limited skills	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	26.7	0	100	40	63.3	60	0	20	10	40
40	They are more likely to think before they act	0	0	0	0	100	60	56.7	40	0	40	36.7	40	0	0	3.3	20	0	0	3.3	0

Table 6.6 Managers' perceptions of "older" employees according to location

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree			Agree			Neither Agree or Disagree			Disagree			Strongly disagree			Missing
		ROI	UK		ROI	UK		ROI	UK		ROI	UK		ROI	UK		
1	Older Workers are slow	0 (0%)	0	3 (17.6%)	1 (4.0%)	5 (29.4%)	4 (16.0%)	9 (52.9%)	9 (36.0%)	0 (0%)	11 (44.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	
2	They fail to keep up with changing methods of work	0 (0%)	0	5 (29.4%)	1 (4.0%)	7 (41.2%)	5 (20.0%)	5 (29.4%)	11 (44.0%)	0 (0%)	8 (32.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	
3	They are very productive employees	0 (0%)	7 (28.0%)	10 (58.9%)	15 (60.0%)	6 (35.3%)	3 (12.0%)	1 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	
4	They are unsure of themselves	0 (0%)	0	1 (5.9%)	1 (4.0%)	5 (29.4%)	3 (12.0%)	9 (52.9%)	14 (56.0%)	2 (11.8%)	7 (28.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	
5	They work well in teams	0 (0%)	0	3 (76.5%)	15 (62.5%)	2 (11.8%)	6 (25.0%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)	

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree or Disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Missing
		ROI	UK	ROI	UK	ROI	UK	ROI	UK	ROI	UK	
6	They make many errors	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (17.6%)	5 (20.8%)	11 (64.7%)	9 (37.5%)	3 (17.6%)	10 (41.7%)	1 (2.4%)
7	They are more reliable than younger workers	5 (29.4%)	6 (24.0%)	6 (35.3%)	9 (36.0%)	4 (23.5%)	10 (40.0%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0%)
8	They are only interested in putting in their hours	1 (5.9%)	1 (4.0%)	5 (29.4%)	4 (16.0%)	5 (29.4%)	6 (24.0%)	6 (35.3%)	9 (36.0%)	0 (0%)	5 (20.0%)	0 (0%)
9	They have no ambition	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0%)	5 (29.4%)	5 (20.0%)	8 (47.1%)	11 (44.0%)	2 (11.8%)	9 (36.0%)	0 (0%)
10	They are more confident	0 (0%)	2 (8.0%)	7 (41.2%)	13 (52.0%)	7 (41.2%)	9 (36.0%)	3 (17.6%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
11	They cannot supervise others well	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (11.8%)	2 (8.0%)	3 (17.6%)	3 (12.0%)	12 (70.6%)	18 (72.0%)	0 (0%)	2 (8.0%)	0 (0%)
12	They will not take on any additional responsibilities	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (29.4%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (23.5%)	6 (24.0%)	8 (47.1%)	17 (68.0%)	0 (0%)	2 (8.0%)	0 (0%)
13	They have good interpersonal communication skills	0 (0%)	3 (12.0%)	12 (70.6%)	16 (64.0%)	4 (23.5%)	6 (24.0%)	1 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
14	They are less likely to be promoted in this company	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (23.5%)	3 (12.0%)	4 (23.5%)	8 (32.0%)	8 (47.1%)	9 (36.0%)	1 (5.9%)	5 (20.0%)	0 (0%)
15	They have higher levels of absenteeism	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (23.5%)	3 (12.0%)	9 (52.9%)	15 (60.0%)	2 (11.8%)	7 (28.0%)	0 (0%)
16	They are reliable	1 (5.9%)	3 (12.0%)	15 (88.2%)	17 (68.0%)	1 (5.9%)	5 (20.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
17	They just wait for retirement	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (12.5%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (31.3%)	9 (36.0%)	8 (50.0%)	9 (36.0%)	1 (6.3%)	7 (28.0%)	1 (2.4%)
18	They are interested in being trained	0 (0%)	2 (8.0%)	8 (47.1%)	17 (68.0%)	3 (17.6%)	6 (24.0%)	6 (35.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
19	They need longer rest periods more often	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.9%)	2 (8.0%)	7 (41.2%)	6 (24.0%)	8 (47.1%)	15 (60.0%)	1 (5.9%)	2 (8.0%)	0 (0%)
20	They think before they act	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (41.2%)	16 (64.0%)	8 (47.1%)	8 (32.0%)	2 (11.8%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
21	They cannot concentrate	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (17.6%)	4 (16.0%)	13 (76.5%)	16 (64.0%)	1 (5.9%)	5 (20.0%)	0 (0%)
22	They are interested more in security than job advancement	0 (0%)	1 (4.0%)	12 (70.6%)	8 (32.0%)	3 (17.6%)	8 (32.0%)	2 (11.8%)	7 (28.0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)
23	They are better with customers	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (58.9%)	10 (40.0%)	7 (41.2%)	12 (48.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (12.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree or Disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Missing
		ROI	UK	ROI	UK	ROI	UK	ROI	UK	ROI	UK	
24	They are critical of younger workers	1 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	6 (35.3%)	1 (4.0%)	5 (29.4%)	11 (44.0%)	5 (29.4%)	12 (48.0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)
25	They are more willing to change working hours to fit demands	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (11.8%)	6 (24.0%)	7 (41.2%)	16 (64.0%)	7 (41.2%)	3 (12.0%)	1 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0%)
26	They need more time to learn more operations	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (52.9%)	3 (12.0%)	3 (17.6%)	6 (24.0%)	5 (29.4%)	13 (52.0%)	0 (0%)	3 (12.0%)	0 (0%)
27	They are not physically able to keep up with the work	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (4.0%)	5 (29.4%)	5 (20.0%)	12 (70.6%)	15 (60.0%)	0 (0%)	4 (16.0%)	0 (0%)
28	They have more work-relevant experience	2 (11.8%)	0 (0%)	8 (47.1%)	16 (64.0%)	6 (35.3%)	7 (28.0%)	1 (5.9%)	2 (8.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
29	They are interested in technological change	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.9%)	7 (28.0%)	9 (52.9%)	16 (64.0%)	7 (41.2%)	2 (8.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
30	They dislike working under younger supervisors	1 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	6 (35.3%)	3 (12.0%)	6 (35.3%)	13 (52.0%)	3 (17.6%)	8 (32.0%)	1 (5.9%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)
31	They resist new ways of doing things	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (41.2%)	2 (8.0%)	5 (29.4%)	8 (32.0%)	5 (29.4%)	13 (52.0%)	0 (0%)	2 (8.0%)	0 (0%)
32	They are more committed	1 (6.3%)	2 (8.0%)	6 (37.5%)	15 (60.0%)	8 (50.0%)	7 (28.0%)	1 (6.3%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)
33	They are more effective in their job	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (23.5%)	4 (16.0%)	10 (58.9%)	20 (80.0%)	3 (17.6%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
34	They are conscientious	0 (0%)	2 (8.0%)	11 (64.7%)	16 (64.0%)	4 (23.5%)	7 (28.0%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
35	They are difficult to work with	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (35.3%)	3 (12.0%)	10 (58.9%)	18 (72.0%)	0 (0%)	4 (16.0%)	0 (0%)
36	They are loyal to the organization	0 (0%)	1 (4.0%)	10 (58.9%)	14 (56.0%)	5 (29.4%)	10 (40.0%)	2 (11.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
37	They are able to grasp new ideas	0 (0%)	1 (4.0%)	5 (29.4%)	14 (56.0%)	11 (64.7%)	9 (36.0%)	1 (5.9%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
38	They learn quickly	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6.3%)	9 (36.0)	14 (87.5%)	16 (64.0%)	1 (6.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)
39	They have limited skills	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (29.4%)	5 (20.0%)	10 (58.9%)	16 (64.0%)	2 (11.8%)	4 (16.0%)	0 (0%)
40	They are more likely to think before they act	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (47.1%)	16 (64.0%)	8 (47.1%)	7 (28.0%)	1 (5.9%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.0%)	0 (0%)

40.5% of managers thought that all jobs would be suitable for older employees and 11.9% stated that most positions would be suitable. The only other response where $n > 1$, was “accounts” ($n=2$). Other responses included guest relations, maintenance, accounts, restaurant, purchasing and switchboard. Of managers who gave a response to the question “Why would these jobs be suited to older employees?” ($n=25$), seven stated that the job was not as physically demanding, two commented that there should be no reason why older employees couldn’t do the job and two respondents stated “why wouldn’t they”. There were a number of responses where $n=1$ including: “hours often suit”, “they are challenging job roles and require experience” and “ease of training”. Of those giving a response to the question “What type of jobs in this hotel would not be suitable for older employees?”, ($n=28$), nine stated “none”, three stated that it “depends on fitness level and health”, three “accommodation”, two “kitchen porter”, two “any job involving heavy manual labour” and two “kitchen porter and night porter”. Other responses where $n=1$ included kitchen, receptionist, waitress and sales. Of those giving a response to this question ($n=12$), four managers stated that “the physical element of the job can be exhausting” and two respondents mentioned that older employees would be “prone to injury”. Other responses where $n=1$ included “lifting required”, “working times” and “high stress”.

Just under three fifths of managers categorised an “older” employee as a person above the age of 55. Almost a quarter believed an “older” employee to be a person above the age of 65. Two managers stated a person above the age of 45 to be “old” and one manager a person above the age of 75. Four managers answered “none of the above”.

6.2.4. Perceptions of age discrimination in the workplace

Most (57.2%) respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “In the hotel industry employers aren’t interested in employing or promoting people over the age of 50” with 42.9% disagreeing and 14.3% strongly disagreeing. 16.7% neither agreed nor disagreed; 21.4% agreed and 4.8% strongly agreed with the statement. 73.8% of managers stated that they had not been discouraged from applying for a job because of wording in an advert that contained or hinted at an age range; 26.2% stated that they had. Of those stating an opinion ($n=40$), 62.5% of managers believed that recruitment advertising did not encourage older workers to apply for jobs whereas 32.5% thought it did. One person stated that recruitment advertising encouraged everyone and one person stated that it depended on the position. 69% of managers stated that they had never felt discriminated against because of their age in an interview whereas 28.6% stated they had. One person (2.4%) commented that they had “Not knowingly” ever felt discriminated against.

6.3. Results of the interviews

6.3.1. Introduction

This section will report the findings of interviews which took place with two groups of individuals: a selection of employees aged 50 and above in HotelCo properties in Ireland and the UK (twenty three in total) and a selection of Personnel and Training managers of HotelCo in Ireland and the UK (ten in total). The characteristics pertaining to employees are given in Table 6.7. The names are fictitious but all other characteristics are true.

Table 6.7. The characteristics of employees in ten HotelCo properties

Property Label	Type of Property	Country	Number	Female	Male	Ethnicity
BBH	Hotel	ROI	3	2 Janet Liz	1 Mike	3 white
BHI	Inn	UK	3	1 Margaret	2 John Peter	3 white
CKI	Inn	ROI	None	0	0	0
BRH	Hotel	UK	3	1 Sue	2 Paul Jim	2 white 1 black (Paul)
CHI	Inn	ROI	3	0	3 Bob Dave Tim	3 white
GOH	Hotel	UK	2	1 Gwen	1 Nick	2 white
KEH	Hotel	UK	2	2 Alison Fiona	0	2 white
LKI	Inn	ROI	2	2 Kath Ann	0	2 white
MNT	Hotel	ROI	3	1 Karen	2 Eddie Mark	3 white
NWI	Inn	UK	2	1 Helen	1 Philip	2 white
TOTAL			23	11	12	22 white 1 black

The characteristics pertaining to Personnel and Training managers is given in Table 6.8. As is the case with employees, the names are fictitious but all other characteristics are true.

Table 6.8 Characteristics of Personnel and Training managers

Property Label	Type of Property	Name	Country	Ethnicity
BBH	Hotel	Louise	ROI	White
BHI	Inn	Debbie	UK	White
CKI	Inn	Emily	ROI	White
BRH	Hotel	Angie	UK	White
CHI	Inn	Mary	ROI	White
GOH	Hotel	Trish	UK	White
KEH	Hotel	Paula	UK	White
LKI	Inn	Rita	ROI	White
MNT	Hotel	Sally	ROI	White
NWI	Inn	Judy	UK	White

6.3. 2.Older Workers' views on employment in hotels and inns (ROI & UK)

6.3.2.1. Nature and duration of employment

Older employees worked in a variety of positions. These included: credit control (Janet), cleaning (Mike, Jim), housekeeping (Liz, Helen), portering (Paul, Dave, Nick, Eddie), cheffing (John, Fiona), waitering (Gwen, Kath, Alison), purchasing (Ann), maintenance (Peter, Philip) and Conferencing and Banqueting (Mark).

Before starting work at the property, employees held a variety of positions in a range of companies and industries. These included a finance company (Janet), a chocolate factory (Liz), a renovation firm (Bob), the Inland Revenue (Paul), a construction company (Dave), a special needs children's teaching unit (Kath), in a canteen of a broadcasting company (Karen), an English teacher (Alison) and a tailor (Mark).

According to the employees, most worked full-time (e.g. Janet, Mike, Liz, Margaret, John, Peter, Jim, Nick, Ann, Fiona, Eddie, Mark, Helen, Philip) and the minority part-time (e.g. Sue, Tim, Gwen, Alison). Flexible working patterns were found in both. For example, Liz stated that she started work early in the day and finished early. This suited her. Tim worked three mornings a week and flexibility was important as "I'm not interested in a full-time job". Flexible working

hours suited Gwen because of family commitments whereas Ann worked full-time and wanted to work full-time as “I don’t have any family, so it suits me”. Eddie considered part-time work to be particularly suitable for married women.

Although the hospitality industry has a reputation for high levels of labour turnover, many older employees had worked in their respective units for some considerable time. In one Irish hotel, BBH, of three older employees interviewed, one had worked in the same hotel for 14 years, one 16 years and the third 20 years. In another Irish hotel, MNT, the three older employees who were interviewed had worked in the hotel even longer: 17 years, 33 years and 36 years respectively. The picture was very different in the Inns. In one Inn, CHI, the three older employees interviewed had worked in the hotel for 5 and a half years, 3 years and 1 year respectively. In another, LKI, one employee had worked 4 years and another only 2 weeks. A third Inn, CKI, did not have any employees aged 50 and above. Or, rather, the Personnel and Training manager of the inn informed me that this was the case but, upon interviewing her, it was discovered that the property did indeed employ three females aged 50 and above who were on long-term leave due to ill health.

Many older employees left school at 16 or younger. In one case (Mike), the individual left school at 14 years of age. With four exceptions, an employee with a degree in engineering (Dave), a worker with a degree in finance (Tim), an employee with a degree in hospitality management (John) and a worker with a degree in English (Alison), respondents tended to have few formal qualifications. Some older employees thought that younger employees in the hotel had better qualifications (e.g. Janet, Mike, Bob, Eddie). Janet commented that “Younger workers have better qualifications. They often have degrees”. Mike stated that “They have Secondary education. Some have been to university, but they’re no better or wiser than me”. Eddie thought that the

younger workers in the hotel had more qualifications, some with degrees, but they only “work in hotels because they can’t find anything else”.

6.3.2.2. Age, skills and jobs

When asked the question “Do you consider yourself an “Older” worker?”, Peter, Bob, Dave, Eddie, Mark and Helen did not consider themselves “older” whereas Janet, Liz, Paul, Sue, Kath, Ann and Fiona did. According to Mike, “Sometimes I do, sometimes I don’t. I don’t see myself as an older worker. I’m 63. My work capacity hasn’t diminished. Age is not important for me”. Tim commented that he considered himself an older worker “Fifty percent of the time. Sometimes it doesn’t bother me only in the sense that I think short-term. Every day I’m alive is a bonus”. Karen stated that “No in general but yes for this hotel. Some employees are older than me. I don’t feel 62. I feel that I can still do a day’s work. Most mornings I’m up at 5.30. At the moment, I work part-time because I was ill. I do 20 hours per week”. Margaret was reflective, aware of the ageing process, saying that “In my mind I’m not. You catch a glimpse of a grey-haired woman. I don’t think of myself as old. As a worker you just work. I was Employee of the Year. To me, I don’t feel any different than I did 20 years ago”. After having had a heart attack with subsequent hospitalization, Jim considered that he had become an older worker but “people are people, age isn’t important. We all get on well together”. Some workers did not like the term “older”, preferring the term “mature” instead. For example, John said that “I consider myself mature. Old is a relative term” and Gwen stated that “I consider myself to be more mature. I wouldn’t use the term “older”. I know you’re kidding yourself but mature is more sensitive”. Nick didn’t know whether he was an older worker and Alison didn’t feel any older because “I have children and they keep me young”. According to Philip, age didn’t matter to himself but “it does matter to some people”

Respondents were also asked “How old do you have to be in order to be an “older” worker?” Some older employees were quite reflective and did not give a chronological age: “Being sensible and mature can happen at any age. Age itself isn’t important”, said Liz. An ironic answer was supplied by Bob who said “Older than me!” Another male employee, Tim, stated: “Personally, I wouldn’t put an age on it. It is noticeable in Ireland that a number of companies are employing what I now define as “older” workers”. Margaret considered an older worker to be someone who actually felt they were slowing down. Paul thought that it “depends on the individual and their health” Karen thought that “The day I can’t get up from bed and work is the day that I’m old”. A number of employees ventured to put a chronological age on an “older” worker: for Janet it was someone “From their mid-40s onwards”, for Sue, Gwen and Philip it was someone over 50, for Alison it was someone aged 60 but it also depended on the person’s health and for Mark it was someone in their 60s. John was aware of a kitchen employee in the hotel who was in their 80s and stated “that would be old”. Peter and Nick didn’t know how old someone had to be in order to be an “older” worker and Jim didn’t think about age. Eddie stated that “a worker is a worker. Age doesn’t come into it at all”

Some older workers thought that the management preferred young recruits. For example, Mike thought the preferred age of recruits was “People in their 20s and 30s”, John “Early to late 20s”. Bob commented that management preferred recruits to be between 25 and 35 years of age and that younger managers were more likely to choose younger staff. Janet said that management didn’t have a deliberate age group in mind but “are mindful of the cost”. Peter did not state a chronological age but commented that management preferred to recruit younger people because they believed that they would have less time off through illness whereas Kath said that management preferred younger employees, hoping they would stay. Some workers believed that management had no preferences when recruiting. For example, Margaret considered that age didn’t come into it and

management recruited on ability based on those who had applied. Similarly, Paul thought that management just wanted people and didn't discriminate against older people, Jim stated that management wanted people who could do their job, Sue thought that management would employ anyone irrespective of their age and Gwen, Alison and Fiona stated that management didn't have a preference. Mark commented that management preferred to recruit a mixed age workforce. Helen stated that preference depended on the department: "In front office they'd rather have someone who is older with experience", she said.

Older employees were aware of the age structure of employees in their hotel or inn. "Mostly younger employees", said Janet, who continued by saying that "In the induction group yesterday they were all 18, 19 and 20. It hasn't really changed over the years. Most recruits are younger unless it's a specific position. Waiters seem to be more mature". The hotels had a larger number of older workers than the Inns. A female worker in a hotel, Liz, commented: "There are a lot of older people here. There have been for the past 40 years. A lot younger crowd has come in particularly from overseas. I can't see young people in Ireland going into hotel work. It's difficult to recruit young Irish people to hotels. It's a tough industry to work in". John believed that, typically, workers in his property were aged between 24 and 30 with not many mature people. Mark commented that most workers in his property were in their late teens and 20s, Paul believed most staff in his property to be between 18 and late 20s; Sue and Ann commented that most employees in her hotel were between 18 and 25, Jim and Karen believed most employees in their properties to be in their 20s and 30s and Alison thought most employees in her hotel were between 25 and 45. Sometimes, an older worker would comment on changes to the age composition of the property's workforce. For example, Eddie highlighted this trend by saying: "The average age is getting younger. We've lost a lot of older staff in the last 2 to 3 years. There are fewer older employees. Housekeeping and Bars tend to be younger. It's a young person's job". Bob stated that the

management in his property were a lot younger than they used to be. According to Peter, "You don't get many people over 35. A lot of staff come and go. It's a poorly paid industry. In maintenance a new chap just started who is over 50. People in maintenance are older than in the other departments". Nick stated that his property employed people from seventeen upwards. According to Helen, the majority of staff in her property were between 16 and 30s but didn't think this was a result of a deliberate policy on the part of management.

Older employees had good contact and interaction with their younger colleagues and felt that, with a few exceptions, they weren't treated any differently because of their age. Liz felt that younger workers looked up to her. Tim commented that he was treated differently but in a positive sense: "If something heavy had to be lifted they'd offer a hand. I wouldn't tolerate it in any other sense". A female employee at a hotel, Karen, stated that she had "good contact with students. They treat me like a mother". According to Gwen, younger employees are "quite happy working alongside me. They respect me more. It's a two way thing. You don't put them down". Ann commented that younger employees treated her differently, expecting her to be more conscientious. When asked if they were treated differently by managers because of their age, all but three said "no". Tim didn't know and Kath answered "Yes, sometimes. They wouldn't ask you to do anything too strenuous like stacking shelves, mopping floors or lifting". John, having completed a part time degree, felt that the hotel's management had not provided him with the possibility of promotion due to the hotel's "youth orientated promotion strategy".

Only one older worker had any "Special needs" because of their age to do the job. Kath, an employee at an Inn in Ireland, stated: "I did accommodation for a short while but had to give it up because of all the lifting. I don't lift heavy items. I get someone else to do it. I've got a letter from HR. It's supported by the management"

Respondents were asked about the skills which they had as an older person which a younger person wouldn't have and, conversely, skills which a younger person would have which they, as an older person, wouldn't have. More than one answer from the responded was possible. The answers are summarised in Table 6.9.

Table 6.9 Skills of older employees versus skills of younger employees

Older employees:	Younger employees:
More experience (Janet, Liz, John, Paul, Jim, Dave, Nick, Gwen, Ann, Fiona, Karen, Mark, Helen)	Better computer skills (Janet, Liz, Jim, Sue, Gwen, Kath, Ann, Karen, Eddie, Helen, Philip)
Better at dealing with customers (Mike, Gwen, Kath, Alison, Karen, Eddie, Mark)	Better qualified/educated (Mike, Liz, Bob, Kath, Eddie)
Good communication Skills (Mike)	More confidence (Janet)
More patience (Sue, Bob, Gwen, Kath, Ann, Karen, Eddie)	More enthusiasm (Tim)
More knowledge (Eddie, Philip)	More modern in outlook (Tim)
Diplomacy (Mike)	More energy (Dave, Ann)
Better able to evaluate the consequences of actions (Tim)	More flexible (Ann)
Better insight (Peter)	More up-to-date with regulations (Peter)
More commitment to the job (Paul)	
More diligent (Sue)	

Margaret was critical of younger workers, stating that they “lack a lot in social skills. It’s an effort for them. They tend to not want to put themselves out. My attitude of the young is they know everything that’s not their job but nothing about what is their job. I haven’t got much patience with younger workers. They’re a bit slack. Everything has to be pointed out to them repeatedly. General attitude of disobedience”. Margaret also claimed that “a lot of young people don’t like physical work and a class thing comes into it. They say “I’m not doing that””. Margaret had previously worked in a pub and commented that “students drove me nuts”. Alison stated that “for myself, I don’t think older people have different skills than younger people”, Karen stated that she was

very tactful, which, according to her, came with age “but I can be deliberately untactful. I get away with it because of my age”.

In particular, older workers were aware that younger workers possessed much better Information Technology skills. Some older workers were fearful of computers. For example, Jim stated that younger people are more computer literate and “to me a computer is just a box, something you think you’re too old to learn”. Similarly, Sue said that she couldn’t do computers and “left the last job because of that. Feel I am too old to learn”. Karen stated that, as far as computers were concerned, she didn’t have a clue, was not interested and never bothered to learn. However, Bob and Helen felt they had good IT skills which were enhanced by having a computer at home.

Employees were asked the type of jobs in the property which would be particularly suitable for older employees and, conversely, jobs which would not be suitable. Table 6.10 summarises the answers, giving the number of times that the job was mentioned and the person who mentioned the job.

Table 6.10 Jobs considered suitable/not suitable for older employees

Suitable:	Not Suitable:
Receptionist/Front desk (4) (Peter, Jim, Kath, Helen)	Housekeeping (8) (Janet, Mike, Gwen, Ann, Karen, Eddie, Helen, Philip)
Waiting (3) (Janet, Jim, Kath, Alison)	Bar Work (2) (Bob, Ann)
Portering (3) (Mike, Jim, Nick)	Portering (2) (Tim, Mark)
Bar Work (3) (Kath, Mark, Philip)	Kitchen Work (2) (Fiona, Eddie)
Restaurant (3) (Gwen, Fiona, Philip)	Restaurant Work (1) (Ann)
Supervisor/Management (2) (John, Philip)	Reception (1) (Janet)
Cleaning (2) (Alison, Fiona)	Washing up (1) (Fiona)
Dealing with the public (2) (Eddie, Mark)	
Accounts (1) (Ann)	
Concierge (1) (Peter)	
Kitchen Work (1) (Janet)	
Conference and Banqueting (1) (Mark)	

Suitable:	Not Suitable:
Cheffing (1) (Alison)	
Laundry (1) (Fiona)	
Food preparation (1) (Fiona)	
HRM (1) (Tim)	
Pot washer (1) (Helen)	
Maintenance (1) (Philip)	

According to Janet, whatever the person's age, if they are willing to do the job they should be given the opportunity. Liz stated that the type of jobs in the hotel particularly suited to older employees would depend on the individual and no jobs would be unsuitable. Nick also said that it would depend on the person. Similarly, John, Jim, Sue and Tim commented that no jobs would be unsuitable and Peter thought that all jobs are suitable once the person had been trained. Margaret believed attitude to be more important than age. Jobs in housekeeping were mentioned by eight respondents as not being suitable for older employees. Janet, for example, stated that she couldn't do the very hard physical work needed to work in housekeeping. The physically demanding nature of the work was also mentioned by Eddie, Philip and Gwen although Gwen added that "at the end of the day, it depends on the individual". Philip said that it would depend on what the person was used to and "if they're used to it, it isn't a problem. Karen stated that housekeeping was "a backbreaking job" and Helen commented that housekeeping would be a problem for an English worker but not a Polish one.

Some older workers did not consider ageism to be a problem although, as Janet pointed out, "Maybe age discrimination does go on but I've never come across it". Ageism was not an issue for Mike who said "I can only speak from personal experience but I have never felt discriminated because of my age". A male employee at an Inn, Tim, was aware of other businesses in Ireland who were taking-on older workers and cited the example of a DIY store. For this

employee, the hotel industry in Ireland was changing in a positive sense. According to Kath, American visitors preferred older workers and would often approach her as a result. Ann considered the General Manager's attitude important with respect to the employment and treatment of older people in the hotel, stating that "the last GM was very age friendly". This was a point also raised by Helen who said "When I applied for this job I was 52. I said to my sister "I wish I didn't have to put my age on my CV" but I did put it on. I had a manager who was looking for experience. The manager here said to me that age didn't bother him". Eddie commented that it was getting harder and harder for older people in hotels because of reduced staffing levels. John was very critical of the employment for older workers, both in the industry and in his property, stating "The whole hotel industry in the UK is ageist. I know of a guy over 50 in conferencing who solves a lot of the problems. The younger workers would curl up in a ball and cry". According to Peter, the UK hotel industry did not employ many people over 40 and gave some reasons why this might be the case, stating that "older people might not apply for jobs in a hotel because they might think it's a younger person's job. Also, the hotel is always open and there are difficult shift hours, probably off-putting to older people".

6.3.2.3. Training, development and retirement

Older workers were asked what training they had received in the hotel. Almost all of the employees were interested in being trained and had undertaken training in different areas. Examples included: Information Technology, Customer Care, Health and Safety, Manual Handling, First Aid and Food Hygiene. Older employees seemed enthusiastic about training, with Mike stating: "I want to do training. I never refuse any opportunities." This was in stark contrast to Tim who said that "They knew when I came here that I had no ambition to be trained. It's not a productive investment for the hotel. I'm not building a career". All employees answered "yes" to the question: "Do you feel that all age groups are treated the same in terms of access to training in this

organisation?” In relation to this question, Helen added “Age doesn’t come into it. They (the management) encourage people. Everyone gets trained whatever level they are at”.

When asked if age was a barrier to promotion, Mike stated that, as a laundry supervisor, he had applied for promotion but didn’t get it because he would be difficult to replace. Janet had applied for an office manager’s job but her computer skills were not good enough although “age was not important in the decision to promote”. Liz hadn’t applied for promotion because “I raised a girl on my own”. Peter stated that “I’m 60 next birthday and I’m not interested in promotion”. Sue also stated that she wasn’t interested in promotion. Bob had applied for promotion “A couple of years ago. It was ages before the Personnel and Training manager got round to having interviews. I asked a few times when the interviews were going to be. She asked me if I’m sure I would be up to it, that the job may be a bit strenuous. Though she didn’t mention age, I do know that all supervisors here are around 30ish. I think they prefer them that age”. Tim, who, prior to joining the hotel, occupied a senior position in a Finance company, stated: “I’m not interested in promotion. From my background I could manage this property”. Nick hadn’t gone for promotion because “I can’t write or spell. When I left school I couldn’t write my name”. Kath hadn’t thought about promotion and was happy doing what she was doing. For Ann, few promotional possibilities existed in the hotel but “the hotel was five minutes from my home. I didn’t want to move. It’s great to walk to work”. Another reason for not considering promotion possibilities was the worker’s desire not to have any extra responsibilities. This was the case as far as Karen was concerned.

Employees viewed retirement in one of three ways: positive (i.e. looking forward to retirement), neutral (i.e. having mixed views or not having thought about it) and negative (i.e. not looking forward to retirement). Employees’ views to retirement are summarised in Table 6.11.

Table 6.11 Employees' views on retirement

Positive:	Neutral:	Negative:
"I'm looking forward to retirement" (Peter, Nick, Bob)	"I haven't thought about it" (Liz, Karen, Helen)	"I have no intention of retiring and staying at home" (Mike)
"I'd like to retire as soon as I can" (Kath)	"I have mixed feelings about it" (Alison, Eddie)	"I don't want to stay at home dusting the house" (Ann)
"I can't wait" (Janet)		"I'm not looking forward to it" (Mark, Paul)
		"It would drive me nuts" (Margaret)
		"It will be a sad day for me when I finish" (Sue)
		"Dreadful. Not looking forward to it" (Gwen)
		"I prefer work until I can't work. I don't want to stay at home" (Fiona)

Tim, who was 67 and had re-entered employment after retirement, stated: "I looked forward to getting off the roundabout. Having reached that stage, I wanted a little bit more than retirement".

Respondents were asked whether they ever felt discriminated against in an interview or selection process because of their age. Some thought not. For example, Mike said: "I've genuinely never felt any discrimination because of my age". Kath commented that "when I went for the interview here, I had no problem getting the job". However, some respondents thought discrimination had taken place. For example, Janet commented that "When I was coming for this job I was 40 at the time. It influenced a number of potential employers. One actually said that they wanted somebody younger". Tim also thought he had been discriminated against in an interview or selection process because of his age: "Yes. At times I could intimidate the interviewer because of my

experience”. According to John, it was difficult to state whether he had been discriminated against in an interview or selection process because of his age because he never got to the stage of having an interview.

6.3.3. HRM practices and their effects on older workers (ROI and UK)

A total of ten Personnel and Training managers were interviewed, five in the ROI and five in the UK. All Personnel and Training managers were female and all were white. None of the managers was aged 50 or above. All managers were able-bodied and worked full-time. In one hotel, MNT, the Personnel and Training manager, Louise, was assisted by a Training manager, Mike. At this property, Louise requested I speak to Mike and he was asked to join us at one point in our discussion.

6.3.3.1. Recruitment and selection

Louise, Debbie, Angie, Emily, Mary, Paula, Rita and Sally stated that the company website was used to recruit employees. Word-of-mouth was also a favoured method and was mentioned by Louise, Debbie, Mary, Paula, Rita and Judy. Sally commented that her hotel had an “Introduce a friend” programme. The methods used to recruit personnel depended on the position and the practice of managers receiving speculative CVs was commonplace. For example, Paula stated that “We get a lot of speculative CVs at reception” and Judy stated that “people leave their CVs at reception”. Wherever possible, newspaper advertisements and recruitment agencies were avoided due to the high cost of these methods. Louise, for example, commented that “we rarely use agencies”, Debbie said “we try not to use the local press”, Emily mentioned that she would only really use newspapers if she was stuck and Paula said that she didn’t advertise in papers. According to Sally, employment agencies were sometimes used for skilled positions as “it’s difficult to fill some positions. Chefs are the worst but also accommodation assistants, management positions,

conference and banqueting” but Rita and Louise stated that they rarely used employment agencies. In Ireland, Emily used the internet recruitment site, “Jobs.ie”. Emily also used radio advertising and, due to the difficulty of recruiting chefs, targeted catering colleges in the city. This was also the case in another Irish city where Mary would recruit from the college close to the hotel. According to Mary, recruitment of students would take place throughout the year, with peaks taking place in September, when many student casual staff would be hired, and April, when many student casual staff would leave to concentrate their efforts on examinations. Jobcentres were mentioned as a source of recruitment by Debbie, Trish, Paula and Judy.

According to Louise and Judy, the methods used to select employees depended on the position. Experience was important for some positions but, for other positions, “people don’t need experience, they can be trained” (Louise). Mary considered personality important and would look for someone who was “a people person, outgoing, someone that will actually approach a customer, rather than a customer having to come to them”. In terms of the mechanics of selecting, Angie commented that more than one interview would take place for management positions and the GM would be present. Emily stated that, after checking the applicant’s CV, she may call them in for an interview. Paula outlined how she selected employees: “We pre-select, go through the CVs, look at experience. We select applicants for interviewing then we do one or two interviews depending on the number of applicants. We may get the head of department involved. We have person specifications. We use standard interview questions. We follow up references and hopefully find the right candidate who stays for a long time”. Rita mentioned a very similar approach to selection. This was also the case with Sally who added that “Candidates must be customer driven and eager to succeed”.

The importance of appearance and speech depended on the position. The following statement from Debbie demonstrated this: “If it’s a kitchen porter then it’s not important but, for most public facing positions, it is important that they are well presented and articulate. Almost all our Housekeeping department is from Eastern Europe. Their communication skills are very limited but they have limited guest contact”. This was also the case for Angie who commented that “Appearance is important. I’d look at level of English, not speech. In reservations, grammar would be important. When you speak to a customer, you shouldn’t use slang. Accent doesn’t matter. I wouldn’t be as harsh on someone who spoke English as a second language”. Sally considered a person’s appearance and speech very important, even in the back of house, and said that “in terms of speech it is important for management, front office and conference and banqueting but not for lower positions”. Similarly, Judy mentioned the fact that speech and appearance was more important for front office and not very important for back of house. For Emily, a bar or restaurant worker had to have a good standard of English. Trish commented that employees needed to be friendly and able to chat. She also said that “we get a lot of school leavers who are shy”. Although Paula reiterated the importance of appearance, she considered circumstances, for example, if the applicant happened to be in the area at the time but wasn’t appropriately dressed, this would be taken into account. Where a person was interviewed by telephone, appearance could not be taken into account. Paula also stated that “We don’t come across many people who don’t have a good level of English. It tends to be a language barrier rather than grammatical barriers.” Rita considered appearance to be important and the person would need to be “clean, smart, neat and tidy but they don’t have to come in in a suit”.

6.3.3.2. Training and development

According to the Personnel and Training managers, training needs were identified and some training done by the hotel or inn and some, such as food

safety, by headquarters or an external organisation. Debbie commented that “the company is very, very good at training” and Louise said that “we do a huge amount of training”. The first training to be undertaken was typically induction which, according to Emily, would cover “history, policies and procedures, a tour of the hotel, benefits of training and the staff canteen”. Trish stated that managers at her hotel were required to do ten minutes of training every day and Paula commented that training would result from an analysis of the core competencies and skills to do a job. At Rita’s hotel in Ireland, most training would be “coordinated with Dublin” and a training manual for each department would be used. In general, the nature of training depended on the department in which the employee worked.

None of the properties had age-awareness training or anything similar. Judy commented that “No, we don’t know whether there’s a need for it” and Angie stated that “No, we did have disability training and age could be part of that”. Similarly, Mary’s property did not have age-awareness training because “To be honest the reason I probably haven’t done it is because I’d be afraid you could be seen to be discriminating against them or the one thing is that a lot of people, I know mostly women, don’t like to be highlighting their age. So some people might not actually be comfortable with highlighting the over 50s. Again, maybe there is something there but there’s nothing that I’m personally aware of and I haven’t ever done anything on it”. When asked about whether age-awareness training is an important issue, the same respondent (Mary) stated that “I personally don’t feel it’s a big issue because I don’t think there’s any difference.....there shouldn’t be any preferential treatment for someone that’s 50 or 45. Obviously, awareness maybe amongst the managers in terms of medical awareness. At the end of the day they’re still employed to do a certain job”. Paula thought that “it wouldn’t surprise me if we were to get it” (age awareness training). Sally mentioned that, although the hotel did not have any age-awareness training, “we do have a poster on age awareness”.

6.3.3.3. Equal opportunities and managing diversity

All of the properties had an equal opportunities policy, which was directed by headquarters and implemented in the unit. According to the Personnel and Training managers, the policy was given to new employees during the Induction programme. Debbie, Rita and Judy thought the equal opportunities policy was effective but Emily commented that, "I don't know if it is effective. It is clear". Angie stated that the equal opportunities policy was decided by headquarters and enforced by her but effectiveness could be compromised as "It's not necessarily the policy but the people", meaning that line managers had to implement the policy and this was not always done effectively. Paula was also critically reflective, stating that "in certain circumstances we are not an equal opportunities employer. For General Managers, for example, we always appoint internally". According to Sally, the hotel had an equal opportunities and dignity at work policy but not a diversity policy which would be different, adding that "we need a separate managing diversity policy which would be a completely different policy and would need to be at a group level for consistency". Louise thought that the equal opportunities policy was effective as "we have a diverse team here".

Little attempt was made to actively manage employee diversity in the properties with Louise stating that "It's not an issue". Debbie considered that employee diversity at her property "happens on its own", although "we haven't really got anyone with physical disabilities because I haven't had any people with physical disabilities apply for a job". Similarly, there were few people with disabilities at Sally's property though cultural diversity was managed, for example where an employee was given four months off to go back to China. Judy thought her workforce was mixed but "managing diversity is not something that I consciously think of". Some Personnel and Training managers specially mentioned diversity in terms of workers from different countries with Angie commenting that "we get so many people from all over the world" and Debbie saying that "we've got a

diverse workforce from 14 different nationalities”. Emily was aware that the CVs she received were from young people although she also stated, “We do have 3 people over 50 but they are off sick and are not likely to come back”. When asked how she had tried to manage employee diversity in her property, Trish stated “that’s a hard question to answer. Age-wise not really. All our jobs are open to everyone. It depends on the individual” Paula pointed to the fact that having a diverse workforce was more important in some departments and jobs than others. Thus, language skills were considered very important for someone working in front office.

When asked about the age-balance of employees in their properties, Louise and Paula reported a spread of ages. However, Debbie and Rita stated that the majority of their employees were between 20 and 25 and Debbie added that “it tends to be (so young) because of the shifts”. Angie alluded to the fact that the age-balance depended on the department and level with most managers in their 20s, the bar and restaurant staff were very young and housekeeping and front office were more “mixed”. Trish also mentioned differences according to department in her hotel, stating that “We have lots of youngsters as casuals and in Food and Beverage. Housekeeping is more middle-aged between 20 and 25. The Leisure Club is also a young department”. At Sally’s hotel the full-time staff tended to be older than the part-time staff. At Emily’s property there was nobody aged 50 or above and “The average age of employees is 20-24. The oldest is 43”. The age composition of the workforce seemed to differ according to the brand, as highlighted by Mary who said “we actually have a very young team and I think it seems to come across in a lot of the Inns in comparison to the hotels, I mean, I get to see that when I went looking for my over 50s and realised I had two”. Judie reported having a high percentage of young staff “but for no other reason than they applied for a job in the hotel.

Because most of the Personnel and Training managers had been in tenure for less than two years in the property, they were unable to comment in a meaningful way on how the age balance had changed over the years. Louise, referring to her overall experience in other properties, claimed that “In recent years, a younger workforce has come to exist with more casual staff”. At a property in the UK, Debbie was aware that the age balance in her property had got younger over the five and a half years she had been Personnel and Training manager for the only reason that in housekeeping, which employed a third of all staff, Eastern European workers, which tended to be predominantly under 30, had replaced Afro-Caribbean workers. In contrast to this, Emily commented that: “I’ve been 3 years at this hotel. When I first started here everyone was in their late teens. It’s got older. Work is now more demanding. It’s no longer a weekend job”. Trish thought that the age balance of employees had not changed a great deal over the last three years as “usually when one person leaves the person that comes in is the same age”. Paula also reported little change in the age composition of her workforce though “I don’t look at age. It’s not a factor I consider at any point in the recruitment process”.

Asked how the age-balance of employees compared to the age-balance of guests, opinions varied. At one property, Louise commented that the guests were a “bit more mature” while, according to Debbie and Emily, the age range of guests depended on the night of the week. For Trish and Rita the age balance of guests and employees would depend on the time of year but, in general, guests would be older. Angie thought that the guests would be a little older than the employees although “the age relationship is not important, it’s whether people have enthusiasm and energy”. According to Paula, “I don’t know whether the guest considers it (an employee’s age). Judy stated that, if an older guest complained they would probably want to talk to an older employee but this rarely happened.

Managers' perceptions of the local labour market seemed skewed towards younger people with Louise saying that "The labour market is full of younger people. There are a lot of students looking for part-time work" and Angie commenting that "the city has lots of universities". Emily was a little more reflective: "People of a certain age group would want a job in a hotel. Perhaps it has something to do with our recruitment methods". Local conditions also affected the labour market. For example, Debbie reported that the local labour market had been affected by the closure of a large factory in the area with more older people looking for work. As far as Mary was concerned, the labour market was very young but people with more experience would have higher salary expectations. For example, Mary stated that "I had somebody apply for a job as a kitchen porter and he had been a head chef. His CV was 15 pages long. I couldn't find his age on the CV. My thing would be I suppose the salary offered would not match that (his experience)". Referring to her city in the UK, Trish declared that "most people looking for jobs are students looking for part time work. It's rare that somebody older applies for a job. The restaurant staff are very young. Probably people over 50 would be looking for full-time jobs. It's rare to see someone over 30 apply for a Food and Beverage job". Differences between how younger and older people applied for jobs was evident in Sally's hotel where younger people would apply via the internet and older people would hand-in their CV at reception. Sally further commented that "there are a lot of mature people in the labour market but I don't see many of them applying for jobs here".

Personnel and Training managers were asked about a range of government initiatives in terms of equality in the workplace. These were different according to whether the property was located in the ROI or the UK. Approximately one month before the interviews took place, the "Say No to Ageism Week" (May 16th to May 22nd 2005) was held in the ROI. Only one of the managers, Emily, had heard of the initiative and had displayed a poster on ageism in the workplace.

No follow-up training was held. Similarly, in relation to the properties in the ROI, little awareness existed of the Employment Equality Acts of 1998 and 2004 and initiatives to promote equality of opportunity for older people under the Equal Status Act of 2000 and 2004. The same applied to awareness concerning the contents of the report “Towards Age Friendly Provision of Goods and Services”, another Irish EO initiative. One Personnel and training manager in the ROI, Rita, thought that the initiatives came from the hotel group’s headquarters. In another Irish hotel, the Personnel and Training manager, Louise, thought it a good idea that I talk with the Training Manager (one of the few hotels in the group to have such a post) about the initiatives. It became quickly evident that, once again, awareness and knowledge of the initiatives was limited and the focus in the hotel was on cultural diversity rather than age diversity. Finally, Personnel and Training managers were asked if they thought the hotel industry in Ireland was ageist. The responses are as follows:

“They are trying to get more older people back into the workforce. I’m positive about older employees. Things have changed in the last few years. Older workers are good mentors. Older women in particular function as mother figures in the organisation. It’s good to have a few in different departments. I had this in the last hotel I worked in” (Louise)

“Overall, the attitude is very positive. Older people are reliable and hardworking. I don’t think there’s any discrimination at all. I would like more older employees” (Emily)

“I think it depends on the actual property itself. But I don’t think, in general, age is a factor. At the end of the day, if somebody is able to carry out the duties assigned to them, their age really isn’t an issue. I don’t see in any way that it is a huge issue personally” (Mary)

“The hotel industry in Ireland is generally negative about older people. They don’t want to recruit older people because they need flexibility. Some people have stereotypes of older people, which is down to the individual. Because of an older person’s age, they may expect a higher wage. The majority of people employed are younger people. It’s a young person’s industry. It’s about the way hotels are run in Ireland” (Rita)

"I have mixed views, positive and negative. In a new hotel, they look for younger workers but in this hotel older people stayed because they haven't been able to find anything else. Generally, their attitude is more negative than positive. They are perceived as lacking flexibility and being of the old school. A problem here is with people on the old contracts: the full-time workers who are more negative. Part-time workers are more positive" (Sally)

Personnel and Training managers in the UK were asked a number of questions about government or government-sponsored equality initiatives. None of the managers were aware of the information available from the Third Age Employment Network. However, all managers were aware of the government's legal initiatives to outlaw age discrimination in the workplace but only one manager, Paula, had any firm idea of what this might entail: "Yes. It comes into effect next year (2006). It means taking off dates of birth from application forms. It filters through to everything. It will impact on more things than people realise. For example, internet recruitment could be discriminatory against older people. In terms of recruitment, selection, training, making sure it filters through to line managers". As far as the following initiatives in the UK were concerned, the managers knew very little or nothing about them: The Code of Practice on Age Diversity in Employment; Age Positive's Practical Guide for Business (Age Diversity at Work) and the DTI's report entitled "Towards Equality and Diversity: Report on Responses on Age". The New Deal 50+ programme was known but wasn't considered a fruitful initiative to recruit older workers with Debbie stating that "we've never taken anyone on", Angie responding that "we haven't been contacted by them" and Trish commenting that "we haven't appointed anyone from the Jobcentre in 2 years, although we interview a lot of people (from there)". Finally, managers were asked if they thought the hotel industry in the UK is ageist. The following responses were given:

"Yes. Sometimes on paper people will think they're too old. An employee who retired with us was 65 but I thought he was in his 50s" (Debbie)

“Probably, yes. You generally find young people working in hotels maybe through choice” (Angie)

“In general, it’s quite bad apart from cosy, small hotels. Managers see the benefits of employing older people. But managers in the Hospitality Industry are very young. It’s awkward to have a younger boss and younger managers may appoint younger people. They may be comfortable appointing people who are a lot younger than themselves” (Trish)

“I would say yes it is but it doesn’t realise it. It doesn’t set out to be but it happens. We don’t get many older people applying. The older established hotels have an older workforce. They have grown with the industry. The way the industry comes across it is very appealing to the younger generation because there are a lot of career progression possibilities. We don’t go out of our way to dispel the idea that the industry is for young people. 2006 will make people more aware of the possibilities of employing older people. They won’t be able to discriminate anymore. With any luck there will be more older people in the industry. With an older workforce in the UK we need to be prepared for having older people in employment. A lot of managers in the industry are unaware of the demographic time bomb. We also need an immigration policy to attract more young immigrants. It’s needed to support the population. I am at college so I am aware of demographic trends. Younger people don’t stay in the industry. A major issue is to keep and retain people. I’m doing a postgraduate in HRM therefore I’m aware of managing diversity and changing demographics” (Paula)

“It can be. I have worked in places that are. Has improved over the years” (Judy)

6.3.3.4. Managers’ perceptions of older employees

When asked if the age of an employee affects his/her ability to perform well, two Personnel and Training managers mentioned that age could be an issue: “It could affect their ability”, said Louise, and “Some older people are very good but sickness and absenteeism has increased in some older employees”, said Sally. But other managers were unequivocal about the relationship between age and performance. For example, Emily stated: “No, definitely not. No difference at all”. Debbie and Angie also answered “no”. According to Rita, an employee’s age would not affect his/her ability to perform well “unless they have health problems, but it’s not an age thing”. The issue of health was also mentioned by

Mary who claimed that “for every employee, we will have a medical questionnaire. I don’t think I would be discriminatory by ensuring that someone was medically fit because equally if someone was 20 and there was a certain issue, for example a back pain issue, equally I couldn’t take someone at 20 or 50 or 60 with back pain and send them upstairs to clean 15 rooms because I know that within 6 weeks, never mind three months, there’d be issues. And, obviously, it’s not helping that person putting them in that position either”. Trish believed older workers to be more loyal and sensible than younger workers and would probably perform better. Paula considered the job important with portering being physically demanding and “at some point age will become a factor and older employees may put themselves at risk. But it depends on the employee’s fitness”. Similarly, in Sally’s property age and ability would depend on the individual and “if there was something that an employee couldn’t do we would change the job role slightly”.

Personnel and Training managers were asked about the benefits and drawbacks of employing older people. The responses are given in Table 6.12.

Table 6.12. The benefits and drawbacks of employing older employees

Benefits:	Drawbacks:
Better with customers (Debbie, Trish, Rita, Sally)	None (Trish, Paula, Rita, Judy)
More experience (Debbie, Angie, Rita, Judy)	Resistance to change (Angie, Sally)
More reliable (Louise, Debbie, Emily)	Difficulty in adapting to flexibility (Mary)
More punctual (Emily, Paula)	Rigid in their duties (Sally)
More mature (Emily, Mary)	Not good at multi-skilling (Sally)
Better skills (Debbie, Sally)	Less interested in training (Sally)
Likely to stay longer (Trish, Paula)	Lack of I.T. skills (Sally)
Good standards (Sally)	Greater long-term sickness (Emily)
More sensible (Louise)	May take longer to learn new skills (Debbie)
More passion for the industry (Sally)	Less able to adapt (Louise)
Are used to discipline (Louise)	Reluctant to leave (Sally)
Less sickness (Debbie)	Poor customer skills (Sally)
Handle situations better (Angie)	

Benefits:	Drawbacks:
Better knowledge (Sally)	
Better work ethic (Paula)	
Less transient (Paula)	
More courteous (Paula)	
More dedicated (Rita)	

Sally was much more negative about older employees than her colleagues. At her property there were a relatively large percentage of employees aged 50 and above (26%, the highest of the ten properties analysed) and the hotel had been acquired in 1999. According to Sally, most of the staff were retained after the acquisition and, atypically, the hotel was heavily unionised.

One manager's perceptions, Emily's, were influenced by her views of her mother: "If I think about older people I think of my mum who is 50 this year. She is a positive role model". This seemed to counterbalance the manager's overall perceptions, which were influenced by the long-term sickness of older employees in her hotel: "The only three people over 50 that I know who work in a hotel, this hotel, have been off long-term sick". Yet this Personnel and Training manager was perhaps one of the most positive managers in terms of perceptions of older employees.

Personnel and Training managers were also asked about the type of jobs in their property that would be particularly suitable or unsuitable for older employees. Jobs considered suitable included waiting (Emily, Trish), housekeeping (Emily), administration (Trish), accounts (Trish) and reception (Trish). In addition, Angie, Paula, Rita, Sally stated that any job would be suitable for older employees. Jobs considered unsuitable included housekeeping (Louise, Angie, Mary), reception (Emily), leisure club (Trish), luggage porter (Paula) and kitchen porter (Paula).

According to Louise, the suitability of a job for an older employee would depend on the position. Debbie stated that “there are physical limitations as you get older but it depends on the individual” and Angie believed that it would also depend on the individual. For Trish, job suitability would depend on the person’s health, fitness and ability. Paula didn’t have any older or female luggage porters in her hotel because the work was physically demanding. Although housekeeping was considered a physically demanding department, Louise commented that “we have many older people in that department and they’ve been here for a long time. At another hotel I had a 50 year old woman on a Back-to-Work scheme. The woman came to work in accommodations and had no problem in working there. She proved us wrong”. Angie also mentioned the challenging nature of a job in housekeeping, stating that “I couldn’t do it. I would explain what was involved in housekeeping. I would explain the physical activity (needed) but it’s the same for young or old”. Mary also commented on housekeeping work, saying that “for someone at 58 years of age, (cleaning) 15 rooms is too much. To me 15 rooms is too much”. However, in the inns, a person would be appointed to a GSS (Guest Service Staff) function and could be required to work anywhere in the property. This, according to Mary, could prove problematic for an older worker as older workers would tend to be less flexible and flexibility was a requirement for a GSS position.

6. 4. Conclusions

This chapter reported on the findings in relation to a survey of managers’ perceptions of older employees in HotelCo and interviews with older workers and Personnel and Training managers in ten HotelCo properties. An analysis of results from the questionnaire revealed that managers, overall, possess a positive view of older workers and cross-tabulation of results revealed no significant difference of managers’ perceptions of older workers in relation to the manager’s gender, no significant difference of managers’ perceptions of older workers in relation to age group but a significant difference of managers’

perceptions of older workers in relation to the location of the property (ROI or UK). Findings from the survey also revealed a lack of special initiatives to encourage older workers to apply for vacancies in the property and, of those stating an opinion ($n=40$), 62.5% believed that recruitment advertising did not encourage older workers to apply for jobs. Furthermore, little attempt was made to measure the effects of the property's equal opportunities or managing diversity policies, despite the fact that such policies existed in all workplaces and specifically addressed equality of treatment or discrimination in relation to age in almost 90% of policies. Most (57.2%) respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "In the hotel industry employers aren't interested in employing or promoting people over the age of 50".

Results from interviews with older workers in HotelCo revealed great diversity of opinion regarding whether the employee regarded him/herself as an older worker with some workers preferring the term "mature" instead. Major differences of opinion were also evident in terms of the employee's view on how old a person has to be in order to be an older worker. Some older workers thought that the management preferred young recruits whilst other older employees believed that management had no preferences when recruiting. Older employees were aware of the age structure of employees in their property and the fact that, as an employee aged 50 or above, they were very much in the minority. Although older workers believed most jobs to be suitable for an older employee, housekeeping jobs were mentioned as not being suitable by eight of the twenty-three employees. Older workers stated that they had more experience, more patience and were better at dealing with customers than younger employees but considered younger employees to have better computer skills and better qualifications. All older employees answered "yes" to the question: "Do you feel that all age groups are treated the same in terms of access to training in this organisation?". However, some older workers felt that they had been discriminated against in an interview or selection process

because of their age and some older workers stated that age was a barrier to promotion.

Results from interviews with Personnel and Training managers in HotelCo revealed practices which could, potentially, be discriminatory towards older workers, including internet recruitment and recruitment from local colleges and universities. Some managers commented on the importance of speech and appearance and this may affect the employment of older workers. Despite the fact that HotelCo properties offered a range of training, none of the properties had age-awareness training or anything similar. All of the properties had an equal opportunities policy, which was directed by headquarters and implemented in the unit, but little attempt was made to actively manage employee diversity in the properties. Personnel and Training managers commented on the benefits and drawbacks of employing older workers with four managers stating that there were no drawbacks. When asked about a range of government initiatives in terms of equality in the workplace, Personnel and Training managers' knowledge of these initiatives was poor, both in Ireland and the UK. Finally, managers were asked if they thought the hotel industry in Ireland or the UK is ageist. Opinions varied with all UK managers stating that it is or could be whilst managers in Ireland had a mixture of views from "Overall, the attitude is very positive" (Emily) to "The hotel industry in Ireland is generally negative about older people" (Rita).

Chapter 7. Conclusions and recommendations.

7.1. Introduction

This thesis has focused on age discrimination in the workplace, specifically hotel workplaces in Ireland and the UK. The thesis sought to answer four research questions, namely how can age discrimination in the workplace be explained?, what role do employment policies and practices play in the inclusion or exclusion of older workers?, what are managers' perceptions of older workers and how might these affect employment policies and practices? and how does an analysis of the accounts of employment given by older workers provide an understanding of age discrimination in the workplace? The study examined these questions in the context of hotel employment in ten properties within the same hotel chain using a cross-national, mixed-methods approach. In twenty three interviews with older workers and ten interviews with Personnel and Training managers, together with an analysis of managers' views of older workers and organizational employment policies and practices obtained via a postal survey, an attempt was made to reveal employment policies and practices which, potentially, may be discriminatory towards older employees. A focus on older workers' accounts of employment in contemporary workplaces was considered essential in unmasking ageism and age discrimination as little is known about the attitudes, experiences and aspirations of older workers (Loretto and White, 2006b; Loretto, Vickerstaff and White, 2006).

The aim of this chapter is to reiterate the study's main findings and interpret these in the context of the major literature sources which were discussed in chapters 1 to 4. However, it is important to recognise that the conclusions in this thesis are tentative and the methodology employed has weaknesses and limitations. These were examined in Chapter 4 but will be further explored in the conclusion, together with suggestions for further research into age

discrimination in employment. This chapter will review evidence obtained during the course of this study and will seek to draw conclusions about the nature and extent of age discrimination in hotel employment. Specific recommendations will be given to organizations in order to maximise the potential of older workers and to eliminate discriminatory practices which may affect the recruitment, selection, training and development of older staff. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the study's limitations and implications for further research.

7.2. How can age discrimination in the workplace be explained?

From an analysis of literature pertaining to ageism and age discrimination it was evident that discrimination against older people is not a new phenomenon. It has existed for thousands of years and is affected by society's norms, values, customs and traditions. In explaining the relationship between ageism and age discrimination, Hughes (1995) postulates that broader forces, such as the economic structure, political values, cultural heritage, historical legacy and social attitudes results in negative and stereotypical images of older people which affects policy at the government, local authority and agency levels, personal values, whether personal or professional, and the experiences of older people which are mediated by gender, race and class. Age discrimination in employment principally concerns professional encounters, i.e. encounters in the workplace. However, these will be affected by the social construction of ageing which, in turn, will be influenced by wider political, economic, socio-cultural and technological factors (Lucas, 2004).

Two equality theories, in particular, that help explain age discrimination in the workplace are distributive justice and procedural justice. Distributive justice is about the perceived fairness of procedures which are used to establish outcomes (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 2001) whereas procedural justice concerns the processes which lead to decision outcomes (Colquitt, 2001,

p.386). However, as the effects of distributive justice on employees in the workplace are affected by procedural justice, there is much overlap between these two concepts (De Cremer, 2005). Liberal approaches to equality are perhaps more aligned to notions of procedural justice whereas the radical approach is more linked to distributive justice (Jewson and Mason, 1986). The precise relationship between managing diversity and theories of distributive and procedural justice is difficult to establish given managing diversity's malleable properties. However, as the instrumental model of procedural justice focuses on the economic incentives to promote fairness, (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 2001) this would apply to a managing diversity approach.

Employment opportunities for older workers are largely determined by employers (OECD, 2006b) and these opportunities will be affected by discriminatory policies and practices. Age discrimination in the workplace takes place when "Decisions made by an employer, about an individual, are based on an individual's chronological age" (Sargeant, 2001, p.141). Age discrimination may also result from an employer's attitude about an employee's perceived age (Glover and Branine, 2001). Kirton and Greene (2000) claim that employers are the main barrier to the employment of older workers with their attitudes of older workers being rooted in myths and stereotypes and De Beauvoir (1996) states that employers dislike the very idea of employing older people. Moreover, many employers believe that older workers should make way for younger workers (Shah and Kleiner, 2005). As the cost of workers in the UK rises steeply as retirement approaches, older workers are often selected for early retirement (The Carnegie Inquiry into the Third Age, 1993). This was particularly the case in the 1990s (Cappelli, 1999). Indeed, early retirement can be viewed as a social invention which is used by firms to induce older workers to leave the organisation to allow for a restructuring of the workforce (Rein and Jacobs, 1993).

Discrimination against older people in employment is not just about individual prejudice; it is a social construct. It is institutionalised in social, economic and employment systems (Taylor and Walker, 1998). Moreover, it is not just employers who are discriminatory towards older people as the state, unions and works councils have conspired to provide opportunities for younger workers by removing older people from the labour force (Institute of Personnel Management, 1993). Furthermore, it is important to recognise that older people themselves may possess ageist attitudes (Minichiello, Browne and Kendig, 2000).

7.3. What role do employment policies and practices play in the inclusion or exclusion of older workers?

This section will be structured according to the Human Resource Management three-part cycle: attracting an effective workforce (focusing on recruitment and selection), developing an effective workforce (focusing on training and development) and maintaining an effective workforce (focusing on equality and diversity) (Baum, 2006; Nickson, 2007).

With regards to recruitment, interviews with Personnel and Training managers revealed a number of policies and practices which may, potentially, be discriminatory towards older workers. Firstly, the company website proved to be a popular method used in the recruitment for all positions in the UK and Ireland. This may place older people at a disadvantage as internet access, computer ownership and computer skills tend to be lower amongst older people. Indeed, an Omnibus survey by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in January 2001 identified a clear link between age and internet use with 89% of males aged 16-24 stating they had used the internet at some time compared to 43% of males aged 55-64. The same survey revealed that 82% of females aged 16-24 had used the internet at some time compared to only 33% of females aged 55-64.

Therefore, internet recruitment may have the effect of placing older females at a greater disadvantage than older males. Moreover, a class divide exists in terms of computer ownership as 70% of households whose head belongs to the managerial/technical class owns a computer compared to only 39% of households headed by an individual with a partly skilled occupation (ONS, 2001). A more recent survey by the Central Statistics Office in Ireland (2006) revealed a somewhat different picture concerning age, computer ownership and internet usage with a higher percentage of 45-54 year olds having access to an internet connection via a personal computer in the household (57.9%) than 16-24 year olds (36.2%) or 25-34 year olds (50.6%). However, the survey also revealed that only 40.2% of 55-64 year olds in Ireland lived in a household with an internet connection via a personal computer.

Secondly, both in the UK and Ireland, Personnel and Training managers stated that colleges were an important source of recruitment for their properties, particularly in relation to the recruitment of casual staff. Again this may disadvantage older applicants as an overwhelming majority of students at colleges and universities in Ireland and the UK are under the age of twenty-one. For example, in the UK, almost 80% of students beginning full-time first degree study are aged 18-20 (Weko, 2004). Of full-time enrolments to Irish higher education institutions in 2004-2005, of the 80,639 enrolled, 6,420 (8%) were aged 30 and over (The Higher Education Authority (of Ireland), 2005). Furthermore, the use of word-of-mouth recruitment could, potentially, disadvantage older people as existing hospitality workers, who tend to be under twenty five, may inform friends of vacancies in the property.

According to Age Positive (www.agepositive.gov.uk), an indicator of good practice in recruitment is that the workforce is age-diverse. Such a workforce is advantageous in that it can draw on strengths from different age groups (OECD, 2006b). This is clearly not the case of many of HotelCo properties. For example,

a statistical analysis of 1363 employees at ten properties revealed significant differences between properties with one property (in Ireland) having 26.17% of its employees aged 50 and above whilst a property in the UK only had 3% of its employees in this age category. Furthermore, there existed a major difference between brands (Hotels and Inns) in terms of the average percentage of employees aged 50 and above. For Hotels, 15.51% of workers were aged 50 and above; for Inns the figure was only 4.64%. At the national level, the average percentage of employees aged 50 and above in the five Hotels and Inns in the Republic of Ireland was 11.6%. For the five UK hotels and inns the figure was 6.37%. Thus, despite the claims made by HotelCo with respect of equal opportunities for older workers, there is evidence to suggest that older employees are marginalised given the age balance of workplaces in this study.

With regards to selection, as experience was considered essential by some managers, this may place older workers at an advantage. However for GSS positions (general guest service positions which tended to be the norm in inns) experience was less important. Appearance was considered crucial and candidates were assessed on appearance during the interview. The objectivity of assessing appearance is disputable and this may allow the manager to exercise bias, appointing a person on “aesthetic” grounds in order to produce a particular style of service (Warhurst, Nickson, Witz and Cullen, 2000). This may disadvantage older applicants. Moreover, the inns, which employed fewer older workers than hotels, tended to place more emphasis on design, offering a “contemporary bar and restaurant” (HotelCo website). From the inns visited in the UK and Ireland, this meant a bar and restaurant which used contemporary materials such as glass, steel, wood, halogen lighting and designer furniture. In such a working environment, the recruiting manager may decide to appoint a younger workforce to enhance company image and deliver service quality (Nickson, Warhurst and Dutton, 2005). The importance of good social skills may indirectly benefit older workers as Personnel and Training managers, in the UK

and Ireland, commented that older people had good/better social skills. There is much scope for covert discrimination against older workers in the selection process, including the interview phase (Duncan, 2003). However, this study did not include an observation and analysis of selection interviews in HotelCo and, therefore, no meaningful statements can be made about selection interviews in the workplaces visited.

As far as training and development was concerned, in general, the nature of training depended on the department in which the employee worked. None of the hotels had age-awareness training or anything similar. The only item mentioned (by Sally, a Personnel and Training manager in an Irish property) was a poster on age awareness. The lack of focus on age-awareness may be the result of a lack of awareness about the issue, the sensitivity of the subject or fear of being discriminatory. As far as promotion was concerned, all positions were advertised internally and externally although personnel and training managers stated a strong preference for internal candidates, particularly the properties in Ireland. This would certainly disadvantage external candidates, whatever their age.

All of the HotelCo properties had an equal opportunities policy which was developed by headquarters and implemented in the hotel. Personnel and Training managers considered the policy effective but Emily, a manager of an Irish property, stated: "I don't know if it is effective. It is clear". A UK-based manager, Angie, claimed that "it's not necessarily the policy (that's at fault) but the people". This reiterates the importance of the line manager's role and responsibility in ensuring an equal opportunities policy is implemented as line managers are taking-on greater responsibility for recruitment, selection, induction and training (Cornelius, 1999). Moreover, evidence from the survey suggests that few special initiatives existed to encourage older workers to apply for job vacancies in HotelCo properties. Therefore, without specific initiatives to

attract older workers this policy is a façade, an empty shell (Dex and Purdam, 2005) which is an exercise in image management (Hoque and Noon, 2004). Moreover, It can be argued that some Personnel and Training managers are “colluding with the rhetoric” of using the right gestures and language but without a firm commitment to anti-discriminatory practice” (Thompson, 2006, p. 180).

In terms of workplace age diversity, the composition of the workforce seemed to differ according to the hotel brand and age segmentation at the departmental level was evident. The manager’s knowledge of the local labour market was sometimes poor, with one Irish Personnel and Training manager, Louise, stating that “The labour market is full of younger people. There are a lot of students looking for part-time work”. There are undoubtedly many older people looking for work but they seem invisible to this manager. Thus, when asked how the age balance of employees had changed over the years, many Personnel and Training managers in the UK and Ireland were unable to answer the question as they had been appointed to the position for less than a year. One UK Personnel and Training manager, Debbie, stated that the ethnic composition had affected the age structure of the workforce as younger Eastern European workers had largely replaced older Afro-Caribbean workers in the housekeeping department, which employed a third of all staff at the property.

Little attempt was made to actively manage employee diversity in the properties with Louise stating that “It’s not an issue” and Debbie considering that employee diversity at her property “happens on its own”. This corresponds to Loretto and White’s (2006) finding from research into employers’ attitudes, practices and policies towards older workers in Scotland (utilising focus groups and including participants from the hospitality industry), that “The age-mix within the organisations seemed to be the result more of chance than deliberate policy” (Loretto and White, 2006a, p. 327)

It was evident from interviews with Personnel and Training managers in the UK and Ireland that Eastern European workers were considered desirable hotel employees with one British manager claiming that almost all housekeeping staff were from Eastern Europe. As more Eastern European workers seek employment in the hospitality industry, both in the UK and Ireland, the age diversity of the workforce may change, resulting in a younger workforce. However, a UK manager, Trish, stated that the age balance had not changed over the last three years because “When one person leaves the person that comes is the same age”. This, in itself, suggests that discriminatory practices may exist with the manager matching a job to a person of a certain age, confirming Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby (2003) contention that organisations have commonly-held beliefs about the suitability of certain groups for certain jobs.

When asked how the age-balance of employees compared to the age-balance of guests, opinions varied. At one property, BBH, the guests were a “bit more mature” while at another two properties, BHI and CKI, the age range of guests depended on the night of the week. Whilst staying at an inn in Ireland to undertake interviews, it was apparent that, at breakfast, the vast majority of guests were over fifty although, during the interview, the Personnel and Training manager claimed that the age-range of employees was very similar to that of guests (3% of staff aged 50 or above; average age of employee:28). In this instance it may be that the day in question was untypical in terms of guest age diversity or that the manager tended not to notice older guests. A Personnel and Training manager of a UK property, BRH, thought that the age relationship, between employees and guests, was not important. It is not possible to verify the accuracy of this statement as this thesis did not seek to solicit customers’ views on the age diversity of the workforce.

Personnel and Training managers in the UK and Ireland were asked about a range of government initiatives in terms of equality in the workplace. Only one of the Personnel and Training managers in Ireland, Emily, had heard of the “Say No To Ageism Week” and had displayed a poster on ageism in the workplace. No follow-up training was held. Little awareness existed of the Employment Equality Acts and initiatives to promote equality of opportunity for older people under the Equal Status Act. The same applied to awareness concerning the contents of the report “Towards Age Friendly Provision of Goods and Services”.

In the UK, none of the UK Personnel and Training managers was aware of the information available from the Third Age Employment Network. All five managers were aware of the government’s legal initiatives to outlaw age discrimination in the workplace. As far as the following initiatives were concerned, the Personnel and Training managers knew very little or nothing about the Code of Practice on Age Diversity in Employment; Age Positive’s Practical Guide for Business (Age Diversity at Work) and the DTI’s report entitled “Towards Equality and Diversity: Report on Responses on Age”. Personnel and Training managers did know of the existence of The New Deal 50+ programme but it wasn’t considered a good method to recruit older workers. One Personnel and Training manager, Debbie, stated that “We’ve never taken anyone on from the programme and another, Trish, “We haven’t appointed anyone from the Jobcentre in 2 years, although we interview a lot of people (from there)”. These opinions should be of concern to the Department for Work and Pensions as it would appear that some Personnel and Training managers have more or less written the programme off. Given that the New Deal 50 plus is a key part of the UK government’s Welfare Work Strategy, and having been used by over 98,000 people to gain employment (www.number-10.gov.uk), this is potentially a major issue. It may be the case that people on the New Deal 50+ programme are not being effectively trained in writing a CV, completing a SAF or presenting themselves in an interview. Thus, in line with the OECD’s

recommendation concerning the New Deal 50 plus programme, various aspects could be improved” (OECD, 2004)

There are a number of potential explanations for Personnel and Managers’ poor knowledge of age discrimination initiatives. Firstly, it may be the case that the initiatives are not sufficiently publicised by the authority with the responsibility for the particular initiative, for example the Department for Work and Pensions concerning the New Deal 50+ Programme in the UK or the Equality Authority’s “Say No To Ageism Week” in the ROI. Secondly, it may be the case that Personnel and Training managers do not feel ageism and age discrimination in the workplace is an issue which is sufficiently important to merit further exploration. Thirdly, it may be the case that Personnel and Training managers were not getting sufficient support from headquarters about equality initiatives regarding older workers and were left to their own devices to find out about such initiatives. Finally, Personnel and Training managers may have been so preoccupied with other diversity initiatives that they overlooked age equality and diversity. Indeed, some Personnel and Training managers were of the opinion that age diversity just happened and did not need to be managed.

Personnel and Training managers in the UK and Ireland were aware of the benefits and drawbacks of employing older workers. Managers in both countries had similar beliefs regarding the benefits of employing older people, believing older workers to be more reliable, sensible, punctual, mature, confident and courteous, to have more experience, to be used to discipline, to be less transient, have good skills, knowledge and standards, give better customer care, have lower levels of sickness and absenteeism, be better at understanding customer needs and have more passion for the industry. More drawbacks were identified by managers in Ireland than managers in the UK. Irish managers considered older workers to be less able to adapt, less flexible, be set in their ways, be resistant to change, not good at multi-skilling, less

interested in training, lacking in Information Technology skills and have greater levels of long-term sickness. UK personnel and training managers, between them, only mentioned two drawbacks: May take a little longer to learn new skills and greater resistance to change. It is difficult to account for national differences in terms of managers' perceptions of the drawbacks of employing older workers although it was certainly the case that opinions in Ireland were more polarised than they were in the UK. Thus, in one (heavily unionised) Irish property, MNT, the Personnel and Training manager was critical of older workers in the hotel and the difficulty in introducing change whilst at another Irish property, CKI, the Personnel and Training manager was very positive about older workers.

The employment of older workers may be affected by the firm's approach to employment relations. With reference to the ten HotelCo properties where interviews took place, there seemed to be a clear difference in employment relations between the hotels in Dublin and the hotels and inns in the rest of the group. The two hotels in Dublin, BBH and MNT, had both been acquired, BBH in 1972 and MNT in 1999. These properties, prior to acquisition, had relatively high levels of union membership and a greater number of older workers than other properties within the group, characteristics which remained after acquisition. For example, Mike, the Training manager in BBH stated that "It's still unionized here and there's a little battle all the time with some older individuals". Referring to union members at her property, Sally claimed that "A problem here is with people on the old contracts, the full-time workers who are more negative". It is interesting to note that in MNT, the average age of employees on the payroll was 37.32, the highest of the ten HotelCo properties surveyed. Furthermore, MNT also had a greater percentage of "older" employees (26.17%) amongst its workforce than the other nine units in the sample. Therefore, it may be the case that union density will affect the employment of older workers. The fact that the two Dublin properties had higher levels of union membership confirms Piso's (2003, p. 211) finding that "The Dublin hotel

industry experiences significantly higher levels of union density than is the case amongst hotel workers in the UK”.

7.4. What are managers’ perceptions of older workers and how might these affect employment policies and practices?

In an attempt to identify and assess managers’ perceptions of employees aged fifty and above in HotelCo, a survey was undertaken. All general managers, deputy general managers, food and beverage managers, personnel and training managers and financial controllers/accounts managers in HotelCo were surveyed using a postal questionnaire. A full discussion of the findings is presented in chapter 5.

An analysis of results from the survey concerning managers’ perceptions of older workers in this study revealed that managers in HotelCo hold generally positive views of older employees, particularly with regard to productivity, team work, interpersonal communication skills, reliability, conscientiousness, pace of work, number of errors, concentration levels, physical ability, absenteeism and supervision skills. Results from the survey reveal that managers did not appear to have any major reservations about older worker qualities. Thus older workers were not considered slow, any less interested in being trained, not needing longer rest periods more often and not resistant to new ways of doing things. This finding contradicts the findings of Taylor and Walker (1994) who, in a postal survey of employers’ attitudes and policies towards older workers in the UK, found that employers have both positive and negative views although, in practice, it is the negative views which prevail. According to Taylor and Walker (1994) the positive views were associated with productivity, reliability and loyalty whereas negative views were associated with flexibility, speed in adapting to new technology and cautiousness. HotelCo managers’ positive inclination towards older employees may have been affected by the phenomenon of

“sageism” where the assumption is made that the older person is wise (Minichiello, Browne and Kendig, 2000). Alternatively, the research instrument, namely a questionnaire, may have produced socially-desirable responses as a survey of attitudes towards minority groups may not produce accurate and honest responses (Riach and Rich, 2002). It is also feasible that opinions about older workers have changed for the better in the last twelve years, assisted by government, industry and organisational attempts to discourage age discrimination in the workplace, both in the ROI and the UK.

In relation to the survey concerning managers’ perceptions of older workers in this study, three null hypotheses were formulated. In relation to the first hypothesis, “There is no significant difference between males and females in terms of their perceptions of older employees”, statistical analysis of the findings established that there was no significant difference. With reference to the second hypothesis, “There is no significant difference between UK-based managers and ROI-based managers in terms of their perceptions of older employees”, statistical analysis revealed that there was a significant difference. Finally, statistical analysis of the third hypothesis, “There is no significant difference between different age-groups in terms of their perceptions of older employees” established that there was no significant difference.

It may have been expected that managers in the ROI would be more positive about older workers given that age discrimination legislation in the ROI has been in existence since the introduction of the Employment Equality Act (1998) and, a month before interviews took place, the “Say No to Ageism Week” was held throughout Ireland. However, this was not the case as managers in the UK were significantly more positive about older workers despite the fact that the UK, at the time the interviews took place, did not have age discrimination legislation.

The fact that the survey found no significant difference between age-groups in terms of their perceptions of older employees is perhaps somewhat surprising as it might be expected that, the younger the manager, the more likely it is he/she holds negative views of older workers. Based on the results of a survey conducted by the IPM in 1992, Lyon and Pollard (1997, p. 247) conclude that “younger personnel managers are more prejudiced against older employees”. However, as the survey in this study assessed the views of a range of managers in the organisation, not only personnel managers, it is difficult to compare the results of this survey with that conducted by the IPM in 1992. Other studies have pointed to younger people possessing a range of positive, neutral and negative attitudes. For example, a survey of business studies students’ perceptions of older workers by Loretto, Duncan and White (2000a) revealed that 96% of respondents believed that the performance of manual workers declined with age although students’ attitudes towards older workers from a list of attributes was extremely mixed. Further statistical analysis of students’ perceptions of older workers by Loretto, Duncan and White (2000a) established two clusters: Cluster 1, the largest of the two, contained students who tended to be more sympathetic towards older workers and Cluster 2 which contained students who were less sympathetic or weren’t sure. A survey of MBA students by Lyon and Pollard (1997) revealed that these students, 75% of whom were under 40 years of age, were noticeably less positive about older managers than respondents in the 1992 IPM survey, where 48% of the respondents were under 40 years of age

Research undertaken by Austin and Droussiotis (2004) regarding Cypriot managers’ perceptions of older workers in Cyprus suggests that, in relation to seven statements about older workers, significant gender differences were evident in relation to only one of the seven statements, namely that promotions are based on seniority. In research undertaken by Loretto and White (2006c), using a focus group and survey methodology, respondents believed that work

performance declined with age, commencing from the age of 45 and above, and affecting women at an earlier stage than men. It is unclear how female hotel managers might perceive older workers differently to male hotel managers. Female hotel managers may have been affected by gender-based discrimination and, therefore, may be more sensitive to discrimination in general but statistical analysis of the survey data confirmed that no significant difference existed between males and females in terms of their perceptions of older employees

Interviews with Personnel and Training managers, whilst also uncovering positive views of older workers, also revealed negative views. These included resistance to change, difficulty in adapting to flexibility, rigid in their duties, not good at multi-skilling, less interested in training, lack of IT skills, greater long-term sickness, take longer to learn new skills, less able to adapt and poor customer skills. This may be a demonstration of a manager's ability to "draw upon different views of the older worker according to different job conditions and at different stages of the employment relationship" (Arrowsmith, 1996). As the Personnel and Training managers who were interviewed were predominantly "young" (all but one was under 30 years of age), it may be the case that older workers will be seen in a less positive light (Platman and Tinker, 1998).

When asked about what special initiatives existed to encourage applicants from older workers when filling vacancies, only one initiative was mentioned more than once: part-time hours (which was only mentioned twice). The use of part-time labour is a characteristic of numerical and temporal flexibility (Bryson and Karsten, 2005) and some managers may be utilising older workers to create a more flexible workforce. However, it should be noted that part-time employment is the most popular flexible working arrangement in hotels and restaurants in the UK and is found in 53% of workforces (Kersley et al, 2006). In his book, "The Future of Work", Charles Handy (1990, p. 100) asks the question "Why could it

not be made easier for the older workers to work part-time?”. It seems that this advice has largely been ignored by hospitality managers, at least as far as results from the survey in this study is concerned.

Less than 20% of managers had tried to measure the effects of the property’s equal opportunities or managing diversity policies. Although it is sometimes difficult to measure the effects of such policies, it is nevertheless important that appropriate measures are developed and used to assess effectiveness. Evidence of possible discrimination against older workers can be gleaned from the response to the questions “Have you ever been discouraged from applying for a job because of wording in an advert that contained or hinted at an age range?” where 26.2% stated that they had and the question “Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your age during an interview?” where 28.6% stated they had. Although only one manager agreed with the statement that “They (older employees) are not physically able to keep up with the work”, in relation to jobs which would not be suitable for older employees, four managers stated that “the physical element of the job can be exhausting” and two respondents mentioned that older employees would be “prone to injury”. This may result in managerial stereotyping where jobs are deemed inappropriate for older workers. Therefore, this finding would support the body of literature which suggests that managerial stereotyping is significant in relation to the employment of older workers. It is also interesting to note the characteristics of managers in the survey. They were predominantly young (83.3% being under the age of 35), able-bodied (95.2%) and white (100%). This does not represent a diverse workforce when compared to the demographic characteristics of the UK and Irish populations.

Older women seemed to occupy a certain position in the workplace. Thus, Louise, a Personnel and Training manager at a hotel in Ireland, stated that “Older women, in particular, function as mother figures in the organisation”.

Furthermore, a female employee at a hotel, Karen, in relation to working with younger people, stated that she had “good contact with students. They treat me like a mother”. Thus, older females may function as a mother figure in the organisation, comforting and nurturing the guest or other employees (Biswas and Cassell, 1996). However, placing women in certain positions and encouraging gendered behaviour may not be compatible with a sustainable equal opportunities policy (Biswas and Cassell, 1996).

7.5. How does an analysis of the accounts of employment given by older workers provide an understanding of age discrimination in the workplace?

The hospitality industry has a reputation for high labour turnover with many employees staying in their job less than a year. However, in the Irish hotels where interviews took place, all six employees had been employed in the same hotel for at least fourteen years. The situation was very different in the inns, probably due to the opening dates of the properties concerned. A similar picture emerged in HotelCo’s UK properties. When asked whether they considered themselves “older” workers, opinions were very much divided. Some workers stated that age wasn’t important while others did not feel comfortable with the word “older”, preferring instead to use the term “mature”. This may be a sign of “gerontophobia”, as discussed by Germaine Greer in *The Guardian* (14/09/05) who claims that “Old people themselves are in denial about their degree of ageing and do not thank those who remind them of it”.

Respondents were asked “How old do you have to be in order to be an “older” worker?” Some employees gave a chronological age. This ranged from the mid-40s to the 80s. Other employees provided a more philosophical answer with Karen stating that “The day I can’t get up from bed and work is the day that I’m old” and Margaret concluding that an older worker was someone who actually felt they were slowing down. This reinforces the suggestion that age and older

age are relative concepts and the age at which a person becomes “old” will differ according to a range of factors such as health, income, gender, social class and education. Thus, defining an older worker in chronological terms is problematic and research on older workers which uses chronological age as a condition of respondent selection may result in the inclusion of workers who may not define themselves as “older” workers and the exclusion of those who might. Therefore, in researching older worker employment, it may be advantageous to select workers based on whether they consider themselves as older workers, an approach advocated by Riach (2007) as, for some people, a clear boundary into old age does not exist (Wilson, 2000). Furthermore, where older workers stated a chronological age well above the SPA, this may reflect Seabrook’s (2003, p. 29-30) comment that “The age at which people admit to growing older has risen”.

Older employees were aware of the age structure of employees in their property and the fact that most employees were under 30 years of age. Some employees also commented on the age structure of a particular department which was considered, perhaps, unusual in being staffed by a greater number of older or younger workers. Thus, it seems that departmental job segmentation is ageist in that certain departments will be composed of jobs deemed, by management, to be more suitable for a person of a given age. Therefore, segmented internal labour markets (Collinson, Knights and Collinson, 1990) operate which disadvantage, or sometimes benefit, older workers.

Opinions were divided on whether older workers thought the hotel’s management preferred young recruits. An Irish employee, Bob, stated that younger managers were more likely to choose younger staff whilst Janet thought management didn’t have a deliberate age group in mind but were mindful of the cost. This may confirm Price’s (1994) contention that the hotel and catering industry operates a cost-minimization strategy, using

disadvantaged labour in operational positions and utilising personnel practices which keep costs low. In general, older workers did not feel they were treated any differently by managers because of their age. In the UK properties, only one employee, John, believed they had been treated differently (in a negative sense) by management because of their age stating that the hotel's management had not provided him with the possibility of promotion due to the hotel's "youth orientated promotion strategy".

The older workers who were interviewed commented on their positive working relationships with younger workers with mutual respect being important in fostering good relations. Respondents were asked about the skills which they had as an older person which a younger person wouldn't have and, conversely, skills which a younger person would have which they, as an older person, wouldn't have. Older employees believed themselves to be better at dealing with customers/looking after customers, have better judgement, be better able to evaluate the consequences of actions, have more (life) experience, have greater insight into the job, have greater commitment to the job, have good communication skills, be more mature, proactive, patient, diligent and diplomatic. Older employees believed younger employees to have better computer skills, be better qualified/educated and to be more confident, enthusiastic, modern in outlook, energetic, flexible and up to date with regulations.

Employees were asked the type of jobs in the hotel which would be particularly suitable for older employees and, conversely, jobs which would not be suitable. Most employees considered most jobs to be suitable. However, housekeeping was mentioned by nine older workers (six in Ireland and three in the UK) as being not suitable for older employees as work in this area was considered physically demanding. It is undoubtedly the case that housekeeping is a physically demanding job for a person of any age. Indeed, one Personnel and

Training manager, Mary, commenting on housekeeping work, stated that “for someone at 58 years of age, (cleaning) 15 rooms is too much. To me 15 rooms is too much”. It may be the case that the organisation is placing too much pressure on its housekeeping staff in terms of the number of rooms to be cleaned. It may also be the case that the job itself could be redesigned so that it is within the physical capacity of the older worker (Doering, Rhodes and Schuster, 1983) but there was little evidence to suggest that housekeeping jobs had been redesigned in any of the properties where interviews with older workers took place. Or it may be the case that housekeeping jobs are age-typed as typically belonging to younger staff (Perry and Finkelstein, 1999). According to Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby (2003), structural discrimination results in certain groups being excluded due to certain practices. Thus, in this instance, the practice of choosing employees for housekeeping jobs, with a greater emphasis on physical ability, may represent a form of structural discrimination.

Some older workers did not consider ageism to be a problem with one Irish worker, Janet, stating that “I can only speak from personal experience but I have never felt discriminated because of my age. It’s not an issue”. Janet also pointed out that “Maybe age discrimination does go on but I’ve never come across it”. This would correspond to Donovan and Street’s (2000, p. 28) contention that “People may be victims of a variety of forms of age discrimination without being aware of it”. Similarly, it may well be the case that an older worker may feel that he or she has been discriminated against because of their age when this was not the case (Donovan and Street, 2000). Other older workers were aware that it existed with a male UK-based worker, John, claiming that “The whole industry is ageist”. An Irish worker, Ann, considered the General Manager’s attitude important with respect to the employment and treatment of older people in the hotel.

The majority of older workers who were interviewed were interested in being trained and had undertaken a range of training and development courses in such areas as health and safety, customer care and information technology. All employees interviewed in HotelCo properties in the UK and Ireland answered “yes” to the question: “Do you feel that all age groups are treated the same in terms of access to training in this organisation?” This contradicts the findings of Brooke and Taylor’s (2005) research of organisations in the UK and Australia which demonstrated that older workers were excluded from training opportunities, especially in relation to new technology. As far as training is concerned, it is vital that all workers have the same access to such training as older workers tend to have fewer qualifications than younger workers (OECD, 2006b). Otherwise, older workers will be placed at a disadvantage in the workplace. However, it may be the case that the organisation is using training to serve a social function, helping workers form friendships thus distracting them from the alienating work which they perform (Grugulis, 2006).

Some older employees were not interested in promotion for a variety of reasons. These included caring responsibilities at home, not wanting the extra responsibility, a lack of Information Technology skills and not being interested in promotion. Therefore, a range of reasons explain the possible lack of interest in being promoted and it is also possible that older workers limit their own horizons (Newton, 2006) or internalise negative prejudice and discriminate against themselves (Loretto and White, 2006a). The lack of Information Technology skills, in particular, which was mentioned by many older employees in HotelCo, may represent a challenge to the future prospects of older workers as today’s society is characterised by technological change with less respect for tradition (Seabrook, 2003).

Employees viewed retirement in one of three ways: positive, neutral and negative. Opinions varied greatly. Some older workers were looking forward to

retirement, others hadn't really thought about it or had mixed feelings about it and others looked towards retirement with trepidation, with one UK-based employee stating that "It would drive me nuts". The variety of views regarding retirement is, perhaps, unsurprising given that it is daunting for many individuals (Slater, 1995). Moreover, for many older people, a sense of purpose and belonging is attributed to their employment situation (Slater, 1995). Undoubtedly, the decision to retire is made with reference to opportunity structures, including opportunities for leisure and work (Cotter, Hermsen and Vanneman, 2002).

7.6. Ageism and age discrimination in the workplace: theoretical and practical considerations

This section will commence with a discussion of theories on ageing and their relevance in explaining ageism and age discrimination in employment before discussing theories of justice, focusing on procedural and distributive justice, and assessing how these theories relate to an understanding of age discrimination given the evidence obtained in this study. Thereafter, older peoples' position in employment will be examined using human capital theory, segmented labour market theory and the reserve army of labour theory. The section concludes with a discussion of direct and indirect age discrimination.

Biological theories to ageing focus on finding reasons for biological and psychological change in human beings over time (Hughes, 1995). Therefore, as human beings age, they undergo functional and bodily changes (Hughes, 1995). These changes render older employees less able to undertake certain tasks and jobs. Interviews with older workers in this study revealed that, in general, they did not have any "special needs" because of their age. Only one older worker, Jim, reported having any major health problems. This employee stated that, after having had a heart attack with subsequent hospitalization, he had become an older worker. In any hotel workplace, some jobs will invariably

be more physically demanding than others. Indeed, in this study, housekeeping jobs were mentioned by eight older employees as not being suitable because they were physically demanding. It is important, however, to reiterate that biological theories, on their own, do not offer an explanation of ageism and age discrimination in the hotel workplace as ageing will affect different people in different ways, leaving some older workers largely unaffected (The Economist, 2006). Furthermore, as biological theories focus on age as a problem, viewing it as a pathological state or disease (Thompson, 2006), such theories do not explain structural inequalities caused by political, social and economic factors. Biological theories to ageing may have some power in explaining why some older workers define themselves as older employees and why certain physically-demanding jobs are considered less suitable for older workers.

Disengagement theory refers to the process whereby old people withdraw from society, ensuring continuity of the overall system and balance between social groups (Hughes, 1995). Thus, older people would tend to have lower expectations as they gradually withdraw from roles, obligations and social networks (Vincent, 1995). In an employment context, the older worker may therefore be expected to withdraw from job roles demonstrating, perhaps, less interest or commitment in being trained or promoted. Thus, as an older worker approaches retirement, he or she may be expected to demonstrate a higher level of disengagement from the organisation, with lower commitment to training and development. However, from interviews with older workers, this, in general, did not seem to be the case, as the majority of older workers continued to be enthusiastic about training. Mike, for example, stated that “I want to do training. I never refuse any opportunities.” Nevertheless, there was some evidence to support older worker disengagement. For example, Tim stated that “They knew when I came here that I had no ambition to be trained. It’s not a productive investment for the hotel. I’m not building a career” and Peter commented that “I’m 60 next birthday and I’m not interested in promotion”. It is difficult to

establish whether “long-serving” older hotel workers demonstrated more disengagement from the organisation than older workers who had recently entered employment in the industry as there were only a small number of interviewees in the latter group (Jim, Dave, Tim, Alison and Philip).

Social constructionism theorists of ageing reject the view that ageing is natural and argue that, to a large extent, a person’s ageing is affected by socio-cultural factors (Blaikie, 1999). From interviews with older employees it was evident that some older workers were affected by such factors. For example, Alison didn’t feel any older because “I have children and they keep me young”. Furthermore, social constructionism theories may help explain why certain jobs were considered suitable or not suitable for older workers as beliefs about job suitability will invariably be influenced by prevailing socio-cultural factors, both in terms of managers’ views of older workers and older workers’ views of themselves. Symbolic interactionism theorists believe, however, that people imagine themselves in other social roles and, therefore, meanings of ageing arise out of social interaction which manifests itself in stereotypes, images and labels (Blaikie, 1999). There was some evidence to support symbolic interactionism as Sally, an Irish Personnel and Training manager, commented that older employees’ attitudes are more negative than positive. However, positive stereotypes of older workers tended to predominate amongst managers. In terms of labels used to describe older workers, some employees preferred the term “mature” to “older”. For example, John said that “I consider myself mature. Old is a relative term” and Gwen stated that “I consider myself to be more mature. I wouldn’t use the term “older”. I know you’re kidding yourself but mature is more sensitive”.

Distributive justice relates to decisions where “outcomes are consistent with implicit norms for allocation, such as equity or equality” and procedural justice refers to the justice of the processes which lead to decision outcomes (Colquitt,

2001, p.386). However, there is much overlap between these two concepts (De Cremer, 2005). In relation to distributive justice, all twenty three older workers who were interviewed felt they had equal access to training in the organization with Helen adding "Age doesn't come into it. They (the management) encourage people. Everyone gets trained whatever level they are at". In relation to procedural justice, there was some evidence to suggest that older workers were not being treated equitably because of their age. For example, Bob, an older worker at an Irish Inn, had applied for promotion "A couple of years ago. It was ages before the Personnel and Training manager got round to having interviews. I asked a few times when the interviews were going to be. She asked me if I'm sure I would be up to it, that the job may be a bit strenuous".

According to human capital theory, workers are rewarded for their productivity in a non-discriminatory labour market with group disadvantage occurring because the group is less productive (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003). When asked about the benefits and drawbacks of employing older employees, Personnel and Training managers did not mention productivity as being an issue, although such drawbacks as resistance to change and difficulty in adapting to flexibility may adversely affect productivity. Furthermore, 76% of managers in the survey stated that "They (older workers) are very productive employees". In terms of segmented labour market theory, some groups will be over-represented in primary, secondary, core or periphery labour markets (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003). Janet, an older employee at an Irish property, thought management didn't have a deliberate age group in mind when recruiting but were mindful of the cost. Thus, older workers may be considered as being more expensive to employ and this may affect an older person's prospects of joining the core group of workers in the property. However, at Sally's property in Ireland, the full-time staff tended to be older than the part-time staff and this may indicate an instance where older employees are part of the primary internal labour market. Finally, the reserve army of labour theory is

based on the writings of Marx who saw the reserve army being employed when conditions were right or repelled from the labour market at other times (Hollinshead, Nicholls and Tailby, 2003). At the time when primary research took place for this study, unemployment was at a historical low-point in the UK and ROI (below 5%) and, therefore, Personnel and Training managers commented on the difficulties of recruiting suitably qualified staff. Thus Louise, a Personnel and Training manager in Ireland, stated that the hotel industry in Ireland is “trying to get more older people back into the workforce”. This would point to older workers being used as a reserve army of labour in a tight labour market where “prime-age labour” (Loretto, Duncan and White, 2000a) is difficult to obtain. However, it would seem that the hotel industry, both in the UK and ROI, utilizes a number of reserve army workforces including students and A8 workers, both of which represent a predominantly “young” workforce.

Discrimination can be direct or indirect (Tomei, 2003). Direct discrimination takes place where an employee is treated less favourably on the grounds of age, gender, race et cetera than an employee of a different age, gender, race et cetera (Daniels, 2004). This study uncovered little evidence to suggest that older workers are experiencing direct discrimination although John, an older employee at a property in the UK, claimed that, when applying for promotion, he had been treated differently (in a negative sense) by management because of his age due to the hotel’s “youth orientated promotion strategy”. Indirect discrimination takes place when an employer applies an unjustifiable criterion to different groups (for example, based on age, gender and race) which adversely affects one group, resulting in a person from the disadvantaged group being unable to comply with the criterion (Daniels, 2004). Evidence of indirect discrimination against older employees included the widespread use of internet recruitment, a focus on local colleges when recruiting, a focus on work flexibility in the Inns, a desire to recruit Eastern European workers and few special initiatives to attract older employees into the workforce. Moreover, the lack of

recognition regarding the importance of age by some managers in equality issues may serve as a barrier to the employment and advancement of older worker equality.

HotelCo seemed to be combining a managing diversity approach to workplace equality with an emphasis on maximising individual potential and a liberal and fair equal opportunities approach utilising an equal opportunities policy statement, attempting to promote equality of opportunity in recruitment and selection, training and development and other employment areas. Thus, for example, when asked how she had tried to manage employee diversity in her property, Trish stated “All our jobs are open to everyone. It depends on the individual”. This would indicate a managing diversity approach is being pursued as the focus is on the individual rather than social-group membership. Although equal opportunities policies existed at the corporate and business unit or property level, line managers had to implement these policies and this was not always done effectively. Thus, in order for equal opportunities policies to be successful, effective implementation of such policies is required. Line managers, therefore, have an important role to play in workplace equality for older employees.

7.7. Recommendations for organizations in order to reduce age discrimination in the workplace

In relation to recruitment and selection:

1. Ensure age-neutrality in recruitment and selection
2. Develop and implement a recruitment strategy which uses a broad range of methods
3. Develop and implement special initiatives to attract older workers into the workforce
4. Collect and make use of statistics on the age of employees in the workforce and the age of applicants who were short-listed, rejected or appointed

In relation to training and development:

5. Offer age-awareness training to all employees and managers
6. Train line managers on equality issues and how they should interpret and implement the workplaces' equal opportunities and/or managing diversity policy
7. Offer specific Information Technology training for older workers
8. Develop and implement a promotions policy which is age-neutral and encourage older workers to apply for promotion
9. Offer a greater range of flexible work patterns to all workers and offer greater flexibility in terms of retirement
10. Ensure age-neutrality where redundancies is concerned

In relation to equal opportunities and managing diversity:

11. Include a specific mention of age in the organization's equal opportunities or managing diversity policy
12. Establish and support an age-diversity workgroup to advise on age-related matters
13. Develop and implement policy and practice on developing an age-diverse workforce
14. Ensure that all managers are aware of age-discrimination legislation and other major initiatives to address age discrimination in the workplace and that these are translated into improved policy and practice
15. Measure the effects of the organization's equal opportunities and/or managing diversity policies

7.8. Limitations and implications for future research

By its very nature, research has limitations and it is the intention of this section to engage with this issue by discussing some of the limitations in this thesis. In many respects, these issues have been examined in Chapter 4 which discussed limitations in relation to the approach, methodology, methods and analytical techniques employed in this study. As far as the qualitative component of this study is concerned, namely the use of a case study and a focus on interviews, it is difficult to ascertain the truth and, from a positivistic standpoint, such methods are largely unscientific, subjective and biased. However, the use of quantitative methods is also problematic. Thus, in using of a survey to research managers'

perceptions of older workers, the use of statistical methods and techniques will not uncover underlying causal mechanisms (Johnson, 2003). Furthermore, according to Riach and Rich (2002, p. 481), the survey may produce socially-desirable responses as “surveys of attitudes towards minority groups are not likely to produce honest and accurate responses”. This may have occurred in relation to the survey employed in this study as managers may have wanted to seem enlightened, non-discriminatory and positive about older workers.

It was argued in Chapter 4 that the non-probability sampling methods used for this study were chosen to purposefully identify properties which employed at least three staff aged 50 and above and to reflect different geographical locations of properties in the group. Hence, interviews were conducted in Dublin, Limerick, Cork, Glasgow, Newcastle, Birmingham, Bristol and London. The case study organisation itself, HotelCo, was purposively chosen because it was the largest hotel operator in Ireland and was the fastest-expanding hotel group in the UK. Furthermore, the researcher had corporate level contacts in the company who were prepared to offer support, provide information and answer any queries about work processes. The choice of properties in the sample broadly reflected the composition of HotelCo’s portfolio. The two main brands, hotels and inns, were proportionally represented in the sample of ten properties selected for interviews. As far as the survey was concerned, a non-probability sampling method was chosen as all general managers, deputy general managers, food and beverage managers, personnel and training managers and financial controllers/accounts managers were surveyed. The choice of older employees in each property was decided by the Personnel and Training manager. Thus, the manager may have selected older workers who were less critical about organisational policies and practices. In reflection, the researcher should have asked for a list of all older workers within a property and randomly selected from names on the list. As the case study organisation, survey and interviews used a non-probability sampling technique, care must be

taken when generalising from the sample to the population (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). With hindsight, wherever possible, a probability sampling technique, such as simple random sampling, should have been used.

The original intention of this thesis was to undertake a cross-national comparison of age discrimination in hotel employment, focusing on the UK and ROI. However, whilst investigating the problem of age discrimination in hotel employment in the abovementioned countries, it became evident that national differences were not as influential as had been anticipated. Instead, the property brand, human resource management practices, managers' attitudes towards the employment of older workers and union density were more important factors in determining the employment and equal treatment of older employees. Therefore, whilst this study encapsulates some comparative national elements in relation to age discrimination in hotel employment, this thesis does not primarily focus on comparing the UK and ROI to establish the effects of national culture on older worker employment. Given the four research questions, however, this is in keeping with the principal focus of the research.

The findings and conclusion of this study do not, in any way, represent a definitive exploration of age discrimination in the hospitality industry as this study focused on properties within one international hotel group. A limitation of selecting one hotel group for in-depth analysis is that there is no way of knowing if properties in the group are "typical" of the industry. This is perhaps particularly problematic in the hospitality industry given the great range and diversity of businesses. In particular, work processes in small hotels may be very different from those in a multinational business. There is clearly scope for further research into an emerging but complex area such as this and, therefore, the next section will review how the topic may benefit from further research.

Firstly, given recent moves in the UK to legislate against age discrimination in the workplace with the introduction of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, a fruitful avenue of research could focus on how these regulations have affected organizational employment policies and practices. It is claimed that the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 are likely to affect many areas of the employment relationship, including the use of recruitment agencies, the use of age limits, experience requirements, graduate recruitment and the whole of the recruitment, selection, training and development process (IRS, 2006, b). Further research could establish whether this is indeed the case.

Secondly, there is a paucity of research on the attitudes of the consumer regarding an age-diverse workforce. A longitudinal study by Kochan et al (2003) of four firms in the USA revealed that most customers did not care whether the salespeople who served them were of the same gender or race. A similar approach could be used to determine how customers feel about being served by a person of a particular age or how they feel about an age-diverse workforce. This research could use a mixed-methods, case study approach with different firms within an industry being examined or a representative firm from a range of industries.

Thirdly, the effects of EU integration and labour market change on the employment of older workers, especially regarding younger workers from A8 countries, could be a productive topic for research given that, under the Worker Registration Scheme for A8 nationals (citizens from countries that acceded to the EU on the 1st May 2004, namely Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), the UK registered 195,000 A8 nationals in 2005, most of whom (171,400) were from Poland (Salt and Millar, 2006). There is evidence from interviews with Personnel and Training managers that Eastern European workers, particularly Polish workers, who tend to be

under 30 years of age, are highly regarded. Could this result in the further marginalisation of older workers?

Lastly, there is considerable scope for an investigation into age discrimination in the workplace with reference to “style” workplaces such as boutique hotels, designer bars and celebrity-chef restaurants as much of the hospitality industry is style obsessed. Indeed, the industry seems to be particularly ageist and “The image of beautiful young things dressed in Armani dominates the industry. Employers seem determined to discriminate when it comes to age” (Clark, 2000, p.24). These workplaces rely on the successful interaction between employee and customer and management may seek personnel who have the right embodied capacities and attributes which can be “aesthetically geared” to produce a particular style of service (Warhurst, Nickson, Witz and Cullen, 2000). In choosing the “right” kind of employee to enhance company image and deliver service quality, potential discriminatory practices may take place (Nickson, Warhurst and Dutton, 2005). Therefore, an interesting research topic could concern the employment of older workers in style workplaces.

This study raises a number of questions. Will the hospitality industry continue to rely on predominantly younger workers, bolstered by the ranks of young, transient labour from Eastern Europe? Will the hospitality industry adopt a more proactive approach to the employment of older workers, having witnessed the benefits reported by non-hospitality firms such as ASDA and B&Q? Will hospitality firms reassess their treatment of older workers given new anti-discrimination legislation focusing on age? The future employment of older workers will be determined by three elements, namely policy, practice and attitudes (Loretto and White, 2006a). The findings of this study demonstrate that positive attitudes towards older workers and equal opportunities policies do not necessarily lead to equality for older workers. Furthermore, legislation alone cannot be expected to eradicate age discrimination in the workplace.

Employment conditions and opportunities for older workers have undoubtedly improved over the last twenty years. However, there is still much to achieve, especially in the hospitality industry which is particularly ageist (Clark, 2000). Many businesses have realised the benefits of employing older workers. It is time that hospitality businesses followed suit.

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Appendix 1

Defining the terms “hospitality”, “hospitality industry”, “hospitality management” and “hotels”

Hotels are part of the hospitality industry. Defining “hospitality” and “hospitality industry” is, however, not straightforward and there is much discussion as to the nature and meaning of these terms (Williams, 2002). In order to undertake research in hospitality, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of what the term encompasses yet the term is often defined in a general and unsatisfactory manner (Brotherton, 1999). Hospitality is a human activity. It has social dimensions and meets important psychological requirements such as shelter and nourishment (Littlejohn, 2003). According to Knowles (1998), hospitality provides customers with three core services, namely food, drink and accommodation. Similarly, Mars, Bryant and Mitchell (1979) refer to the basic needs of food, drink and shelter. A more rigorous definition of hospitality is offered by Lashley and Morrison (2001, p. 142) who define the term as: “A contemporaneous human exchange, which is voluntarily entered into, and designed to enhance the mutual well-being of the parties concerned through the provision of accommodation, and/or food, and/or drink”. In providing shelter, food and drink, the hospitality worker attempts to make the guest, customer and client feel safe, welcome and comfortable (Powers and Barrows, 2006). A hospitality business, whether it is a hotel, restaurant or catering unit, will be part of an industry where products and services are broadly alike and where the sources of competitive advantage are similar. Lashley and Morrison (2001, p.143) define the hospitality industry as being “Comprised of commercial organisations that specialise in providing accommodation and/or, food, and/or drink, through a voluntary human exchange, which is contemporaneous in nature, and undertaken to enhance the mutual well being of the parties concerned”. Yu (1999, p.8) offers a more general definition, stating that the term

hospitality industry is used to “encompass all facets of the business that cater to travellers’ needs when they are away from home”. Lucas (2004) considers the hospitality industry to be an umbrella label for commercial businesses whose primary activities include the sale of accommodation, food and drink. King (1995, p.220), referring to the work of Hepple, Kipps and Thomson (1990), has identified four characteristics of hospitality: a host confers hospitality on a guest who is away from home; it involves an interactive process of supply and demand; it comprises tangible and intangible elements and the host provides security, physiological and psychological needs.

In the UK, hospitality has, to a large degree, replaced the term “hotel and catering”. Indeed, in recent years, the term hospitality has become an increasingly popular term for a large assortment of businesses including hotels (Mullins, 1998, p.10). According to Powers and Barrows (2003), hospitality includes hotels, restaurants and other kinds of establishments which offer accommodation, food, or both to people who are away from their usual place of residence. The dictionary definition of hospitality refers to “kindness in welcoming strangers or guests” (Collins Concise Dictionary, 1989) and the word itself is derived from the Latin for guest: hospes (Stone, 1996). Thus, the original meaning of hospitality was to take care of guests or strangers. Hospitality and hospitality businesses have existed for thousands of years. In the Roman empire, for example, the development of highways encouraged travel. This, in turn, facilitated the development of inns at regular intervals “which also served as stores, saloons and brothels” (King, 1995, p.225). In the early middle ages, most of the accommodation for pilgrims was provided by religious houses and private persons but, as the middle ages drew to a close, commercial-type inns were growing in popularity in England (Medlik, 1987). Twenty-first century hospitality shares many of the features of early hospitality enterprises although commercialisation, globalisation and the profit ethic has changed the activity into a more managerial function. Therefore, much

discussion of hospitality concerns the management of hospitality or hospitality management. The term hospitality management refers to “companies, organisations and businesses which have as their core (main) business the provision of food, drink, leisure, business facilities and accommodation” (Roberts, 1995, p.4). Lashley and Morrison (2001, p.144) are critical of the term and claim that “it does not exist other than as a linguistic label employed to describe programmes of study, styles of research, and so on, prevalent in higher education”. Any analysis of hospitality management or the hospitality industry is fraught with difficulties as statistics may relate to hotels; hotels and restaurants; distribution, hotels and restaurants; hospitality; hotel and catering or hospitality, tourism and leisure.

In addition to defining “hospitality”, “hospitality industry” and “hospitality management” it is necessary to define what exactly is meant by a hotel although “one main problem in reporting on the accommodation industry is that there is no generally accepted definition of a hotel” (Knowles, 1998, p.34). However, the same author refers to the World Tourism Organization definition of hotels and similar establishments as “being arranged in rooms, in number exceeding a specified minimum; as coming under a common management; as providing certain services, including room service, daily bed making and cleaning of sanitary facilities; as grouped in classes and categories according to the facilities and services provided, and not falling in the category of specialised establishments” (Knowles, 1998, p.7). Similarly, “Hotel Research”, a research centre based at the University of Huddersfield, defines a hotel as “a business which as its main endeavour offers for rent a minimum of four bedrooms. Frequently this activity is supported by the provision of food, drink and other related services” (UK Hotel Groups Directory, 2003). Medlik and Ingram (2000) describe a hotel as an establishment which provides accommodation, food and drink to travellers for monetary exchange. Hotels can be classified in many different ways, for example by price, function and market segment (Powers and

Barrows, 2003). Furthermore, a hotel may be classified as small or part of a hotel group, with corresponding characteristics regarding products and markets, ownership and finance, organization and staffing and accounting and control (Medlik and Ingram, 2000). Powers and Barrows (2006) offer a classification of hotel properties based on price (limited service hotels, full-service hotels and luxury hotels), function (commercial hotels and convention hotels), location (downtown hotels, suburban hotels, highway hotels and airport hotels), market segment (executive conference centres, resorts, casino hotels, health spas and timeshares) and other types of hotel, such as all-suite hotels, extended-stay hotels, bed and breakfast inns, boutique hotels and historic conversions.

There are a number of ways of measuring hotel demand. These include: room rates, occupancy rates, sales revenue and room nights sold. (Phillips, 1997). Hotel supply tends to be measured in terms of room stock (Phillips, 1997).

Appendix 2.

Questionnaire

This questionnaire relates to the issue of “age and employment” and is part of a research project undertaken by myself, Andrew Jenkins, Senior Lecturer in Hospitality Management at the University of Huddersfield. The research is supported by HotelCo and you are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire and send it to me in the stamped addressed envelope provided. All answers are confidential. You are not required to provide your name.

1. What is the full title of your job?

2. How long have you been doing this job with this company?

Years Months

3. Which of the following responsibilities are parts of your job?

(More than one answer is possible)

- Pay or conditions of employment
- Recruitment or selection of employees
- Training of employees
- Systems of payment
- Handling grievances
- Staffing or manpower planning
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Performance Appraisals
- Performance management assessment/Decisions regarding promotion
- None of these

4. When filling vacancies, what special initiatives do you have to encourage applicants from the following groups?

- Women returning to work after having children
- Members of ethnic minorities
- Older workers

- Disabled people
- People who have been unemployed for 12 months or more

5. Does your workplace have a formal written policy on Equal Opportunities or Managing Diversity?

Yes No

If No, why not?

6. Does this policy specifically address equality of treatment or discrimination on any of the following grounds?

(More than one answer is possible)

Sex/Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Ethnic Minority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No

7. How is this policy made known to employees?

(More than one answer is possible)

In letter of appointment	<input type="checkbox"/>
In staff handbook	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noticeboard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part of Induction Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>
Told by manager	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

8. Have you tried to measure the effects of your equal opportunities or managing diversity policies?

Yes No

a) If Yes, what were these effects? b) If No, why not?

9. Below are statements about older workers (which, for the purposes of this research, are all employees aged 50 and above). For each of the statements please tick the appropriate box. Please answer all questions.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Older workers are slow					
2. They fail to keep up with changing methods of work					
3. They are very productive employees					
4. They are unsure of themselves					
5. They work well in teams					
6. They make many errors					
7. They are more reliable than young workers					
8. They are only interested in putting in their hours					
9. They have no ambition					
10. They are more confident					
11. They cannot supervise others well					
12. They will not take on any additional responsibilities					
13. They have good interpersonal communication skills					
14. They are less likely to be promoted in this company					
15. They have higher levels of absenteeism					
16. They are reliable					
17. They just wait for retirement					
18. They are interested in being trained					
19. They need longer rest periods more often					
20. They think before they act					
21. They cannot concentrate					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22. They are interested more in security than job advancement					
23. They are better with customers					
24. They are critical of younger workers					
25. They are more willing to change working hours to fit demands					
26. They need more time to learn new operations					
27. They are not physically able to keep up with the work					
28. They have more work-relevant experience					
29. They are interested in technological change					
30. They dislike working under younger supervisors					
31. They resist new ways of doing things					
32. They are more committed					
33. They are more effective in their job					
34. They are conscientious					
35. They are difficult to work with					
36. They are loyal to the organization					
37. They are able to grasp new ideas					
38. They learn quickly					
39. They have limited skills					
40. They are more likely to think before they act					

10. “In the hotel industry employers aren’t interested in employing or promoting people over the age of 50”. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. Have you ever been discouraged from applying for a job because of wording in an advert that contained or hinted at an age range?

- Yes No

12. Do you think recruitment advertising encourages older workers to apply for jobs?

- Yes No

13. Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your age during an interview?

- Yes No

14. Would you like to continue working for your current employer past their mandatory retirement age if you could?

- Yes No

15. What type of jobs in your hotel would be suitable for older employees?

16. Why would these jobs be suited to older employees?

17. What type of jobs in this hotel would not be suitable for older employees?

18. Why would these jobs not be suited to older employees?

19. How old is an “older employee”?

(Please tick only one box)

- a person above the age of 35
- a person above the age of 45
- a person above the age of 55
- a person above the age of 65
- a person above the age of 75
- none of the above

20. Which age-band do you belong to?

- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 and over

21. Are you disabled?

- Yes No

22. What is your gender?

- Male Female

23. Which of the following qualifications do you have?

(Tick all of the qualifications that you have or the nearest equivalent)

- 1+ O levels/CSEs/GCSEs(any grades)/leaving certificate at ordinary/standard level
- 1+ A levels/AS levels/leaving certificate at higher/honours level
- HND/HNC/Foundation degree/National diploma National Vocational Certificate
- Undergraduate degree (eg BA, BSc)
- Postgraduate degree (eg MA, MSc, PhD)
- Other Qualifications (eg City and Guilds/BTEC/Edexcel/)
- No Qualifications

24. Where do you work?

- A [redacted] hotel in the UK
- A [redacted] hotel in the Republic of Ireland
- A Inn hotel in the UK
- A Inn hotel in the Republic of Ireland

25. What ethnic group do you belong to?

- White
- Mixed
- Asian
- Black
- Other

Many thanks for completing this questionnaire. Please place it in the envelope provided and send it to me at the following address: Andrew Jenkins, Senior Lecturer in Hospitality Management, Department of Logistics and Hospitality management, The University of Huddersfield, Queensgate, Huddersfield, HD1 3DH, UK.

Appendix 3.

Protocol for interviews with employees in Ireland

1. How long have you worked in this hotel?
2. What job do you currently do and how long have you done this job?
3. What work did you do before you started work at this hotel?
4. Do you consider yourself an “older” worker?
5. How old do you have to be in order to be an “older” worker?
6. Do younger employees treat you differently because of your age?
7. Do managers treat you differently because of your age?
8. How important are flexible working arrangements to you?
9. Have you ever felt that your age is a barrier to promotion?
10. How do you view retirement?
11. At what age would you like to retire?
12. What qualifications do you have?
13. How would you compare your qualifications with those of younger workers in this hotel?
14. What training have you received in this hotel?
15. Do you feel that all age groups are treated the same in terms of access to training in this organisation?
16. Have you ever felt discriminated against in an interview or selection process because of your age?
17. How would you describe the age structure of employees in this hotel?
18. What do you think is the preferred age of employees/recruits in this hotel?

19. Do you have any “special needs” because of your age to do your job?
20. Do you feel you have skills which a younger person doesn't have?
21. Do you feel that younger people have skills which you don't have?
22. What type of jobs in this hotel would be particularly suitable for older employees? Why?
23. What type of jobs in this hotel would not be suitable for older employees? Why not?
24. Do you think there are situations when age discrimination is justified?
25. Is the hotel industry in Ireland ageist?
26. Is there anything you'd like to add?

Appendix 4.

Protocol for interviews with employees in the UK

1. How long have you worked in this hotel?
2. What job do you currently do and how long have you done this job?
3. What sort of work did you do before you started here?
4. Do you consider yourself an “older” worker?
5. How old do you have to be in order to be an “older” worker?
6. Do younger employees treat you differently because of your age?
7. Do managers treat you differently because of your age?
8. How important are flexible working arrangements to you?
9. Have you ever felt that your age is a barrier to promotion?
10. How do you view retirement?
11. At what age would you like to retire?
12. How would you compare your qualifications with those of younger workers in this hotel?
13. Do you feel that all age groups are treated the same in terms of access to training in this organisation?
14. Have you ever felt discriminated against in an interview or selection process because of your age?
15. How would you describe the age structure of employees in this hotel?
16. What do you think is the preferred age of employees/recruits in this hotel?
17. Do you have any “special needs” because of your age to do your job?
18. Do you feel you have skills which a younger person doesn't have?

19. Do you feel that younger people have skills which you don't have?
20. What type of jobs in this hotel would be particularly suitable for older employees? Why?
21. What type of jobs in this hotel would not be particularly suitable for older employees? Why not?
22. Do you think there are situations when age discrimination is justified?
23. Is the hotel industry in the UK ageist?
24. Is there anything you'd like to add?

Appendix 5.

Protocol for interviews with Personnel and Training managers in Ireland

1. What methods do you use to recruit employees?
2. What methods do you use to select employees?
3. How important is a person's appearance and speech when appointing?
4. What methods do you use to train and develop employees?
5. Do you have age-awareness training?
6. What methods do you use to decide promotion?
7. Does this hotel have an Equal Opportunities policy?
8. How effective do you think this policy is?
9. How have you tried to manage employee diversity in this hotel?
10. In general, what HR policies are made by HQ and what policies are made by the hotel itself?
11. What is the age balance of employees in this hotel?
12. How has the age balance of employees changed over the years?
13. How does this age balance compare with the age balance of guests?
14. How does this age balance compare to the age structure of the local labour market?
15. Does the age of an employee affect his/her ability to perform well?
16. What are the benefits of employing older employees?
17. What are the drawbacks of employing older employees?
18. What type of jobs in this hotel would be particularly suitable for older employees?

19. What type of jobs in this hotel would not be particularly suitable for older employees?
20. Did you have any initiatives as part of the “Say No To Ageism Week - May 16th to 22nd”?
21. Have you taken any initiatives to promote equality of opportunity for older people under the Employment Equality Act of 1998?
22. Have you taken any initiatives to promote equality of opportunity for older people under the Equal Status Act of 2000?
23. Have you taken any initiatives based on the contents of the “Towards Age Friendly Provision of Goods and Services” report?
24. Is the hotel industry in Ireland ageist?

Appendix 6.

Protocol for interviews with Personnel and Training managers in the UK

1. What methods do you use to recruit employees?
2. What methods do you use to select employees?
3. How important is a person's appearance and speech when appointing?
4. What methods do you use to train and develop employees?
5. Do you have age-awareness training?
6. What methods do you use to decide promotion?
7. Does this hotel have an Equal Opportunities policy?
8. How effective do you think this policy is?
9. How have you tried to manage employee diversity in this hotel?
10. In general, what HR policies are made by HQ and what policies are made by the hotel itself?
11. What is the age balance of employees in this hotel?
12. How has the age balance of employees changed over the years?
13. How does this age balance compare with the age balance of guests?
14. How does this age balance compare to the age structure of the local labour market?
15. Does the age of an employee affect his/her ability to perform well?
16. What are the benefits of employing older employees?
17. What are the drawbacks of employing older employees?
18. What type of jobs in this hotel would be particularly suitable for older employees?

19. What type of jobs in this hotel would not be particularly suitable for older employees?
20. Are you aware of the information available from the Third Age Employment Network?
21. Are you aware of the Government's initiatives to outlaw age discrimination in the workplace? If Yes, what do you think of these initiatives?
22. Have you taken any initiatives to promote equality of opportunity for older people as a result of the Code of Practice on Age Diversity in Employment?
23. Have you used Age Positive's Practical Guide for Business (Age Diversity at Work)?
24. Are you aware of the DTI's report "Towards Equality and Diversity: Report of Responses on Age"?
25. Do you have any initiatives as part of the New Deal 50+ Programme?
26. Is the hotel industry in the UK ageist?
27. Is there anything you'd like to add?