



The labor market scenario for older people and the violence they suffer

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Abstract

Objective: to systematically analyze publications referring to the labor market for older people and the violence situations faced by active older people. *Method:* an integrative literature review in the databases Web of Science, Scielo (Scientific Electronic Library Online) PubMed and Science Direct. *Results:* 19 papers were found, 89.4% of the cases of international origin, 52.6% with a quantitative approach; 31.5% with a qualitative approach; and 15.7% with both. The areas of knowledge comprising most of the studies were health, psychology, and gerontology with 15.7% of them, and most studies were published in 2019, with 31.5% and 26.3% of recurrences, respectively. *Conclusion:* the studies showed that older people have difficulties to remain in the labor market due to the inadequacies of the workplace and their health condition. On the other hand, there are government initiatives aimed at improving the working conditions for older people, and their presence is beneficial both for their health and for the market. Regarding violence at work, studies are scarce, and the existing ones emphasize the difficulties of older people to enter and remain in the market to the detriment of ageism and stereotypes related to aging. Finally, as the population is aging, it is important to think about public policies to provide older people with adequate conditions to remain active and protect their health and quality of life.

Keywords: Aging. Work. Population Dynamics. Elder Abuse.

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INTRODUCTION

The increased number of older people around the world reflects on demands of a political, social, and economic nature and affects the labor market as it increases the presence of older people among the Economically Active Population (EAP)¹. In this context, there is a need for structural changes in organizations such as offering flexible working hours, adequate ergonomic conditions, management of intergenerational groups, and the creation of strategies to deal with ageism in the companies^{2,3}.

As population ages differently in developed and developing countries⁴, some are more prepared than others to absorb their older workers. According to Cepellos Filho⁵, the Brazilian labor market is not been prepared to include the older population in the EAP. On the other hand, developed countries like Denmark and Canada have greater initiatives to restrain this active population such as increasing the age for retirement and public policies to encourage older people to remain working⁶.

In addition, the increased number of older people compared to the total population contributed to increase the number of cases of violence against older people. According to Morilla and Manso⁷, violence against older people has become a global trend, being a worrisome reality as it affects one in every six individuals aged 60 years or over⁸.

Violence affecting older people occurs in the home environment, on the streets, and in institutions such as the labor market⁹, and can cause physical, emotional, psychological disorders and negative effects on well-being and quality of life¹⁰. According to Bialowolska et al.¹¹ violence against older people in the labor market has grown more and more due to management policies aimed at profit and cost reduction, leaving violence-driver issues such as intergenerational relationships in the background.

In this sense and considering the increasing presence of older people in the labor market as well as the growing violence against this population, the need to know the labor market scenario for older workers and the situations of violence they face in this environment is justified.

Thus, the present study aimed to analyze the publications referring to the labor market scenario for older people and situations of violence experienced by active older people.

METHOD

The present study is an integrative systematic literature review. According to Botelho et al.¹² the integrative review enables the systematization of scientific knowledge on a given topic, enables the creation of the state of the art on it, in addition to pointing out gaps in the literature that may become topics for future studies. In the present case, the topics of interest are the violence to which economically active older people are subject, and the labor market scenario for older workers.

The integrative review followed the steps of choosing the topic of interest, establishing the inclusion and exclusion criteria for studies, definition of the information to be extracted from the studies selected, evaluation of the studies meeting the inclusion and exclusion criteria, and the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of the summary of results¹³.

The descriptors used for the research were “Demographic Aging” AND “Violence” AND “Labor” OR “Workers age”. The search was performed in the databases Web of Science, Scielo, Pubmed, Science Direct, Scopus, PsychInfo, Jstor, Springer, and Nature.

The inclusion criteria used to select the articles were those dealing with the topic in question covering the different areas of knowledge with full text available online, without filtering the language and year of publication. The exclusion criteria were literature review articles of incomplete access, and duplicate articles. The information extracted from the texts were the article authors, journal names, types of study, database used for research, field of knowledge, country of publication, year of publication, aspects related to the labor market scenario, and situations of violence experienced by active older people. Finally, data were organized in tables.

The literature was analyzed from August 2020 to January 2021 by accessing the PubMed, Science Direct, Web of Science and Scielo platforms, the latter two being through the institutional login of Universidade Federal de Viçosa on Capes Journal Portal (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel) accessing CAFE (Federated Academic Community), which gives access to articles in full. For databases other than had open access, articles had to be searched on the internet to avoid loss of content. Therefore, although there was an attempt to identify as many studies as possible related to the proposed topic, some papers may have been unintentionally excluded, with the selection bias being the main bias of the present study.

RESULTS

The search in said databases showed no results for Scopus, PsychInfo, Jstor, Springer, and Nature. And the search for papers in the other databases using the descriptors previously mentioned found 780 studies, of which only 355 had open access. After selecting the open access papers, the abstracts were read to verify which ones really fit the topic of interest, with 332 studies being discarded for not being suitable, besides three literature review studies and one duplicate article. Finally, the sample comprised 19 papers from national and international literature. Therefore, it was found that literature

on older people in the labor market and violence situations to which they are subject is scarce (Table 1).

Most of the studies in the sample (19) were published in international journals, and regarding the perspectives work, most presented a quantitative approach - nine; six, a qualitative one; and three, both.

Regarding the area of knowledge, research showing the presence of older people in the labor market and the violence situations they face run through several areas. The most recurrent were health, psychology, and gerontology - which appeared in three studies -, followed by economics and engineering, which appeared in two studies. The remainder social work, sociology, management, environmental studies, industrial and labor relations, and ergonomics were present in one paper each.

Most publications comprised the years 2019 with six recurrences and 2020 with five, followed by 2015, 2016, and 2018, all with 2 papers each; 2001 and 1997 presented 1 paper each. Regarding the databases, 12 publications descended from the Web of Science, one from Scielo, five from Science Direct, and one from PubMed (Table 2).

Regarding the nationality of the research, the United States presented six studies. The Netherlands, Brazil, Norway, Australia, Denmark, and the United Kingdom presented two studies each. And Belgium, Stockholm, Poland, and the Netherlands presented one research each (Table 3).

Table 1. Methodological path followed to search for papers in Web of Science, Scielo, PubMed and Science Direct, Scopus, PsychInfo, Jstor, Springer, and Nature.

	Descriptors = "Demographic Aging" AND "Violence" AND "Labor" OR "Workers age"					Total
	Scopus, PsychInfo, Jstor, Springer, and Nature	PubMed	Science Direct	Web of Science	Scielo	
	0	242	248	289	1	780
Free access	0	201	23	130	1	355
Off-topic	0	198	16	118	0	332
Review papers and duplicates	0	2	2	0	0	4
Following the criteria	0	1	5	12	1	19

Table 2. Profile of studies carried out on the presence of older people in the labor market and the violence faced by them from 1997 to 2021.

Authors	Journal	Type of study	Area of knowledge	Year/Base
Damman, and Henkens ¹⁴	Journal of Applied Gerontology	Qualitative	Gerontology	2020/Web of Science
Burmeister et al. ²²	Journal of Applied Psychology	Quantitative	Psychology	2020/Web of Science
Straussner and Senreich ²³	Nature public Health Emergency Collection	Quantitative	Social Work	2020/Web of Science
Oddone ³¹	Contemporânea - sociology journal of UFSCAR	Qualitative	Sociology	2019/Web of Science
Coombe et al. ¹⁶	Workplace health & safety	Quantitative	Health	2019/Web of Science
Merkus et al. ¹⁷	International archives of occupational and environmental health	Quantitative	Health	2019/Web of Science
Peters et al. ²⁵	Frontiers in psychology	Quantitative	Psychology	2019/Web of Science
Amorim et al. ²⁷	Rege - management journal	Qualiquantitative	Management	2019/Web of Science
Sundstrup et al. ³⁰	Occupational and environmental medicine	Quantitative	Health	2018/Web of Science
Talbot et al. ³²	International journal of sustainable transportation	Qualiquantitative	Environmental studies	2016/Web of Science
Findsen ²⁶	Educational gerontology	Qualitative	Gerontology	2015/Web of Science
Jonsson; Kielhofner; Borell ²⁸	American journal of occupational therapy	Qualitative	Psychology	1997/Web of Science
Schreurs et al. ²⁹	SA Journal of Industrial Psychology	Quantitative	Industrial relations and work	2001/Scielo
Kerr et al. ¹⁸	Plos One	Quantitative	Gerontology	2016/Pubmed
Bartkowiak et al. ²⁴	Journal of Cleaner Production	Qualitative	Economics	2020/Science Direct
Vigtel ²¹	Labour Economics	Quantitative	Economics	2018/Science Direct
Dimovski et al. ¹⁹	Procedia Manufacturing	Quantitative	Engineering	2019/Science Direct
Sundstrup et al. ²⁰	Safety and Health at Work	Qualiquantitative	Engineering	2020/Science Direct
Case et al. ¹⁵	Procedia Manufacturing	Qualitative	Ergonomics	2015/Science Direct

Source: The authors, 2021.

Table 3. Countries and Main results to support the response to the objectives of the studies carried out on the presence of older people in the labor market and the violence faced by active older people in the years 1997 to 2021.

Authors	Country	Main results supporting the response to the objectives
Damman and Henkens ¹⁴	The Netherlands	The flexibility of working hours is a way of keeping the older people active for a longer time. However, it is different between men and women.
Burmeister et al. ²²	United States	The presence of employees from different age groups at work provides exchange of knowledge, satisfaction, and worker motivation.
Straussner and Senreich ²³	United States	Working is presented as beneficial for older workers as it provides well-being and satisfaction.
Oddone ³¹	Brazil	Ageism is one of the factors to define the early withdrawal of the older people from the labor market, as well as the economic health of companies.
Coombe et al. ¹⁶	United States	The sleep health of workers is a predictor of good performance at work.
Merkus et al. ¹⁷	Norway	The health condition of older workers can be preserved depending on the effort required at work throughout their lives.
Peters, et al. ²⁵	Australia	The negative stereotyping of aging in the labor market compromises the permanence and/or return of the older person to work. Therefore, it is important for the human resources department to focus on issues related to stereotypes to aging.
Amorim et al. ²⁷	Brazil	Violence against older people in the labor market can be observed in the absence of managerial practices to hire and retain older workers.
Sundstrup et al. ³⁰	Denmark	The individual's cognitive ability is not a factor to influence their exit from the labor market.
Talbot, et al. ³²	United Kingdom	Strategies to reduce problems arising from transportation to work are important to reduce worker evasion.
Findsen ²⁶	United States	Stereotypes of aging mainly related to the ability to learn have impaired the permanence of older people on the market. Thus, intergenerational learning initiatives play an important role in age management practices.
Jonsson; Kielhofner; Borell ²⁸	Stockholm	In addition to structural and environmental factors, the health condition of the older person influences the decision to retire early.
Schreurs et al. ²⁹	Belgium	To keep the older person on the labor market for longer it is necessary to provide work conditions to keep them motivated.
Kerr et al. ¹⁸	United States	Reducing the amount of time spent sitting at work is one way to reduce retirement due to health problems, considering that reducing the sitting time contributes to reduce the sedentary lifestyle.
Bartkowiak et al. ²⁴	Poland	Entrepreneurs have kept their older people workers on their teams as they understand they have a human and social capital of great importance to the market.
Vigtel ²¹	Norway	Lowering the minimum retirement age has positive effects on the hiring of older workers.
Dimovski et al. ¹⁹	United States	Since the minimum retirement age has been reduced, older people have been working longer.
Sundstrup et al. ²⁰	Denmark	The early withdrawal of older people from the labor market is related to environmental factors such as hard work and exposure to noise and dust.
Case et al. ¹⁵	United Kingdom	From the human digital modeling, it is possible to verify whether the work environment is harmful to health to older people. Therefore, it is possible to avoid their early withdrawal from work for health reasons.

Source: the authors, 2021.

DISCUSSION

From the studies found, the approaches given to research on the topic of interest were verified. Studies were detected dealing with aspects influencing the older person's permanence at work, benefits of working to the worker and the labor market, violence faced by older people in the labor market, and factors influencing the early withdrawal of older people from the labor market.

Regarding the aspects influencing the permanence of older people at work in different countries, we identified seven studies (Damman e Henkens¹⁴, Case et al.¹⁵, Coombe et al.¹⁶, Merkus et al.¹⁷, Kerr et al.¹⁸, Dimovski et al.¹⁹, Sundstrup et al.²⁰, Vigtel²¹). Damman and Henkens¹⁴ in a study carried out in the Netherlands emphasizing that the older person's permanence at work is associated to the working conditions. In this sense, to offer better conditions and prevent the withdrawal of older people, the Dutch government created a policy of work flexibilization offering to older people the opportunity to work with flexible hours or from home.

Working conditions as a way of keeping older people at work were also mentioned in a study carried out in the United Kingdom. This, in turn, pointed to human digital modeling to improve the working circumstances of older people¹⁵.

Another aspect also mentioned for keeping older people at work is their health status. According to Coombe et al.¹⁶, health conditions especially regarding sleep health of older people are related to their performance and permanence at work. Thus, keeping a good level of sleep among workers is a way to keep them healthy and in the labor market for a longer time¹⁶.

The health situation of older people was also mentioned in a Norwegian study carried out by Merkus et al.¹⁷ demonstrating that maintaining the worker's physical capacity throughout life is the key to keeping good health and activity until retirement. Therefore, adaptations are necessary to prolong the older person's work life, thus requiring less physical effort and consequently causing less health distress¹⁷.

Health was once again mentioned as an important factor to keep the older person at work in an American research carried out by Kerr et al.¹⁸ demonstrating that the sedentary lifestyle of older people is one of the biggest causes of disease. Thus, they sought to reduce it by reducing daily sitting hours and increasing transitions such as standing/sitting to improve their quality of life and consequently prolong their active life.

Also concerned about the active life of older workers given their greater presence in the market and the scarcity of workforce, Dimovski¹⁹ estimated the limit productive age of older people aiming at the productive return of older people to work.

Still referring to health, but this time to the cognitive ability of the older person, Sundstrup et al.²⁰ conducted a study to estimate the relationship between individual cognitive ability and temporary or permanent market withdrawal. It was verified that, in this case, the cognitive ability did not interfere in the work withdrawal.

Finally, a Norwegian article found that another factor to influence the permanence and hiring of older people is the government management of the country, which can encourage companies to hire and maintain older workers by means of the current legislation. For example, by opting for the flexibilization of the minimum retirement age, Norway encouraged greater hiring of older people in the labor market²¹.

Another approach found in the studies deals with the benefits of work for the market and for the older worker. With the population aging there are greater social interactions between people of different ages in the labor market. An American study carried out by Burmeister et al.²² showed that the presence of older people in the company becomes advantageous because it provides exchange of knowledge between generations, motivates employees, and provides greater yearning of the older person to remain active.

An American research developed by Straussner and Senreich²³ showed that to work is beneficial for the older person because despite having health complications - which in this case are due to the

natural aging process -, older people express more satisfaction with their profession, their life, and have a positive perception of the work environment.

The presence of older people at work is still beneficial for the market because according to Bartkowiak et al.²⁴ company managers recognize that these workers can offer the company a good collaborative spirit, skills, intellectual and social capital, characteristics that are not found in most young workers.

Another category found describes the situations of violence faced by older workers in the labor market. Violence with older people in the labor market is presented by the unpreparedness of companies to deal with the new worker profile. A Dutch study pointed out that, even though the age group is changing with more and more older people compared to young people in the market, the human resources management of companies is not prepared to deal with the demands arising from intergenerational coexistence. Furthermore, the actions of managers tend to a negative stereotyping based on age, as they consider older people to be unproductive and not trained. Said stereotyping prevents the older person from making good use of employment opportunities and from staying at work.²⁵

Violence anchored in aging stereotypes was also mentioned in an American study. According to Findsen²⁶, prejudice surrounding aging especially related to the ability to learn has hampered the permanence of older people at work. In this sense, it is important that organizations fight attitudes of age discrimination and encourage mutual learning initiatives through intergenerational activities²⁶.

Violence with older workers can also be observed in managerial practices. According to Amorim et al.²⁷, a Brazilian study identified that companies that are part of the Best Places to Work do not have managerial practices to encourage the hiring and retention of older workers. In addition, they do not pay attention to the adaptation of the environment and the working hours, and do not have health insurance plans with special attention to the needs of older people. Furthermore, it was observed that Human Resource Management professionals do not show interest in the subject, which is once again

configured as structural violence. Furthermore, it was observed that Human Resource Management professionals do not show interest on the topic, which is once again configured as structural violence²⁷.

Another category that emerged from the studies refers to the factors influencing early withdrawal of older people from the labor market. In a study carried out in Stockholm with older workers, Jonsson et al.²⁸ showed that there are many internal and environmental factors influencing the older person's early retirement decision, but the ones generally influencing the most are decreased energy and chronic diseases.

A survey carried out in Belgium examining the elements involved in early retirement intentions found that one of the main factors responsible for the desire to retire is the pleasure of working. In this sense, it seems that keeping an older employee motivated is as important as keeping them healthy so that they can continue working²⁹.

Another factor pointed out by a Danish study as a predictor of the older person's early withdrawal from the labor market is the circumstance of the work environment. According to Sundstrup et al.³⁰, the older worker's early withdrawing from the labor market is related to environmental factors such as physical work requirements, weightlifting, exposure to noises, dust and vibration³⁰.

The changes brought about by globalization also influence the early withdrawal of the old person from the market. For example, technological updates, temporary jobs, and fixed-time contracts do not provide favorable conditions to remain at work. The continuity of the older person is also influenced by the economic situation of companies and the macro-systemic crises affecting them. Therefore, age is no longer the only interruption limitation in the active life of older people³¹.

In the United Kingdom, a study looked at the relationship between early retirement intentions and transportation to the workplace. The elements that interfered the most on the possibility of retirement regarding transportation were high costs, stress, health conditions, fatigue, and the time spent in the transportation. To ensure that transportation does not influence market withdrawal, companies have

been using carpooling strategies, specific parking spots, work shift adjustments, and remote work³².

Similarly, Nomiya et al.³³ carried out a research in Japan to show that the way in which the older person imagines the transition process to retirement varies according to the meaning that work has in their lives. Therefore, older people who see work as a burden will be happy to retire and be able to spend their time in other ways. On the other hand, older people who work as part of their identity will have greater difficulties to retire. Thus, the meaning of work is a considerable factor for the older person's decision to retire.

Finally, a limitation of the study is the incomplete research concerning the labor market scenario for older people as well as situations of violence occurred due to the unavailability of the full text online, which prevented us from using them in our study.

CONCLUSIONS

Most studies on the presence of older people in the labor market and the violence suffered by them

have been carried out in developed countries, and they may refer to the gradual aging process occurred in these countries which may have provided a greater temporal range to think and deal with the issues coming from longevity. It is also believed that this may be related to the fact that developed countries are the most responsible for scientific publications in general. In Brazil, studies indicate that older people face difficulties to remain in the labor market due to the inadequacies of this environment due to the worker's health condition, although there are examples of government initiatives in other countries to improve their working conditions such as labor flexibilization policy and human digital modeling. The presence of old people at work is beneficial for both the market and the older person. Regarding violence at work, studies are scarce, and the existing ones emphasize the difficulties of older people to enter and remain in the market due to ageism and stereotypes related to aging. Given the above, it is important to think about public policies to provide older people with adequate conditions to remain active and protect their health and quality of life.

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