

Exploration of “pre-retirement bounce” in Quality of Working Life and Employee Engagement

IWP Conference 2010
Sheffield, UK
June, 2010



Dr Darren Van Laar
Applied Psychology Unit
Department of Psychology, University of Portsmouth



Simon Easton, Consultant Psychologist, QoWL Ltd.

Work-Related Quality of Life

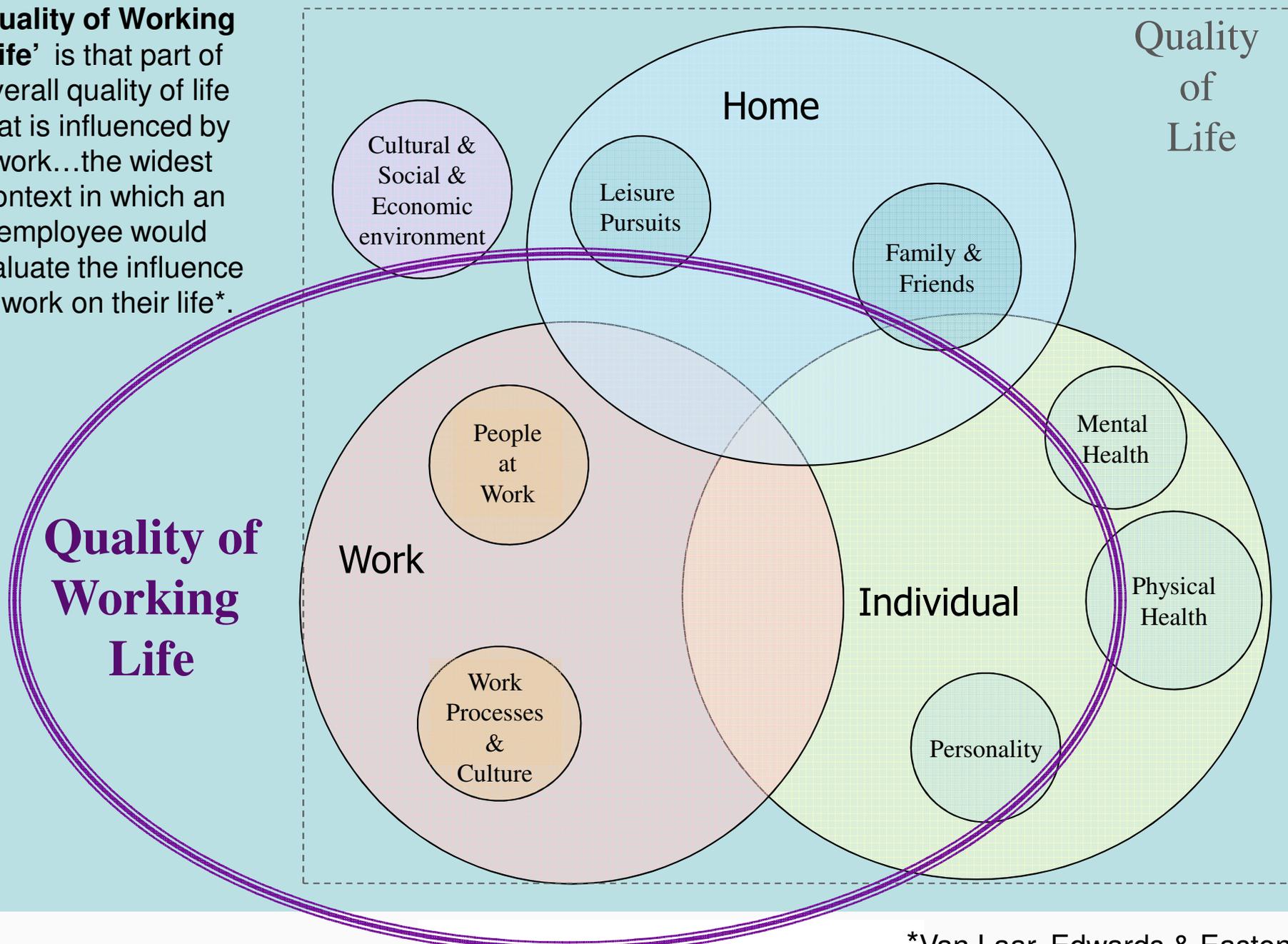
- What is Quality of Working Life?
- The WRQoL scale
- Pre-retirement bounce
- Employee Engagement
- Does Employee Engagement bounce?
- Conclusions & Policy Implications

What is QoWL?

- Quality of Working Life (QoWL) has a long history with many definitions and conceptualisations
- No satisfactory measure of QoWL existed so we looked at the literature and the needs of the organisations we worked with and came up with:

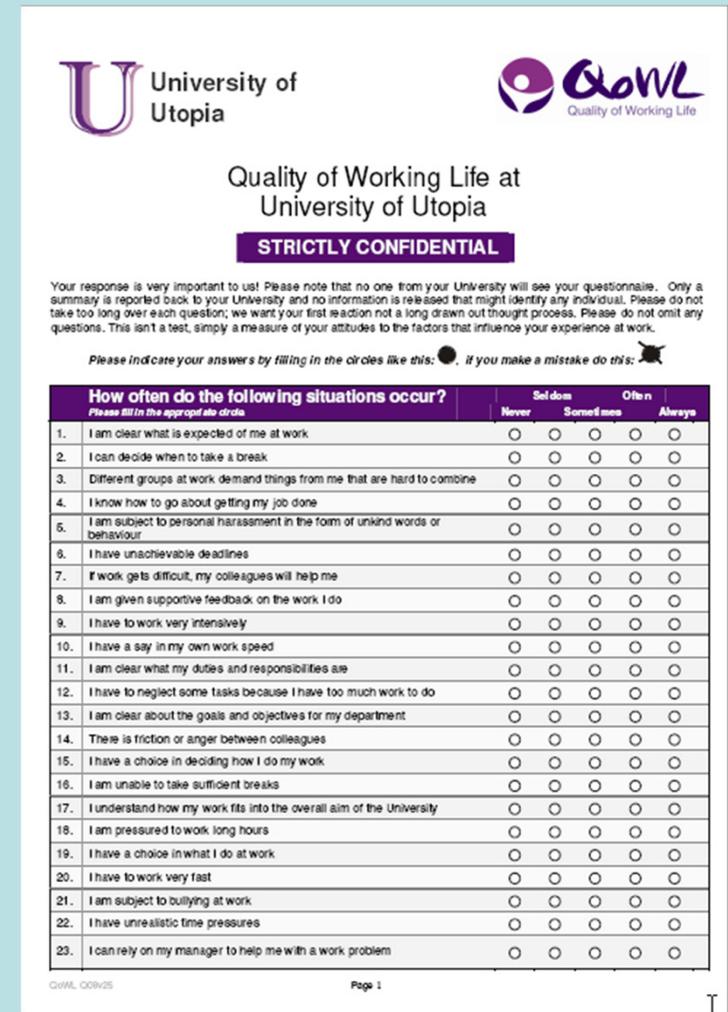
'Quality of Working Life is that part of overall quality of life that is influenced by work... the widest context in which an employee would evaluate the influence of work on their life.'

‘Quality of Working Life’ is that part of overall quality of life that is influenced by work...the widest context in which an employee would evaluate the influence of work on their life*.



The WRQoL scale

-  The University of Portsmouth and QoWL Ltd sought to develop a valid and reliable scale to measure QoWL that organisations could use with confidence
-  The Work Related Quality of Life scale has 23 items and 6 factors. WRQoL surveys report overall reliabilities ($C\alpha$) from .91 to .94 and CFAs have shown a generally strong, stable factor structure



Utopia University of Utopia

Quality of Working Life at University of Utopia

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Your response is very important to us! Please note that no one from your University will see your questionnaire. Only a summary is reported back to your University and no information is released that might identify any individual. Please do not take too long over each question; we want your first reaction not a long drawn out thought process. Please do not omit any questions. This isn't a test, simply a measure of your attitudes to the factors that influence your experience at work.

Please indicate your answers by filling in the circles like this: ●. If you make a mistake do this: ✖

How often do the following situations occur?		Never	Seldom	Often	Always
Please fill in the appropriate circle.					
1.	I am clear what is expected of me at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	I can decide when to take a break	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	I know how to go about getting my job done	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	I am subject to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	I have unachievable deadlines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	If work gets difficult, my colleagues will help me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	I am given supportive feedback on the work I do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	I have to work very intensively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	I have a say in my own work speed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11.	I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much work to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	I am clear about the goals and objectives for my department	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14.	There is friction or anger between colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15.	I have a choice in deciding how I do my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16.	I am unable to take sufficient breaks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the University	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18.	I am pressured to work long hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19.	I have a choice in what I do at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20.	I have to work very fast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21.	I am subject to bullying at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22.	I have unrealistic time pressures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23.	I can rely on my manager to help me with a work problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

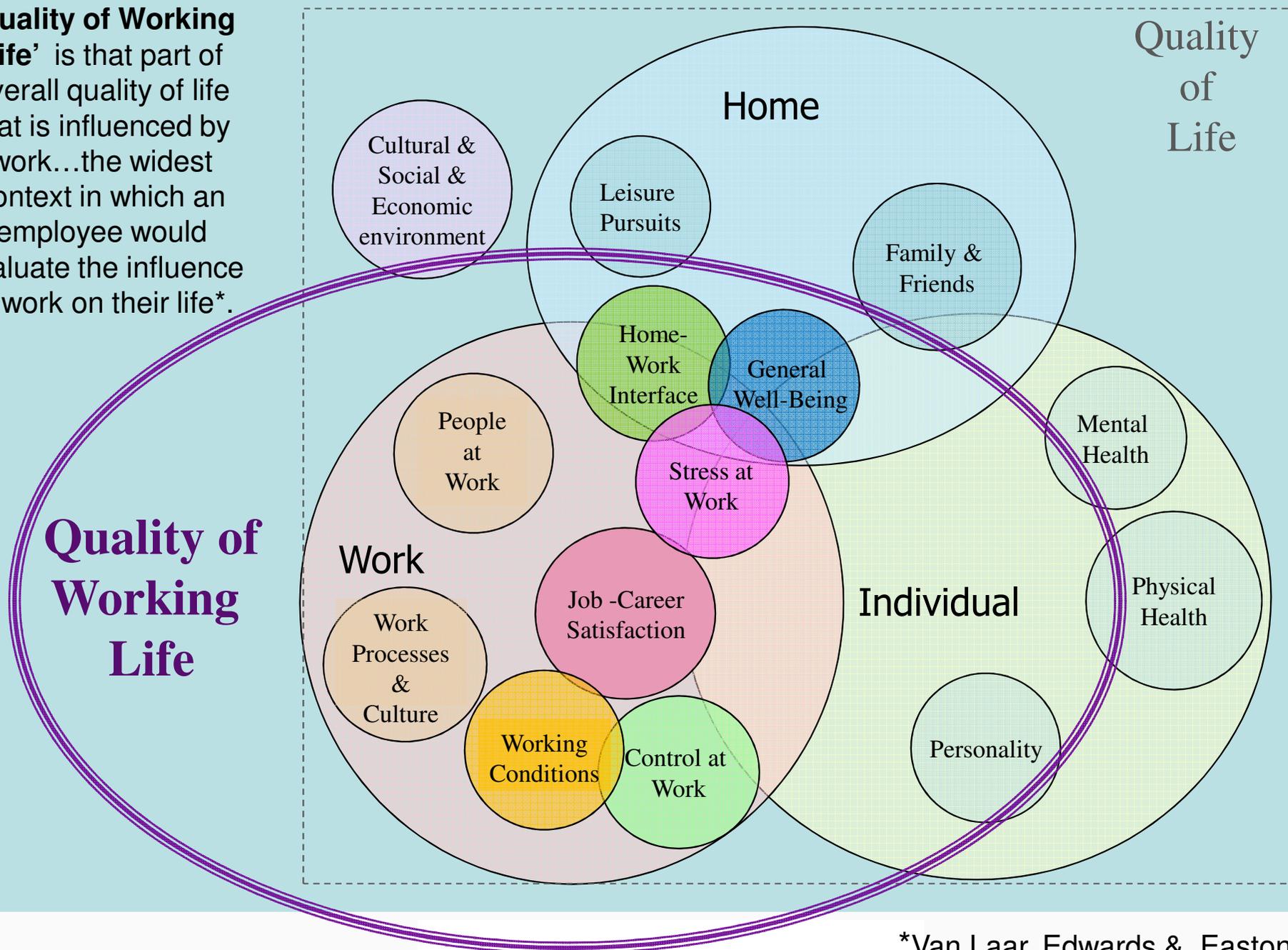
QoWL 009/05 Page 1

WRQoL Scale Factors*

- **Job Career Satisfaction (JCS) : $\alpha = .86$**
How far you agree that you are generally happy with your ability to do your work
- **General Well Being (GWB) : $\alpha = .89$**
How much you agree you feel generally content with life as a whole
- **Home-Work Interface (HWI) : $\alpha = .82$**
How far you agree that the organisation understands and tries to help you with pressures outside of work
- **Stress at Work (SAW) : $\alpha = .81$**
How far you feel agree you experience stress at work
- **Control at Work (CAW) : $\alpha = .81$**
How far you agree you feel you are involved in decisions that affect you at work
- **Working Conditions (WCS) : $\alpha = .75$**
The extent you agree that you are happy with conditions in which you work

‘Quality of Working Life’ is that part of overall quality of life that is influenced by work...the widest context in which an employee would evaluate the influence of work on their life*.

Quality of Life



WRQoL Applications

- Since 2003 the scale has been used by over 10% of UK Universities, the 4 largest HE Unions, Parts of large charitable organisations (BBC, RNLI), NHS Trusts, Schools & Others
- Large-sample norms are available for University and Healthcare workers
- Used by researchers in 20+ countries
- Translated into: American English, Chinese, Farsi, Turkish & Welsh

WRQL

İŞE LIŞKİN YAŞAM KALİTESİ ANKETİ

Cevaplarınız bizim için çok önemli! Kurumunuzdan hiç kimse anket formunuzu görmeyecektir. Yalnızca çalışmanın bir özeti, işvereninizi işleği doğrultusunda, işçilerin kimliği açığa çıkmadan temin edilebilir. Lütfen sorular üzerinde çok fazla düşünmeden, ilk tepkilerinize göre ve hiçbir soruyu atlamadan cevaplandırınız. Bu bir test değil, sadece işyerindeki deneyimlerinizi etkileyen faktörlere karşı tutumlarınızı ölçmek için yapılan bir çalışmadır.

Lütfen cevaplarınızı uygun olan dairesiyi doldurarak şekildedeki gibi belirtiniz. eğer bir hata yaparsanız şekildedeki gibi işaretleyiniz.

Aşağıdaki ifadelere ne derecede katılıyorsunuz? <i>Lütfen uygun seçeneği işaretleyiniz.</i>	Keskinlikle katılıyorum		Kararsızım		Keskinlikle katılmıyorum	
	Katılıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Katılmıyorum
1. İşimi yapabilmem için belirli amaç ve hedeflerim var	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Çalışma alanımda düşüncelerimi ifade edebiliyorum ve düşüncelerime etki edebiliyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. İşimde kendi yeteneklerimi kullanma fırsatım var	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Kendimi şu anda iyi hissediyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. İşveremin, aile yaşamındaki gibi işime uyum sağlamam için gereken kolaylığı ve esnekliği sağlar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Su anki çalışma saatlerim/düzenim kişisel koşullarıma uyuyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

پرسشنامه کیفیت زندگی شغلی

لطفاً زمان زیادی را صرف هر سوال نکنید و هیچ سوالی را بی جواب نگذارید. در ضمن هیچ کس از شبکه بهداشت و درمان شما پرسشنامه شما را نخواهد دید، و هیچگونه اطلاعاتی که ممکن است ماهیت فردی را مشخص کند منتشر نخواهد شد.

لطفاً پاسخ هر سوال را با پر کردن دایره مورد نظر مشخص نمایید: اگر اشتباه بر نمودید بدین شکل اصلاح نمایید

تا چه اندازه با موارد زیر موافق هستید	مطلقاً مخالفم	مختلطم	خنثی	موافقم	مطلقاً موافقم
۱. من اهداف کاری مشخصی دارم که در من توانایی انجام کار را ایجاد می کند	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۲. احساس می کنم می توانم نظراتم را بیان کنم و بر تغییرات محیط کارم تأثیر گذارم	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۳. شرایط کاری ام به گونه ای است که می توانم از تمام توانایی هایم استفاده کنم	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۴. هم اکنون احساس سلامتی می کنم	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۵. کارفرمای من انعطاف پذیری و تسهیلات کافی را برای من فراهم می آورد، تا کارم با زندگی خانوادگی ام تناسب داشته باشد	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۶. ساعات کاری فعلی من با زندگی شخصی ام متناسب است	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۷. اغلباً در محل کار احساس می کنم که تحت فشار هستم	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۸. وقتی من کار خوبی انجام می دهم، برای انجام آن کار از طرف مدیرم فوق خود، مورد تأیید و قدر دانی قرار می گیرم	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۹. اخیراً احساس ناراحتی و استرس داشته ام	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۱۰. از زندگی ام راضی ام	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۱۱. من تشویق می شوم تا مهارتهای جدیدی را یاد بگیرم	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۱۲. من در تصمیماتی که در محیط کارم بر من تأثیر می گذارد مشارکت داده می شوم	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
۱۳. کارفرمای من آنچه را که نیاز دارم تا کارم را به طور موثر انجام دهم را برای من فراهم می کند	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pre-retirement Bounce

- In our latest research using a sample of 9 Universities (4 Pre '92, 3 Post '92, 2 post '95) we analysed the average 23-item WRQoL scores by age and gender

	Age in years				
Gender	under 25	25-44	45-59	60 or over	Total
Male	35	663	608	126	1432
Female	104	1320	855	86	2365
Total	139	1983	1463	212	3797

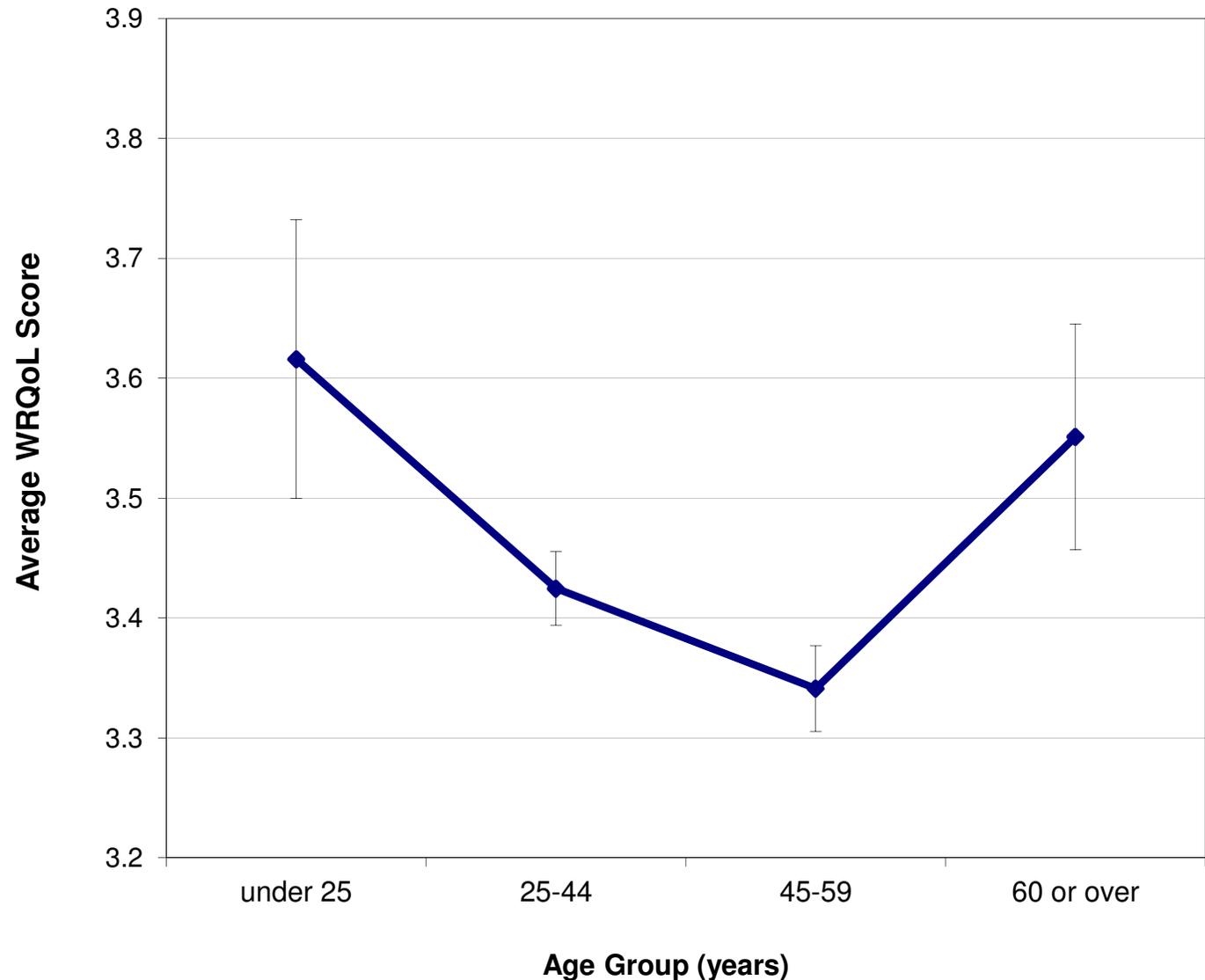
- Average of 33% response rate, 3797 responses with data for all questions.
- Cronbach's Alpha for all 23 items = .94

The Pre-retirement bounce

Average Work Related Quality of Life Scale scores by Age group (2SE bars)

UK University Sample; N = 3797

(Age = $p < .001$)

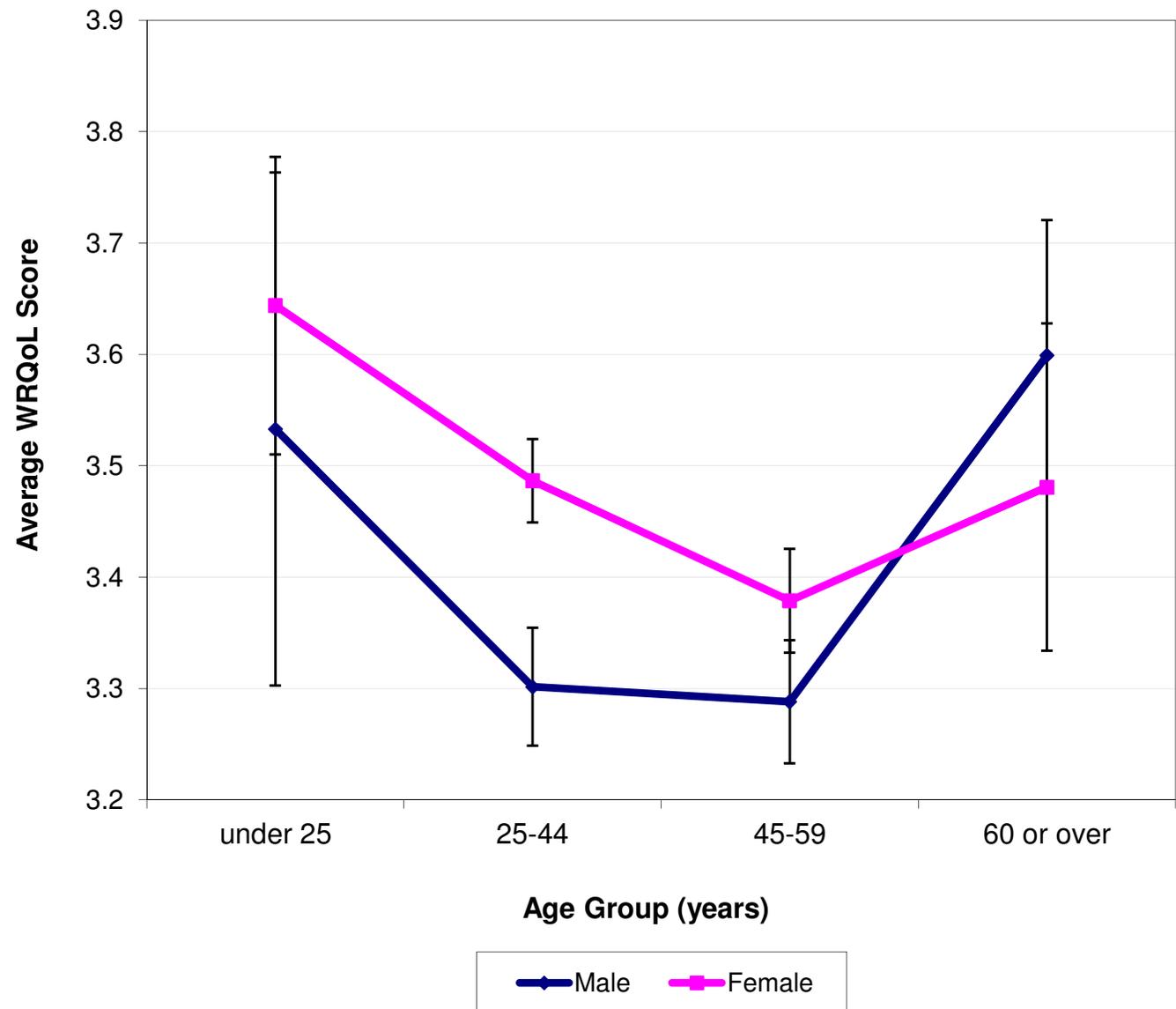


The Pre-retirement bounce

Work Related Quality of Life Scale scores by gender and age group (2SE bars)

UK University Sample; N = 3797

(Gender = ns;
Age = $p < .001$;
Interaction $p = .013$)



Employee Engagement (EE)

- We were interested in whether Employee Engagement contributed to QoWL. Where EE: ‘a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organisation and its values*’
- In our UK University survey we had also asked a number of other questions. E.g. ‘*I am proud to tell others I am part of this organisation*’; ‘*I am motivated to do my best in my job*’
- 5 of these questions loaded together to form a stable Employment Engagement factor ($C\alpha = 0.853$)
- The Employee Engagement factor was found to be correlated .792 with the overall average of the other 6 WRQoL factors (23 + 5 item WRQoL, $C\alpha = 0.951$)

Does Employee Engagement bounce?

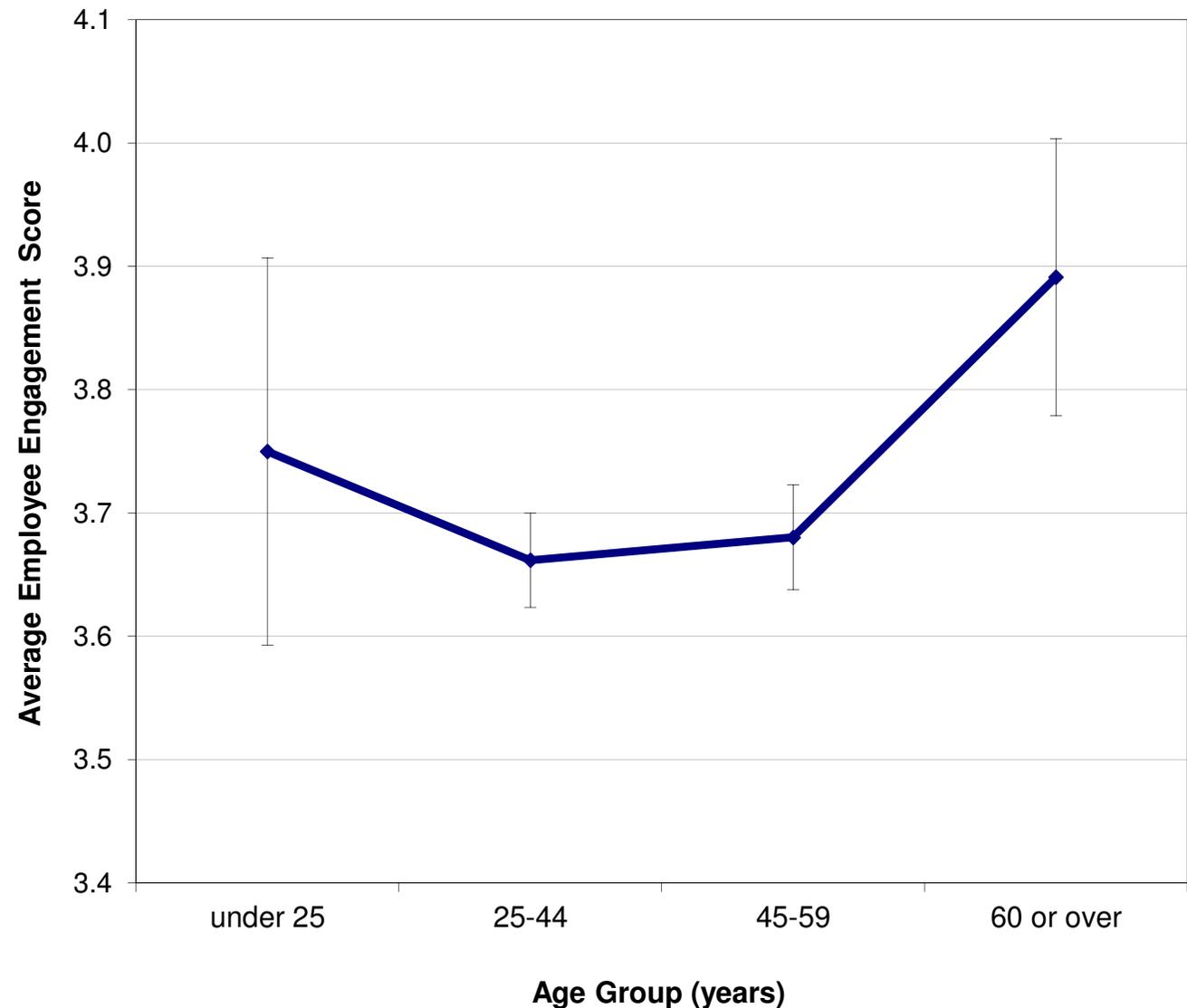
- Our Employee Engagement survey also provided data to investigate pre-retirement bounce
- Would Employee Engagement also be expected to start high, dip down mid career and then ‘bounce’ just before retirement?

Pre-retirement bounce exists for Employee Engagement

Employee Engagement scores by age group (2SE bars)

UK University Sample; N = 3797

(Age is sig., $p = .001$)

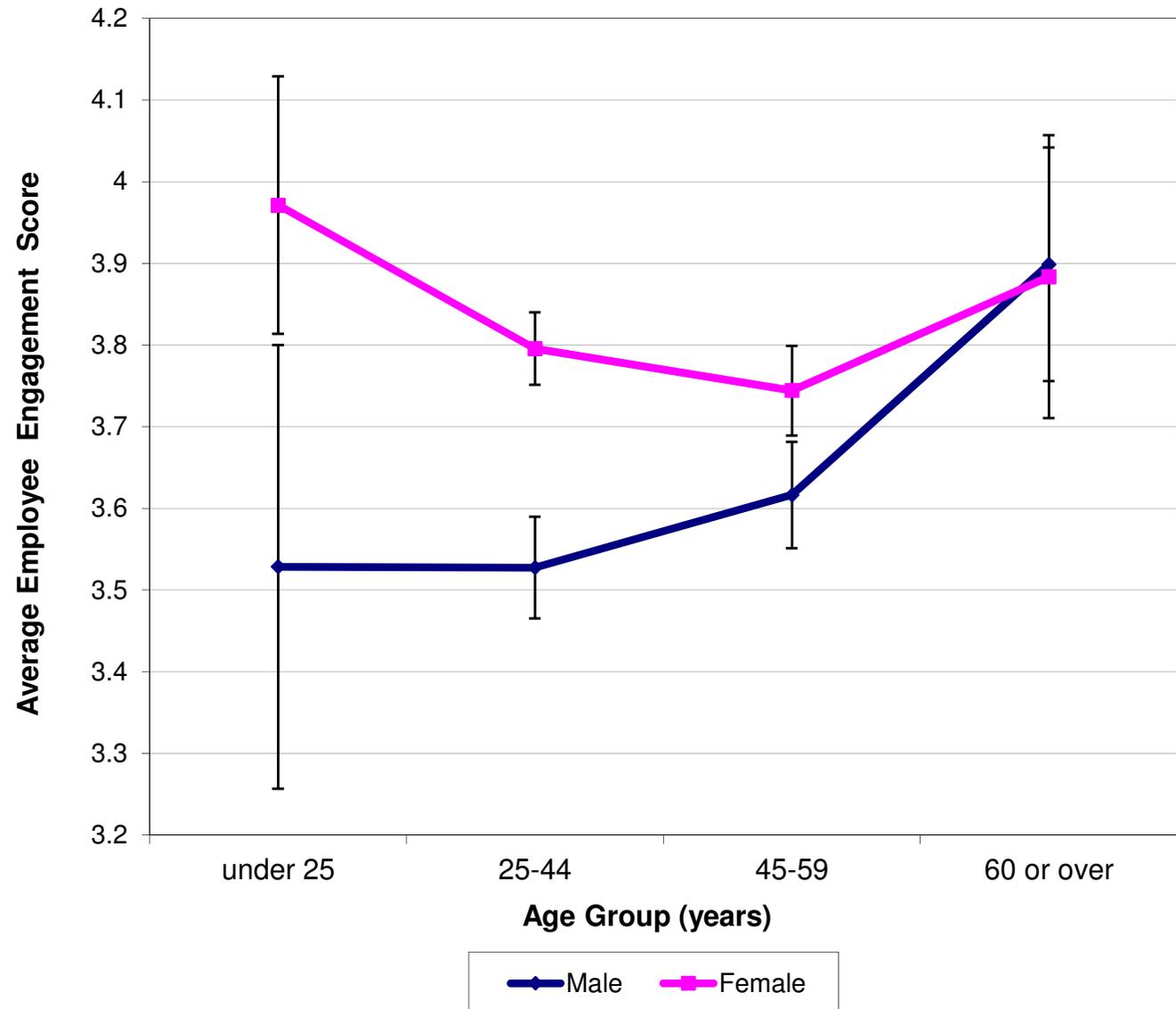


Women
bounce, Men
jump

Employee
Engagement
scores by gender
and age group
(2SE bars)

UK University
Sample; N =
3797

(Gender, Age &
Interaction all
sig. $p < .01$)



Why men do jump

- Women appear to start highly engaged, dip, then bounce just before retirement
- Men start very low, slowly build in engagement then make a large jump in engagement just before retirement
- It could be that the longer you are with an organisation the more you come to identify with it and its values
- Perhaps men tend to avoid early commitment, whereas women like to commit early, become disillusioned, but then come to value the organisation just as they consider leaving it

Conclusions & Policy Implications

- The WRQoL scale measures a broad range of QoWL factors across work and non-work life domains. When compared across age groups, WRQoL score profiles show a clear pre-retirement bounce
- A new 5-item Employee Engagement factor has been developed which appears to complement the existing WRQoL scale
- Overall the Employee Engagement factor shows a clear pre-retirement bounce, but the bounce ‘trajectory’ differs by gender
- Expecting workers to stay in their jobs past the current statutory retirement age may well delay pre-retirement bounce in overall WRQoL, but may further increase levels of employee engagement
- That Employee Engagement is so low for early-career men needs further investigation and organisations may want to encourage more early engagement to get the best from all their employees

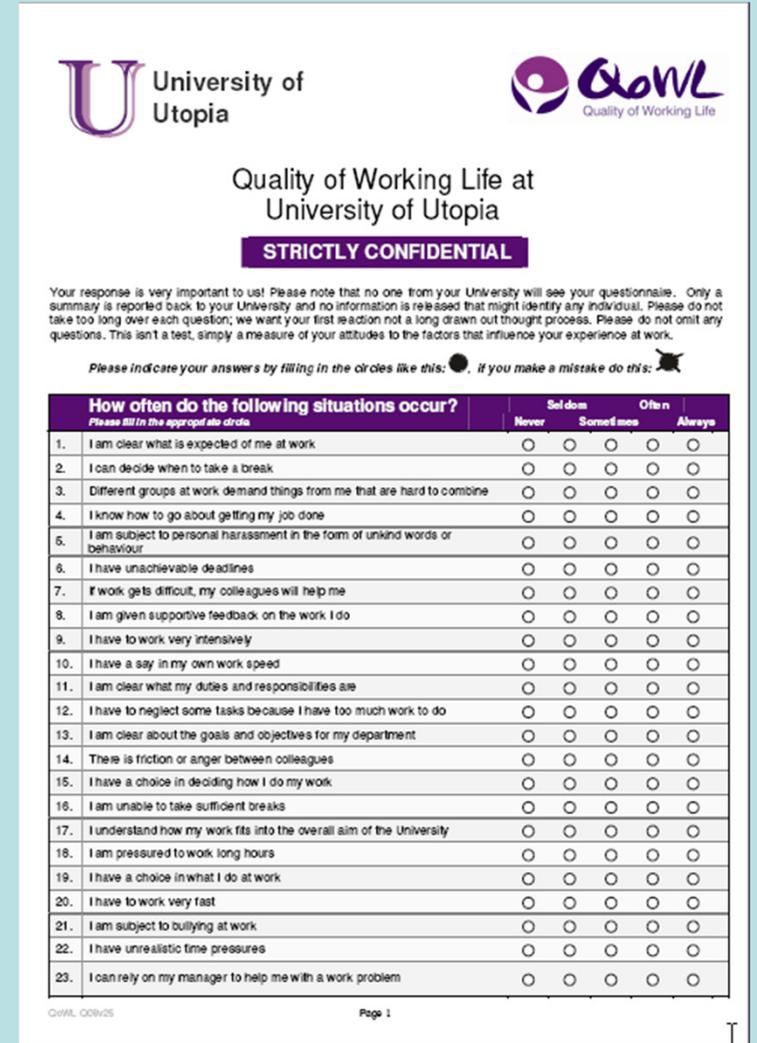
Future Research

We continue to work on the validity of the WRQoL scale and to determine whether the profiles stay the same across a wide range of ages, organisations and nations by:

- Pairing it with other scales (e.g. UK HSE Stress scale, Workability scale) and outcome variables (productivity, illness, sleep quality, etc.)
- Collecting large scale data for norm groups in other areas (e.g. Schools, Government, Police, Business)
- Researching the questionnaire to ensure it remains valid with key staff groups (Older workers, younger workers, disabled workers)

WRQoL Availability

- QoWL Ltd provide staff surveys and organisational development advice based around the WRQoL core question set and license the scale and the analysed results to consultants
- The WRQoL scale is freely available to researchers in return for using the data collected to develop norm groups and benchmarks
- See www.qowl.co.uk for more information



U University of Utopia

QoWL Quality of Working Life

Quality of Working Life at University of Utopia

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Your response is very important to us! Please note that no one from your University will see your questionnaire. Only a summary is reported back to your University and no information is released that might identify any individual. Please do not take too long over each question; we want your first reaction not a long drawn out thought process. Please do not omit any questions. This isn't a test, simply a measure of your attitudes to the factors that influence your experience at work.

Please indicate your answers by filling in the circles like this: ●. If you make a mistake do this: ✖

How often do the following situations occur?		Please fill in the appropriate circles			
		Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1.	I am clear what is expected of me at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	I can decide when to take a break	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	I know how to go about getting my job done	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	I am subject to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	I have unachievable deadlines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	If work gets difficult, my colleagues will help me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	I am given supportive feedback on the work I do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	I have to work very intensively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	I have a say in my own work speed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11.	I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much work to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	I am clear about the goals and objectives for my department	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14.	There is friction or anger between colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15.	I have a choice in deciding how I do my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16.	I am unable to take sufficient breaks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the University	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18.	I am pressured to work long hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19.	I have a choice in what I do at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20.	I have to work very fast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21.	I am subject to bullying at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22.	I have unrealistic time pressures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23.	I can rely on my manager to help me with a work problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

QoWL, 009/05 Page 1

References

- Edwards, J. A., Webster, S., Van Laar, D. And Easton, S. (2008). Psychometric analysis of the UK Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards work-related stress Indicator Tool, *Work & Stress*, 22(2), 96 - 107.
- Edwards, J., Van Laar, D.L., Easton, S. & Kinman, G. (2009). The Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) scale for Higher Education Employees. *Quality in Higher Education*. 15: 3, 207-219.
- Robinson, D., Perryman, S. and Hayday, S. (2004). *The Drivers of Employee Engagement*. Institute of Employments Studies, Report 408.
- Van Laar, D. L., Edwards, J. A. & Easton, S. (2007). The Work-Related Quality of Life (QoWL) scale for Healthcare Workers. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 60(3), 325-333.
- Van Laar, D. L., Easton, S. & Bradshaw, A. (2009). Pre-retirement bounce. <http://www.pressdispensary.co.uk/releases/992493.php>

That's it - Thanks for listening!

Exploration of "pre-retirement bounce" in Quality of Working Life and Employee Engagement

IWP Conference 2010
Sheffield, UK



Dr Darren Van Laar,
Applied Psychology Unit, Department of
Psychology, University of Portsmouth, UK



Mr Simon Easton, Consultant
Psychologist, QoWL Ltd.

Influences on Quality of Working Life



Personality Attitudes
 IQ Needs
 Age Well-being
 Gender Coping styles...

The Individual



The Home

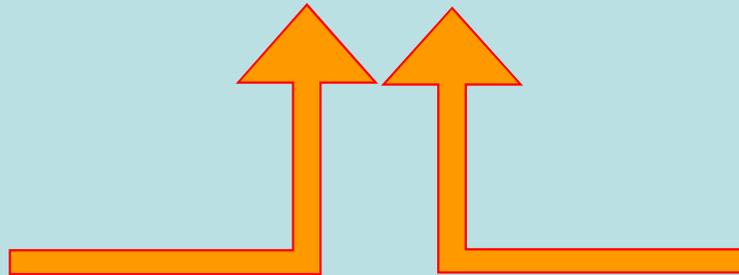


Accommodation Finances
 Family Lifestyle
 Friends Culture...



Training Opportunity
 Job-person fit Resources
 Control Task
 Motivation Demands
 Perceived Equity Stress

The Job



International Context



Terrorism, World economy...

National Context



Interest rates ,Transport
 Government action
 Environmental issues...

The Organisation



Culture Turnover
 Job security Reward
 Trust Shift work...

The Workplace



Colleagues Job satisfaction
 Manager Sick absence
 Job design Work environment...

Development of the WRQoL scale

- The healthcare data set (N = 953) produced a 6 factor structure with the 23 items (Overall C's $\alpha = .91$) with a final 'good' model fit of:

χ^2 (216, N = 953) = 866.46 $p < 0.01$, CFI = .943,
GFI = .93, NFI = .92 and RMSEA = .05

- The 6 factor, 23-item 'Work-Related Quality of Life' (WRQoL) scale appeared to be a valid and reliable scale with good psychometric properties