The impact of work motivation and job search behavior on reemployment among the unemployed aged 45 and older

A study based on STREAM-data
Nienke Velterop
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Why?

- Raising of the retirement age
- Increasing unemployment rates
- Decreasing reemployment success

- Ageism
- Lack of up-to-date labour market knowledge
- No adequate network
- Self-esteem

→ What predicts reemployment success within the older unemployed?
Theoretical background

- Job search behavior, reemployment success

- Job search behavior (Blau, 1994)
  - preparatory
  - active

- Few studies made this distinction
- No studies focused on the older unemployed
Work motivation, job search behavior

Work motivation (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2000)
- autonomous
- controlled (financial motive)

Again, no studies in the older unemployed group
Research model

**Research question**
What is the relation between work motivation, job search behavior and reemployment at one-year follow-up within a population of unemployed persons aged 45 and older?

**Control var.:**
age,
gender,
educational level,
duration of unemployment,
financial situation
Method

- Study on Transitions in Employment, Ability and Motivation in people aged 45 and older (STREAM)
- Sample of 502 unemployed Dutch citizens
- Reemployment at one-year follow-up

- Logistic regression analyses (SPSS 20)
- Adjusted for age, gender, education level, duration of unemployment, financial situation and time-wave
Results

Control var.: age, gender, educational level, duration of unemployment, financial situation

N=499

Work motivation:
- Autonomous
- Controlled

OR 1.84, p<0.02
OR 1.69, p<0.02

Job search behavior:
- Preparatory
- Active

OR 2.67, p<0.01
Conclusion

- Preparatory versus active behavior is a relevant distinction
- Interventions on behavior instead of financial incentives
- Stimulate autonomous motivation
Questions?
“I would recommend all the older unemployed to make a name for themselves”

Jan van der Veen
(‘the national unemployed person’)