Successful Aging at Work: Organizational Strategies and Employee Experiences in Public and Private Sector

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Successful aging at work (SAW) has become a critical challenge for contemporary organizations. This study examines SAW from two complementary perspectives: organizational practices aimed at supporting aging employees (SAW strategies) and employees' maturation, development, and growth through aging in organizational contexts (SAW experiences). Using survey data from 456 employees in Slovenia, we compare public and private sector organizations and examine the relationship between SAW strategies and experiences. Results show that SAW strategies are widely implemented, with no significant differences between sectors. While the strategy–experience correlation is stronger in private sector organizations, SAW experiences are significantly more positive in public sector organizations. The possibility to remain employed in an organization as long as desired is most strongly associated with SAW experiences, which suggests that job security plays an integral role in supporting positive aging trajectories and acts as a foundation that enables employees to adapt, develop, and thrive as they age.

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1   Introduction

The aging of the world's population represents one of the most significant demographic transformations of the 21st century, bringing unprecedented challenges for organizations worldwide (OECD, 2025). The rapidly aging workforce is fundamentally changing the composition of labour markets (Kooij et al., 2020; OECD, 2025). In this context, organizations face the dual challenge of retaining older workers' valuable experience while adapting workplace practices to support longer, healthier working lives (Beier et al., 2022; Rudolph & Zacher, 2022). Understanding how employees can age successfully at work - maintaining and even enhancing their capabilities, motivation, and well-being across the working lifespan, has therefore become a strategic imperative for organizational sustainability, workforce retention, and long-term performance (Dimovski et al., 2022; Zacher et al., 2018; Taneva & Peng, 2024).

1.1   Successful aging at work: theoretical framework

Successful aging at work (SAW) is an emerging concept rooted in contemporary interpretations of organizational and lifespan developmental theories (Beier et al., 2022). Kooij (2015) defined SAW as the sustainable maintenance of an individual's work ability, health, and motivation across the working life cycle. Zacher (2015) expanded this conceptualization by noting that SAW encompasses not only maintenance of current functioning but also development and growth. Unlike traditional deficit-focused perspectives on aging, which emphasize productivity decline and diminishing capabilities, SAW emphasizes employees' capacity for improvement, adaptation, and continued contribution throughout their careers (Debelak et al., 2024; Kooij et al., 2020; Zacher et al., 2018).

Taneva & Yankov (2020) distinguished two complementary, measurable dimensions of SAW. The first dimension concerns organizational strategies for successful aging (SAW strategies): workplace policies, practices, and conditions that facilitate employees' continued engagement and development. The second dimension involves employee experiences of successful aging (SAW experiences): individuals' subjective perceptions of age-related growth in work-related competencies and psychological resources.

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SAW strategies include access to continuous training and skill development opportunities, recognition and respect for employees' contributions, flexibility in work arrangements, supportive supervision and feedback, job autonomy and decision-making freedom, and organizational openness to negotiating individualized work arrangements that match employees' evolving needs (Olson & Shultz, 2019; Taneva & Yankov, 2020; Taneva & Peng, 2024; Zacher et al., 2018; Pak et al., 2020; Boehm et al., 2020; Bal, 2015; Taneva & Arnold, 2017). They provide the contextual resources and opportunities that enable employees to maintain, adapt, and further develop their capabilities as they age (Kooij et al., 2014, 2020; Olson & Shultz, 2019).

On the other hand, SAW experiences reflect positive changes in individuals' functioning at work throughout aging (Taneva & Yankov, 2020; Zacher et al., 2018). Taneva et al. (2016) and Taneva & Yankov (2020) link SAW experiences with increased confidence stemming from accumulated knowledge and adaptations, enhanced ability to manage workplace relationships, greater comfort in raising issues and expressing opinions, improved capacity to solve complex problems, development of more meaningful workplace relationships, enhanced conflict resolution skills, increased emotional regulation (remaining calm and optimistic under pressure), greater adaptability to workplace changes, and heightened self-awareness regarding personal strengths and limitations.

1.2 Organizational context and the SAW strategy–experience link: background and research gap

Aging can lead to notable developmental gains, and not merely losses in workplace contexts (Rudolph & Zacher, 2022; Kooij et al., 2020; Olson & Shultz, 2019). SAW experiences contribute to both employees' well-being and performance (Taneva & Arnold, 2017; Zacher, 2015). In theory, SAW strategies should positively influence SAW experiences, but empirical evidence regarding this relationship is still developing (Olson & Shultz, 2019; Beier et al., 2022). Age-friendly HR practices, supportive supervision, job autonomy, and opportunities for development are generally associated with positive outcomes (Cui et al., 2025; Pak et al., 2020; Kooij et al., 2014; 2020; Zacher, 2018). However, the strategy–experience link and overall SAW approaches and outcomes vary across organizational contexts (Kooij, 2015; Zacher, 2015; Taneva & Arnold, 2017; Egdell et al., 2020).

Substantial differences in organizational structures, management practices, employment stability, and mission orientations between public and private sectors are widely recognized (Perry & Rainey, 1988). Private sector organizations face competitive pressure and are therefore more agile, providing more flexibility and initiatives for development and performance, but also lower employment security, while public sector organizations typically provide stable employment, have more traditional management approaches and seniority models that favour older workers, but may be less developmentally oriented or motivationally engaging (Calo et al., 2013; Walker et al., 2021; Macassa, et al., 2024). Sector characteristics may influence both organizational practices and individuals' aging trajectories, shaping the conditions for SAW (Quinn et al., 2019; Villajos et al., 2020).

Despite growing theoretical interest in SAW, several gaps remain in the literature. Empirical measurement and analysis of SAW strategies and experiences is limited (Pak et al., 2019). There is a lack of examination of the relationship between organizational strategies and employee experiences (Cui et al., 2025; Debelak et al., 2024), and how it may vary across contexts (Boehm et al., 2021; Egdell et al., 2020).

To achieve positive SAW experiences, SAW strategies must be tailored to organizational context and employees' needs (Kooij et al., 2020; Zacher et al., 2018; Taneva et al., 2016). This motivates us to explore how SAW strategies and experiences are perceived by employees in different sectoral contexts, and how specific strategies translate into employees' experiences.

1.3   Research objectives

This study addresses contemporary practical challenges of managing an aging workforce and theoretical gaps with three objectives: (1) to examine the relationship between organizational strategies and employee experiences of successful aging at work, (2) to investigate whether public and private sector employees differ in their perceptions of SAW strategies and experiences, and (3) to explore which specific organizational strategies are most strongly associated with positive SAW experiences, and whether these associations vary by sector. Accordingly, we pose three research questions:

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- RQ1: Are there differences between public and private sector employees in perceived organizational strategies for successful aging at work (SAW-S) and experienced successful aging at work (SAW-E)?
- RQ2: Which specific organizational strategies and employee experiences show significant differences between sectors, and what is the magnitude of these differences?
- RQ3: How do organizational strategies relate to employee experiences of successful aging, and do these relationships differ between public and private sector contexts?

To answer these research questions, we conducted a quantitative survey study and analysed responses from a sample of Slovenian employees across public and private sector organizations, using the validated SAW scales developed by Taneva and Yankov (2020). This study contributes to the emerging SAW literature by providing empirical evidence on the implementation of SAW strategies, employees' experiences of successful aging, the strategy–experience link, and sectoral differences.

2   Methods

This study examines whether SAW strategies and experiences differ between public and private sector employment, and how organizational strategies relate to employee experiences. We employed a quantitative research design using a questionnaire survey approach, a method appropriate for collecting structured data from a defined population and systematically examining relationships among variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The data were gathered through two online surveys administered in Slovenia between May and September 2025. All participants were informed of the research purpose, anonymity, and voluntary participation before completing the questionnaire.

Data collection resulted in a total sample of 557 participants. The sample comprised 494 employees with valid sector information (238 private sector: 48.2%; 256 public sector: 51.8%). The sample was approximately evenly distributed between genders (55.7% female, 44.2% male), with moderate age distribution (age data were available for 506 participants: 90.8%). The largest proportion of the sample was aged 40-49 (28.9%), followed by under 30 (24.9%), 30-39 (22.9%), and 50-59 (22.5%).

Education levels varied, with the largest proportion holding university degrees (42.6%), followed by lower education levels (secondary and professional combined, 35.5%) and higher degrees (master's and doctoral combined, 21.9%) based on 507 valid responses.

SAW was measured using full scales from Taneva and Yankov (2020), which include 10 items for SAW strategies (SAW-S) and 10 items for SAW experiences (SAW-E). Participants rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Respondents could also select "I don't know" (coded as 0) or "Not relevant" (coded as -1) - these responses were excluded from the final analysis, together with data of respondents that had missing responses.

Data were analysed using SPSS 29. We first examined descriptive statistics to characterize the sample and verify that measures showed adequate variability. Both scales demonstrated good internal consistency (Cronbach's α = 0,914 for SAW-S and α = 0,908 for SAW-E). To test whether successful aging differs between employment sectors, we conducted independent samples t-tests comparing public and private sector employees on both composite scores and individual items. T-tests were chosen because they provide a straightforward test of mean differences between two groups. Composite scores for both SAW strategies and experiences were calculated as the mean of valid responses. We calculated effect sizes using Cohen's d to assess the practical significance of differences, using benchmarks of 0.2 (small), 0.5 (medium), and 0.8 (large). Item-level analyses were conducted in addition to composite comparisons to identify specific strategies and experiences that might show sectoral variation even if overall scores do not differ. To examine how organizational strategies relate to employee experiences, we conducted Pearson correlation analyses. Given the exploratory nature of this study and the focus on identifying patterns of associations rather than causal relationships, bivariate correlations were deemed appropriate. Correlations were calculated between each SAW strategy item and the SAW-E composite score for the full sample and separately for each sector. This approach allows us to identify which strategies are most strongly associated with successful aging experiences.

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3   Results

There were 456 valid responses used for the SAW analysis. As shown in Table 1, participants reported moderate-to-high levels of organizational strategies. The highest mean was observed for the item "Stay as desired" (M = 3.81, SD = 1.00), while the lowest was for "Openness to negotiation" (M = 3.13, SD = 1.15).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for SAW Strategies Items

Item		1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
saws_1 (Access to training)	N	28	44	137	181	66	3.47	1.05
	%	6.1	9.6	30	39.7	14.5		
saws_2 (Stay up-to-date)	N	27	42	119	202	66	3.52	1.04
	%	5.9	9.2	26.1	44.3	14.5		
saws_3 (Recognition/respect)	N	22	45	123	199	67	3.54	1.02
	%	4.8	9.9	27	43.6	14.7		
saws_4 (Stay as desired)	N	18	22	107	193	116	3.81	1.00
	%	3.9	4.8	23.5	42.3	25.4		
saws_5 (Flexibility)	N	49	75	109	158	65	3.25	1.20
	%	10.7	16.4	23.9	34.6	14.3		
saws_6 (Quick feedback)	N	34	56	114	182	70	3.43	1.12
	%	7.5	12.3	25	39.9	15.4		
saws_7 (Freedom in decision)	N	17	40	134	189	76	3.59	.99
	%	3.7	8.8	29.4	41.4	16.7		
saws_8 (Supervisor support)	N	32	49	124	168	83	3.49	1.12
	%	7	10.7	27.2	36.8	18.2		
saws_9 (Openness to negotiation)	N	52	71	146	140	47	3.13	1.15
	%	11.4	15.6	32	30,7	10.3		
saws_10 (Flexible supervisors)	N	41	77	142	145	51	3.19	1.12
	%	9	16.9	31.1	31.8	11.2		

Note. N = 456 valid responses; 101 cases excluded due to missing data. Frequencies show response distribution for each Likert scale point. Percentages calculated from valid N for each item. Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree.

Regarding employee experiences (Table 2), the results indicate a generally positive perception of aging at work. Employees felt most confident due to their knowledge (M = 3.97, SD = 0.81) and their ability to solve complex tasks (M = 3.89, SD = 0.80). Overall, the means for experiences were higher than those for organizational strategies.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for SAW Experiences Items

Item		1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
sawe_1 (Confident due to knowledge)	N	4	18	76	246	112	3.97	.81
	%	0.9	3.9	16.7	53.9	24.6		
sawe_2 (Better manage relationships)	N	4	22	121	233	76	3.78	.81
	%	0.9	4.8	26.5	51.1	16.7		
sawe_3 (Dare to raise issues)	N	6	23	109	226	92	3.82	.85
	%	1.3	5	23.9	49.6	20.2		
sawe_4 (Solve complex tasks)	N	6	12	99	246	93	3.89	.8
	%	1,3	2.6	21.7	53.9	20.4		
sawe_5 (Meaningful relationships)	N	6	29	152	203	66	3.64	.85
	%	1.3	6.4	33.3	44.5	14.5		
sawe_6 (Resolve conflicts)	N	9	19	122	237	69	3.74	.84
	%	2	4.2	26.8	52	15.1		
sawe_7 (Calm and focused)	N	4	34	148	212	58	3.63	.83
	%	0.9	7.5	32.5	46.5	12.7		
sawe_8 (Calm and optimistic)	N	6	26	103	236	85	3.81	.85
	%	1.3	5.7	22.6	51.8	18.6		
sawe_9 (Adapt to changes)	N	5	19	120	244	68	3.77	.79
	%	1.1	4.2	26.3	53.5	14.9		
sawe_10a (Aware of strengths/limits)	N	3	16	109	247	81	3.85	.77
	%	0.7	3.5	23.9	54.2	17.8		

Note. N = 456 valid responses; 101 cases excluded due to missing data. Frequencies show response distribution for each Likert scale point. Percentages calculated from valid N for each item. Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree.

To address the first research question (RQ1), we first compared SAW results between the public and private sectors. Levene's test indicated that equal variances could be assumed for all variables. As presented in Table 3, the composite-level analysis revealed no statistically significant differences between the sectors.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and T-test Results for SAW Composite Scores by Sector

		N	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
SAW Experiences	Full sample	456	3.80	.60				
	Private sector	238	3.76	.60	−1.551	440	.122	−.148
	Public sector	204	3.85	.58				
SAW Strategies	Full sample	456	3.46	.81				
	Private sector	238	3.46	.82	.015	440	.988	.001
	Public sector	204	3.46	.79				

Note. 101 cases excluded due to missing SAW data.

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Public and private sector employees reported identical levels of SAW strategies (M = 3.46, p = .988). Public sector employees reported slightly higher overall experiences (M = 3.85) compared to the private sector (M = 3.76), but this difference was not statistically significant (p = .122). These results indicate that at the overall level, both sectors provide similar levels of organizational support and that employees in both contexts report comparable aging experiences. Next, we examined individual items to identify specific strategies and experiences that might differ between sectors (RQ2). Table 4 presents the results for SAW strategies, and Table 5 presents results for SAW experiences.

Table 4: Item-Level Comparison of SAW Strategies by Sector

Item	Private M (SD)	Public M (SD)	t	df	p	Cohen's d
saws_1 (Access to training)	3.45 (1.04)	3.56 (1.01)	-1.075	440	.283	-.103
saws_2 (Stay up-to-date)	3.58 (1.00)	3.52 (1.05)	.574	440	.567	.055
saws_3 (Recognition/respect)	3.52 (1.03)	3.59 (1.00)	-.787	440	.432	-.075
saws_4 (Stay as desired)	3.71 (1.02)	3.96 (.94)	-2.669	440	.008**	-.255
saws_5 (Flexibility)	3.29 (1.21)	3.23 (1.18)	.600	440	.549	.057
saws_6 (Quick feedback)	3.49 (1.11)	3.41 (1.12)	.750	440	.453	.072
saws_7 (Freedom in decision)	3.68 (.95)	3.52 (1.01)	1.685	440	.093	.161
saws_8 (Supervisor support)	3.45 (1.13)	3.56 (1.10)	-1.023	440	.307	-.098
saws_9 (Openness to negot.)	3.21 (1.16)	3.08 (1.13)	1.204	440	.229	.115
saws_10 (Flexible supervisors)	3.23 (1.11)	3.17 (1.13)	.556	440	.578	.053

Note. N = 442 (Private sector = 238, Public sector = 204). 101 cases excluded due to missing SAW data and 14 for missing sector data. All p-values two-tailed. *Significant differences (p < .05). **Significant differences (p < .01).

Table 5: Item-Level Comparison of SAW Experiences by Sector

	Private M (SD)	Public M (SD)	t	df	p	Cohen's d
sawe_1 (Knowledge confidence)	3.71 (.81)	3.87 (.76)	-2.105	440	.036*	-.201
sawe_2 (Manage relationships)	3.83 (.81)	3.84 (.89)	-.130	440	.897	-.012
sawe_3 (Raise issues)	3.82 (.78)	4.01 (.75)	-2.727	440	.007**	-.260
sawe_4 (Complex tasks)	3.66 (.78)	3.66 (.89)	-.018	440	.986	-.002
sawe_5 (Meaningful relations)	3.74 (.81)	3.78 (.82)	-.513	440	.608	-.049
sawe_6 (Resolve conflicts)	3.60 (.84)	3.66 (.80)	-.831	440	.406	-.079
sawe_7 (Calm and focused)	3.75 (.86)	3.88 (.81)	-1.621	440	.106	-.155
sawe_8 (Calm and optimistic)	3.78 (.77)	3.76 (.79)	.169	440	.866	.016
sawe_9 (Adapt to changes)	3.77 (.76)	3.95 (.75)	-2.523	440	.012*	-.241
sawe_10a (Aware of strengths)	3.76 (0.76)	3.95 (.75)	-2.523	440	.012*	-.241

Note. N = 442 (Private sector = 238, Public sector = 204). 101 cases excluded due to missing SAW data and 14 for missing sector data. All p-values two-tailed. *Significant differences (p < .05). **Significant differences (p < .01).

Among organizational strategies, only one significant difference emerged (Table 4): public sector employees reported significantly higher support for staying as long as desired ($p = .008$, $d = -0.26$). In contrast, several significant experiential differences were identified (Table 5). Public sector employees reported significantly higher scores in raising issues ($p = .007$, $d = -0.26$), adapting to changes ($p = .012$, $d = -0.24$), being aware of strengths and limits ($p = .012$, $d = -0.24$), and being confident due to knowledge ($p = .036$, $d = -0.20$).

To examine how organizational strategies relate to employee experiences (RQ3), Pearson correlation analyses were conducted. The results in Table 6 show that all ten SAW strategies as well as SAW-S composite score are significantly and positively correlated with the SAW-E composite score across the full sample and in both sectors ($p < .01$).

Table 6: Pearson Correlation Analysis between SAW Strategies (Independent) and SAW-E Composite (Dependent) - full sample and sector side-by-side comparison

	Pearson Correlation coefficient (r)		
	Full Sample	**Private Sector**	**Public Sector**
saws_1 (Access to training)	.341	.310	**.338**
saws_2 (Stay up to date)	.331	**.346**	.309
saws_3 (Recognition/respect)	.425	.405	**.438**
saws_4 (Stay as desired)	.444	**.433**	.379
saws_5 (Flexibility)	.316	.269	**.358**
saws_6 (Quick feedback)	.393	**.429**	.370
saws_7 (Freedom in decision)	.421	**.432**	.378
saws_8 (Supervisor support)	.379	**.386**	.356
saws_9 (Openness to negotiation)	.330	**.357**	.292
saws_10 (Flexible supervisors)	.337	**.347**	.285
SAW-S Composite value	.491	**.485**	.471

Note: N = 456 (full sample), 238 (private sector), 204 (public sector). All correlations significant at $p < .01$ (two-tailed).

The composite SAW-S score showed a strong correlation with SAW-E in full sample ($r = .491$, $p < .01$) and both the private ($r = .485$) and public ($r = .471$) sectors. When comparing sectors, the pattern of associations remained consistent, with some variation in the strength of specific correlations between strategies and experiences (bold in Table 6).

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4   Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the nuances of SAW across the public and private sectors in Slovenia. While the composite scores initially resulted in a high level of similarity, detailed item-level analysis and correlation patterns reveal a more complex landscape of how organizational support translates into employee experiences.

4.1   Sectoral Differences in Strategies and Experiences

Regarding RQ1, findings indicate a surprising level of uniformity in SAW strategies. This supports the notion that both public and private sector organizations universally implement age management practices (Macassa et al., 2024). However, public sector employees reported significantly higher organizational support for staying as long as desired (p = .007, d = -0.26). This supports that the public sector is perceived to offer greater job security and long-term stability (Quinn et al., 2019; Villajos et al., 2020). Interestingly, a marginal trend (p = .093) showed that private sector employees might feel slightly more freedom in decision-making, potentially reflecting the less bureaucratic and hierarchical nature of private enterprises (Perry & Rainey, 1988).

In contrast to the strategic landscape, several significant experiential differences emerged, all favouring the public sector (RQ2). Public sector employees reported significantly more positive experiences in being confident due to accumulated knowledge, daring to raise issues, adapting to workplace changes, and being aware of their strengths and limitations. Effect sizes for these differences were small, indicating meaningful though not large sectoral variations. These findings support the observations that the public sector environment may foster conditions more conducive to positive experiences of aging at work. Employment stability in public sector allows older workers to be more confident and focus on competence rather than career survival, whereas the private sector's higher performance pressure may impact SAW experiences negatively (Taneva & Arnold, 2018; Egdell et al., 2020; Quinn et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2021; Villajos et al., 2020; Macassa et al., 2024).

4.2   Relationships Between Strategies and Experiences

The correlation analysis for RQ3 highlights the mechanism behind SAW experiences. Composite scores for organizational strategies (SAW-S) and employee experiences (SAW-E) showed a moderate positive correlation (r = .491, p < .001), confirming the overall relationship between organizational support and successful aging outcomes. Results show that the sectors differ in which types of organizational strategies are more strongly associated with positive aging experiences. In the private sector, strategies emphasizing flexibility (r = .269 vs. .358), feedback (r = .429 vs. .370), and autonomy (r = .432 vs. .378) show stronger associations with positive experiences. Conversely, in the public sector, recognition (r = .438 vs. .405) and employment security (r = .433 vs. .379) are more strongly linked to overall SAW experiences. These results align with the proposition that increasing organizational support through SAW strategies is likely to enhance SAW experiences (Kooij et al., 2014, 2020; Pak et al., 2020; Zacher, 2015).

For the full sample, the perceived possibility to maintain employment shows the highest correlation (r = .444) with overall positive SAW experiences. This result is consistent with Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Older workers generally report significant declines in perceived job security, with these concerns being especially pronounced in less secure sectors (Walker et al., 2021). SAW experiences appear more positive in the public sector, likely because job security acts as a psychological foundation (Villajos et al., 2020; Quinn et al., 2019). This implies that job security is a key predictor of successful aging; when tenure is secure, employees are mentally freed to engage in development and maintain positive social relations (Taneva & Arnold, 2017).

Interestingly, the composite SAW-S to SAW-E correlation is slightly stronger in the private sector (r = .485) than in the public sector (r = .471), suggesting that despite lower absolute levels of some experiences, private sector organizations may achieve somewhat more efficient translation of SAW strategies into SAW experiences. This may reflect more direct linkages between formal policies and actual practices in less bureaucratic environments or more individualised age management approaches of private sector (Calo et al., 2013; Egdell et al., 2020), though the public sector's advantage in SAW experiences (based on T-test results) indicates that other

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contextual factors (particularly employment security) shape the nature of aging experiences beyond the immediate impact of formal policies.

4.3   Theoretical and Practical Implications

This study demonstrates that despite both sectors providing similar levels of strategic support, the public sector environment facilitates more positive individual experiences, while in the private sector, the strategies are translated into experiences more effectively. Our findings extend the understanding of SAW by highlighting the importance of sector context. Importantly, the results show that job security is not just a benefit but a catalyst for successful aging. In practice, private sector organizations must realize that without a sense of stability, their initiatives may be insufficient to sustain a high-performing, multi-generational workforce. To bridge this gap, they should implement longevity bonuses, clear career paths for older employees or other mechanisms that enhance perceived employment security. On the other hand, public sector organizations should leverage their stability, and further support successful aging by empowering employees to raise issues and adapt to change, while maintaining robust feedback loops that older workers find vital for their success (Pak et al., 2020; Bal, 2015; Kooij et al., 2014). Overall, increasing organizational support through SAW strategies is likely to enhance successful aging regardless of context (Kooij et al., 2014, 2020; Pak et al., 2020; Zacher, 2015). By actively involving older workers in the design of SAW strategies, organizations can ensure long-term employment sustainability, ultimately supporting a high-performing, multi-generational workforce (Egdell et al., 2020; Villajos et al., 2020).

4.4   Limitations and Future Research

The study is limited by its cross-sectional design and self-report nature of data. Future research should utilize longitudinal designs to observe these dynamics over time (Rudolph & Zacher, 2022). We also propose moving beyond simple correlations by using hierarchical multiple regression to test the predictive power of SAW strategies while controlling for other variables. Furthermore, future studies should employ latent profile analysis to identify specific organizational types (e.g., Security-Focused vs. Development-Focused) and analyse how patterns of strategy implementation influence the aging process of their workforce, helping to tailor interventions to specific organizational contexts. Lastly, identifying clusters of

individuals with similar SAW experiences would bring insights into how to tailor SAW interventions to specific employee profiles.

5   Conclusion

This study demonstrates that while public and private sectors in Slovenia provide similar strategic support, the public sector environment facilitates more positive individual experiences of aging. Employment stability in the public sector allows older workers to be more confident and focus on competence rather than career survival, whereas the private sector's higher performance pressure may impact SAW experiences negatively, despite possibly more efficient strategies. The findings suggest that SAW strategies are not a one-size-fits-all solution; their success depends on the sectoral context and the foundational sense of job security they provide. To truly foster successful aging, organizations must move beyond a purely formal or symbolic implementation of age-related practices and shift towards a holistic strategy that integrates developmental efforts with psychological safety. Aligning strategies with evolving individual needs and sector-specific characteristics is crucial.

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