

# Review of: "Search for Meaning in the Professional Projects of Seniors at the End of Their Careers: an Interpretative Phenomenological Study"

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This article concerns a relatively overlooked stage of working life, namely that of professionals in the second half of their careers approaching retirement. Linked to career development and professional transitions throughout life, this is a major social issue for organizations, public authorities and individuals alike. The authors draw on the theoretical fields of the stages of life, and the meaningfulness of life and work based on existential psychology. The analysis is appropriate and, on the whole, well conducted. The discussion is stimulating. Overall, it is well written. There are, however, some problematic points. The following comments are intended to help the authors improve their paper.

1. The theoretical framework is relevant and well presented. However, the authors should provide more references to empirical studies with comparable results. For example, in the field of occupational transitions, several studies have examined transition to retirement using the IPA (e.g. Gee, 2018; Lavallée & Robinson, 2007; Miron et al., 2022; Pettican & Prior 2011; Spinoglio & Olry-Louis, 2023).
2. It is not necessary to formulate hypotheses when conducting an interview study based on IPA. Moreover, no clear arguments are provided to support the hypotheses, which, as expressed, are relatively unverifiable. The way they are formulated corresponds more to a tentative interpretation.
3. The "Methodology" section presents the research problem rather than the method. Moreover, it is inappropriate to use "Methodology" and "Method" as headings for two consecutive sections.
4. The sample. It is not unusual for IPA studies to involve very small samples. However, information is needed about the inclusion criteria and how participants were recruited. It also seems regrettable that all three participants studied and worked in the fields of psychology, staff support and human resources. This sample is really too homogeneous in terms of gender and socio-professional background to investigate the processes linked to a particular stage of professional life. At the very least, this choice should be justified, and the scope of the study limited.

The authors also suggest that the choice of participants was based on the fact that they each had "a significant project for the latter part of their careers". This needs to be clarified, but if it were the case, it would considerably weaken the authors' interpretations. Indeed, it is likely that people who have developed a significant project for the latter part of their careers have given considerable thought to the meaningfulness of their lives, which is unlikely to be the case for older

professionals as a whole. It seems likely that the participants were recruited from a career transition support scheme. If so, it should be clarified and justified, and the issue of career transitions integrated more clearly into the theoretical framework, and the scope of the study reconsidered.

In addition, Emile is presented as a man, but is subsequently referred to using a feminine pronoun and appears to be included in formulations such as "For all three mothers". This needs to be clarified.

5. Discussion. The results of this study should be linked not only to its theoretical sources but also to empirical studies, in order to discuss the scope of the findings. In the limitations section, the authors state: "Finally, our lack of experience with IPA may have affected the overall quality of the study". It would in fact be preferable to compare and discuss their work in relation to other similar studies.

6. Limitations. These should include the fact that the sample is restricted to a specific socio-professional context and to an on-going transition situation.