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 uses qualitative interview to explore the relationship between the work meaning of middle-aged individuals and certain environmental factors. I think qualitative research has always been used less in this field, and the focus on middle-aged people is also unprecedented. As a middle-aged researcher myself, I sincerely hope to see more similar explorations. However, perhaps due to the inherent difficulties of this kind of research or the authors' unfamiliarity with the field, there are a few problems in this article. Upon a cursory read, I noticed the following.

In the Introduction, the author writes '*In today's context, the terms "loss of meaning in work" and "search for meaning" are often evoked, but their interpretation varies significantly. In the field of psychology, meaning is a complex, multidimensional concept, encompassing dimensions such as significance, direction, and sensation. Researchers seek to understand this concept either by examining objects charged with meaning, such as a meaningful life or work, or by identifying the sources that generate this meaning.*' In this passage, the author seems to confuse the search for meaning with the presence of meaning. I also didn't see the author distinguishing between them in the subsequent discussion. In recent literature, these two are clearly differentiated. Please refer to articles by Steger and others.

'Hypothesis 1 (H1): As individuals progress through the life cycle, they modify their life goals, particularly in the professional sphere.' I find this statement difficult to be a scientific hypothesis, as it seems neither provable nor falsifiable. It's common sense.

'Hypothesis 2 (H2): The choice of new goals is influenced by the search for meaning, in both personal and professional life.' I suggest limiting this statement to the professional realm. Since your focus is on the meaning in the work domain. This applies to Hypothesis 3 as well.

In the 'Methodology' section, the author mentioned Phenomenological Interpretative Analysis (Smith et al., 2022), but later abbreviates it as IPA. Is it IPA or PIA on earth?

In the Data collection section, I think the author should detail the whole process. What was done in the first session, and how? What about the second session? Can you provide some examples? However, the current description makes it difficult for other scholars to replicate your method. You mentioned you used semi-structured interviews, but I can't see what or where your structure is. What is the semi-structured aspect reflected? Can you show your interview outline? How did you control the interview process? What are your specific methods for analyzing results?

In 1.1 'For all three mothers, their children have reached adulthood, and most have left home.' How come there are three mothers in a group of two women and one man? Who is Tia? I'm confused.

After listing some interview content, the author concludes: 'As the children take off, mothers generally have more time and energy to concentrate on their own needs and aspirations. The separation of couples, which can be emotionally difficult at first, subsequently offers more freedom and autonomy, as in the case of Marie and Emile. This makes it easier to pursue projects.' I can't see how the previously mentioned content supports this conclusion. The following paragraphs have similar issues. I believe the content listed above does not suffice to substantiate the follow-up conclusions.

Overall impression: The author claims to use a semi-structured qualitative method, but I couldn't see where the structured content is. If there is any, please specify. Regardless, as other reviewers have said, this scant sample size is insufficient for a reliable conclusion. I understand qualitative research methods are indeed time-consuming and labor-intensive, but three subjects are far too few, way too few. It's very likely that your conclusions would change with more subjects.

My conclusion: Based on the current content, I do not support the publication of this article temporarily. The author still needs to address, but not limited to, the aforementioned issues."