

Review of: "Collective Guilt and the Search for Meaning in Post-Communist Albania: An Existential Perspective"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is an interesting and rather innovative piece of research which explores collective guilt and meaning-making in post-communist Albania among a group of individuals aged 65 years and older. The literature review is well-written, however I have identified several issues in the Methodology, Results, and Discussion sections which I believe are important and might need to be addressed:

1. It would be better to explain the reason why narrative analysis is used in the current study at the beginning of the 'Methodology' section, rather in the second to last paragraph.
2. What is the reasoning behind the chosen age threshold?
3. More information is needed on participants recruitment. Where were the participants recruited specifically (name the city, type of organisations/ community events..)?
4. The study sample needs to be better described - gender, birthplace etc.
5. On the third paragraph under the 'Methodology' section you state that "...**two** participants wrote their narratives...". Under the 'Results' section you however state that the study presents the "narrative analysis of **20** written narratives..." It is unclear how many participants there were in total? Two or 20?
6. On the second paragraph under 'Discussion', the findings of the current study are implied to have correlation patterns. I believe the term 'correlation' can only be used in quantitative research and one should be cautious when using it in qualitative research.
7. The 'Discussion' and 'Conclusion' sections make some strong statements regarding the generalisability of the findings to the whole country and region which is problematic given the small sample size.
8. The last paragraph under 'Strengths and Limitations' states that the analysis offers "insights into collective guilt and meaning-making processes associated with the post-communist transition in Albania", while the first paragraph of the 'Conclusions' sections states that the study "delved deep into the personal narratives of those who endured Albania's post-communist transition". This is contradictory. Moreover, the second statement is problematic since you only focus on 20 individuals who were in their 30s when communism fell, rather than on all Albanians.