



## Aging and Work: Perceptions and Experiences of Higher Education Teachers at Maturity

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### ABSTRACT

This study presents results of a research that aimed to understand the conceptions of higher education teachers in maturity about the relationship of aging and work. A descriptive study with a qualitative approach was carried out with 10 university professors from the state of São Paulo. Data analysis was based on the multiple case study technique. It was observed that teachers associated different perceptions of aging linked to losses and gains. They demonstrated the teaching work related to pleasure and the possibility of contributing to a better society. It is concluded that it is necessary to expand the theme in new research

### KEYWORDS

Longevity. University teachers. Old age. Projective techniques.

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Submitted: 23 Jun. 2018

Accepted: 14 Jun 2018

Published: 18 Sep 2019

 10.20396/riesup.v6i0.8653008

e-location: e019015

ISSN 2446-9424

Checagem Antiplágio



Distribuído sobre



## Envelhecimento e Trabalho: Percepções e Vivências de Docentes do Ensino Superior na Maturidade

### RESUMO

Este estudo apresenta resultados de uma pesquisa que objetivou compreender as concepções de docentes do Ensino Superior na maturidade sobre a relação de envelhecer e trabalhar. Empregou-se um estudo descritivo, com abordagem qualitativa, realizada com 10 professores universitários do estado de São Paulo. A análise dos dados baseou-se na técnica do estudo de caso múltiplo. Observou-se que os professores associaram diferentes percepções de envelhecimento ligadas às perdas e ganhos. Demonstraram o trabalho docente ligado ao prazer e a possibilidade de contribuir para uma sociedade melhor. Conclui-se que é necessário a ampliação do tema em novas pesquisas.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Longevidade. Professores universitários. Velhice. Técnicas projetivas.

## Envejecimiento Y Trabajo: Percepciones Y Vivencias De Docentes De La Enseñanza Superior En La Maturidad

### RESUMEN

Este estudio presenta resultados de una investigación que objetivó comprender las concepciones de docentes de la Enseñanza Superior en la madurez sobre la relación de envejecer y trabajar. Se empleó un estudio descriptivo, con abordaje cualitativo, realizado con 10 profesores universitarios del estado de São Paulo. El análisis de los datos se basó en la técnica del estudio de caso múltiple. Se observó que los profesores asociaron diferentes percepciones de envejecimiento ligadas a las pérdidas y ganancias. Demostraron el trabajo docente vinculado al placer y la posibilidad de contribuir a una sociedad mejor. Se concluye que es necesario la ampliación del tema en nuevas investigaciones.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Longevidad. Profesores universitarios. Vejez. Técnicas proyectivas.

## Introduction

The acceleration of population aging occurs globally in different rhythms and forms in developed and developing countries. For Borges and Seidl (2014), technological advances and public policies provide a decline in infant mortality rates and an increase in longevity. The data "Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean" (2014) show a significant increase in the elderly population in Latin American countries. Projections for 2025 indicate that life expectancy in these countries should be increased from 65 to 82 years (WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, 2013).

In considering the relevance of the rapidity of population aging, expanding knowledge about this process becomes necessary. In this sense, longevity, in addition to allowing the elderly a new relationship with life, triggers changes in the aging process, such as participation in the workforce, increased intergenerational relations, family roles, economic movement, technology, and the search for a better quality of life (CHENA, et al., 2015, GUSEH, 2016). According to Neri (2013), it is necessary to consider aging from the definition of a biological, psychological and social phenomenon that will be determined, mainly, by the culture in which the individual is inserted. From this perspective, aging in its present conception is characterized not only as a natural process determined by chronological time but by the deconstruction and construction of the person's identity.

Aging, whether in life or in the profession, has long since ceased to be synonymous with disease, decline, and senility. There is an aging that occurs in the profession and causes many transformations in the individual. Emphasis is placed on professional aging in higher education, where more and more, the characteristic of continuous development is adopted for the profession. The teacher over 60 years old faces some dilemmas in a work environment with extensive routines, challenges in conflict management among students, updating of theoretical and technological knowledge, production of research and others. But, the main one is the decision-making process to continue working or not when it comes to retirement (SÁ; SOUZA, 2015; MASSETO, 2012).

According to Freire and Fernandez (2015), publications about the teacher of higher education still advance timidly when compared to those involving other levels of education. Regarding the professional and aging aspects pertinent to the university professor over 60 years of age, it is noticed that it is an area little explored by the researchers. Although it is a relevant and current topic, since there are a large number of teachers experiencing these issues there is a shortage of research. In view of what was presented, the general objective of the research was to analyze the perceptions and experiences about work and aging for elderly university teachers who continue to work professionally.

## Method

This is a cross-sectional and multichannel research, with a single group and a qualitative approach. When considering this form of analysis, the study will be based on the search for understanding the dynamics of the human being, starting from the meaning experienced by the individual (TURATO, 2013). According to the same author, understanding meaning implies individual or collective understanding of individuals' lives.

### *Participants*

Ten (10) university professors participated, who were contacted by public or private institutions, male and female, aged sixty and over, were retired or not, and were working in paid employment professional.

### *Instruments and Procedures*

The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee. After the appropriate authorizations, data collection was started with the use of the instruments. Initially a personal contact was made with the indicated participants, in which the objectives of the research and the proposed method were clarified. The individual interviews were scheduled in place, time and date stipulated by the participants in order to guarantee their comfort and privacy. The researcher went to the place established by the participants and the interview and the proposed activities lasted for about an hour and a half. At the moment, the Free and Informed Consent Form was read. The researcher has made herself available for any clarification. Each participant signed and initialed all sheets in two copies.

Initially, a sample characterization script was applied. After applying the Thematic Apperception Test for Elderly SAT (BELLAK, 1992) with the use of boards one and seventeen, whose themes are: "Conversation" that addresses interactions between people and "On the golf course" that refers to subjects related to leisure or physical practice. It is a projective technique validated for Brazil by Tardivo and collaborators (2012), this instrument is a modification of the Thematic Apperception Technique (TAT), has as basic instruction: to present a figure and ask the examiner to tell a story. It should be emphasized that the themes of the figures do not specifically cover the theme of work, but may raise, as in figure one, projections that relate to relationships and among them, those related to professional activity. Already in the seventeen board it was tried to stimulate the projections related to work and leisure.

Next, the Drawings-Stories with Theme Procedure (AIELLO-VAISBERG, 2013) was carried out. This instrument is based on the Walter Trinca Drawing Design Procedure created in 1972 (Trinca, 2013). It had as instruction: Draw an elderly person who works.

Finally, a semi-structured interview was carried out with seven questions developed by the researcher, to gather information about the participants and about the topic addressed. The information collected in the semi-structured interview and in the instruments used were

qualitatively analyzed in the multiple case study method (STAKE, 2007). The case study is characterized as the deep study of an object, so as to allow ample and detailed knowledge about it. The most common case studies are those that focus on one or multiple, in the second several studies are conducted simultaneously and can be performed with individuals or organizations. The present study is considered instrumental and collective in order to have a broader understanding of aging and work for elderly teachers (PEREIRA, GODOY; TERÇARIOL, 2009; SALLES, 2014). According to Yin (2005) multiple case studies (collective) are advised by the fact that it allows for more conclusive analytical conclusions.

## Results and Discussion

For a better understanding of the results of the study will be characterized the participants of the research, it is emphasized that for ethical reasons were used fictitious names to preserve the identity of teachers. In the selection of participants, the same number (five of each sex) of male and female teachers was prioritized. This criterion intends to understand aspects related to the objectives of the study from the point of view of both sexes. Regarding the age the average of the participants of the study is of 64 years, it is emphasized that few academic professors were found more than 70 years. As regards marital status, practically all participants are married. Regarding teacher training, there is a heterogeneity between the human, health and exact areas.

It turns out that the majority of the participants are doctors. Regarding the type of institution that the participants are linked to, the majority of the professors belong to private universities and four are from public universities. As for the length of service in the same institution of higher education, most of the teachers have been in the same organization for a long time. Regarding retirement, the majority of those surveyed are retired and four are not yet retired, three of whom are from public institutions.

### *Presentation of the participants and discussion of the results in the vertical perspective*

#### *Antônio*

When talking about how he is getting older, he emphasized memory loss that is slowly happening as the main difficulty. Antonio made a comparison related to his youth when he managed to conquer many things by having an excellent memory and reports that today he finds it difficult to deal with this loss.

Antonio stated that the meaning he attributes to the work he carries out is the reason he continues to work, he refers to the possibility of transferring all his learning to his students. He stressed the importance of multiplying his teachings and leaving his mark on people's lives, so the participant shows a willingness to leave a legacy permeated with his teachings to the students.

When talking about aging and his influences at work, Antonio emphasizes the fact that his physical condition does not harm the teaching activity, so he says: "... when entering the

classroom, everything is out ..." He emphasized that even having been diagnosed with cancer, having migraine headaches, and having muscle pains on the body, these issues do not interfere with your love of teaching. It is observed in the participant's report about how he is aging, he cites that memory loss and physical pain are a problem, but when related to work the participant affirms that there is no interference. From the above, it is possible to associate with what Teixeira and Neri (2008) talk about how much the capacity of the elderly to overcome their physical limitations can denote a successful aging.

Antonio brought in the content of his speech an optimistic view on the job market for the elderly university professor. He reported that he saw good opportunities for older professionals, cited his own experience as an example, said that he was able to enter higher education through an invitation when he was lecturing at the time of graduation, and after that he received another three.

### *Melissa*

The perception related to aging itself is related to aspects that refer to the concept of successful aging, such as low susceptibility to diseases, high functional capacity (physical and cognitive), active posture towards life and society, and good adaptability to subjective and objective changes. According to Morley (2017) for a better understanding of successful aging it is necessary to observe the multidimensional aspect and, in this vision, to age well may be related to genetic factors and healthy lifestyle.

Regarding the meaning of the work, Melissa considers this as one of the central aspects of her life. She said that through her professional activity, she can feel useful in helping people. She said she does not see herself stopping working so soon. She points out that she is feeling good about her physical and cognitive aspects to continue working and asks, "Why stop without having an apparent reason?".

Melissa has brought positive content in relation to retirement, since she argues that if people over 60 are physically fit, they should not stop their professional activities, and retirement means financial gain, not interruption of professional activities.

As for the relationship between aging and work, Melissa said that because of the teaching career she makes frequent use of her voice, and often feels hoarseness and interferences in the physical aspect related to it. She justifies this fact because of the exhaustive routine that she had for a long time, in which she taught in two colleges with many students, the participant also associates smoking with a worsening voice.

In the thematic on the labor market view for the elderly teacher, Melissa emphasized the teacher's devaluation by society, she argues that the elementary, middle and high school education teacher, regardless of age, is not valued. The participant argues that if she was sent away, she would not be able to get a job replacement at her age, she points out that there is currently a bad time for hiring university professors.

*Ana Carolina*

As for the perception of how to grow old, Ana Carolina said that it is very hard: "it sucks." She said that she feels strong pains in her body constantly and she perceives the loss of physical movements gradually. The participant like the other teachers of the present research, highlighted forgetting as an aging problem. It is observed that even Ana Carolina being a young woman, she presents an old age with difficulties related to her post-cancer, this fact highlights what was discussed previously, about how old is relative and heterogeneous. Ana Carolina has recently been cured of breast cancer and can be said to be still in the post-disease period because of this fact the participant may be vulnerable to dealing with the physical losses caused by aging.

Regarding the meaning of the work, Ana Carolina said that this is an important source of income, but more than that said to be through the professional activity that can deal with post-cancer. It is observed that the participant is in a moment of life when she can re-signify her work, stating that after the diagnosis of the disease began to face the charges of work in a light way. According to Silva and Santos (2017) professional occupation is an important aspect in the post-cancer confrontation, because it is at work that the person can be distracted a little, in addition to living with other people, occupying the mind, feeling active and valued. Regarding retirement, Ana Carolina said that this represents nothing, it is only the money that receives in the same bank account of her work, said that they have greater benefits as a teacher and the money they she receives, she usually saves it. The participant emphasized that she does not plan to have a retired life: "... that stays at home doing nothing".

Regarding the relationship of aging and influence in work, Ana Carolina, although she pointed out the physical losses in old age when she refers to teaching, emphasizes that she does not consider only these, but also the gains related to being a better teacher and safer. According to Teixeira and Neri (2008), recognizing the gains of old age is an important factor for successful aging, this data reveals a more optimistic view about aging and working. With regard to the job market for elderly teachers, Ana Carolina said that it is better than in other professions that the elderly can be inserted, because the accumulation of knowledge of the teacher is advantageous for educational institutions. However, she pointed out that it is a bad market as for the young teachers or teachers over 60, because there is no possibility of placement for so many professionals.

*Angélica*

The perception of aging for Angelica is positive, she says that she is active in every way, emphasized that she is considered an example of active aging and that feeling is seen in her opinion: "... while I am collaborating I will go on." She relates the fact of aging being active at work, so much that it says "I work every day, even though I can retire". The authors Fontes (2010), Franco and Barros Jr. (2013), Neri (2013) and Ferreira et al. (2012) argue that the concept of active aging is broad, not only about physical capacity, but also the participation of the elderly in the workforce. It is observed that professional performance

allows the professional over 60 years of age to feel useful and recognized in society.

As far as the meaning of the work is concerned, Angelica mentioned that it is an important activity because she does what she likes, so "it is a second passion, because the first is the family." Working with what she likes, provides a pleasure experience, and the teacher who appreciates the profession can enhance a satisfaction experience in working life (Kegler and Macedo, 2015). Souto, et al. (2017) in research on postgraduate teaching work, observed that visibility and recognition are important factors in the profession and that pleasure at work is possible when one does what one likes.

Regarding the perception about the influence of aging on the job, Angelica emphasized: "it does not disturb anything and instead helps". The participant said that she tells many stories of the profession to the students and this is only possible because of the experience gained. Masseto (2012), Pecora and Vinhos (2011) emphasize that the teaching profession is one of the few that the elderly are inserted and can be valued by experience, and sharing professional stories with students provides a rich exchange between student and teacher.

With regard to the labor market view for the elderly teacher, Angelica answered this question about the perspective of her profession that according to her is new and does not allow an analysis of how this market is. She commented that in her area (physiotherapy), in particular, there are few elderly teachers because of the relatively new area and said that the few teachers who have retired in their 50s.

### *Bernardo*

As for the perception of how to grow old, Bernardo said that this is a process that carries physical limitations and brings some benefits, as in other phases of life. He said: "It is about successful aging and this is my case." He pointed out that he experiences good and bad times. According to Neri (2013) the ability of the elderly to have a balance between losses and gains, typical of aging, denotes an optimistic view of the aging process.

As for the relationship between aging and work, Bernardo once again spoke of positive and negative influences. The participant said that the most experienced professional can have more answers, but he realizes that the students show some fear in the relationship with the older teachers. Bernardo spoke with displeasure about the "ageism" he feels on the part of the students. The classic definition of ageism is given by Butler (1989) as quoted by Aiken (1995, p. 227):

"Prejudice and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism are in relation to skin color and gender. Senior citizens are categorized as senile, inflexible in ideas and attitudes, conservative in morality and abilities ... ageism causes young generations to see seniors as different from themselves, subtly disconnecting them from their connection to humans. "



For Butler (2010) as a consequence of ageism, it is associated with the elderly the idea that it has no capacity. Ageism manifests itself through various phenomena either individually or institutionally, through stereotypes, myths and discriminatory practices in employment. Perceptions about the older individual may also reflect the existence of age discrimination. Regarding the job market view for the elderly university professor, Bernardo says: "... I have a distorted view because I am a candidate...I am a victim of ageism and this is a disadvantage." The participant says that the old university professor is not well used and serves only to fulfill the hiring goal.

### *Francisco*

As for the perception about his own aging, Francisco said: "... I know that I am an old man, in the photo I am destroyed, but I do not feel old, I feel very good ...". Although he sees that his physical traits are no longer the same, Francisco does not feel old, it reveals how feeling old is something beyond physical appearance, because it is related to a state of mind. Francisco quotes that he crosses the city to work every day, usually does not sleep very much and still feels good.

Regarding the meaning of the work, Francisco emphasized: "My work is my entertainment, I do not feel working, my students accept me, even with my strong accent everyone understands me, I can deal well with my students ...". It is noted that the work for Francisco is related to the pleasure and the possibility of inclusion, in this view being a foreigner and being able to adapt to the teaching environment, becomes an important aspect and professional career has brought this to him. Regarding retirement, the fact of being a foreigner also differentiates him, Francisco said that he has not yet verified his right to retire and has the help of friends to know more about this subject.

Concerning the perception between aging and work, Francisco said: "No influence, I am very happy to work and continue researching, of course I am already reaching the limit". It is noted that Francisco feels that there are no more concrete influences, but at the same time feels that he is reaching his limit and states that he wants to be closer to the family.

The vision of the job market for the elderly university professor was not addressed directly by Francisco, in his speech is detached the individual perception and related to its moment. He talked about his fear of being fired, given that he is not yet retired. Francisco argues that 75 years of age will be difficult a replacement with the same remuneration that currently has. In Brazil's current scenario, the effect of the economic crisis can be seen, with the difficulties of companies from different segments maintaining the same salary range for new hires. It is becoming increasingly common to dismiss older professionals with a higher salary and hire two, up to three in place and with smaller amounts to receive (DEBORTOLI, 2016).

### Tadeu

The perception about getting old for Tadeu was totally positive, he said "... I do not feel that I am getting old and everything is the same", he added that this is due to the fact of always maintaining an active posture before the life. Tadeu repeats this opinion when he is asking about working after age 60. He says: "... I feel nothing and everything is normal," he justifies that being the reason to continue his professional activities. Campos, Ferreira and Vargas. (2015), Lee et al. (2011) Morley (2017) and Minayo (2006) argue that the perceptions and feelings of aging are a reflection of the previous stages of development, in this sense, one notices how much Tadeu was a person who always took care of the physical aspects and maintained healthy habits, so much that it seems to be younger. One realizes how much accumulation of health care during life reflects an optimistic perception of aging.

As for the meaning of the work, Tadeu associated pleasure with saying: "... I like what I do, because it has no sameness". The participant highlighted, contents brought in the socio-demographic questionnaire, about the importance of helping people and that mainly through their work this becomes possible. Tadeu proudly said that in his private practice he usually attends some needy people at no cost. In the academic environment, for accumulating the position of responsible for a sector, said that many employees who supervises, seek for help. Tadeu also stressed the importance of maintaining a bond with the people who help at work and how much pleasure it is to be able to help.

As for the relationship between aging and working, Tadeu again points out briefly that age does not influence his work. In the content brought by the participant is possible to notice a defensive posture, denoting difficulties to get in touch with their feelings. Regarding the perception of the job market for the university professor, Tadeu emphasizes: "... it is terrible", he says that to have a better income it is necessary to reconcile with another career, because only the teaching work is not enough for maintain their standard of living. The participant still highlighted, in general, the devaluation of the teacher, emphasizing: "... the true teachers are those of the primary education of the periphery". In this regard, as discussed earlier, Santos-Filho and Dias (2016) point to the continued devaluation of teaching work, related to low pay, working conditions, overcrowded classrooms that impede the performance of quality work.

### Luísa

Regarding the perception of her own aging, Luisa emphasized that she is preparing herself and she often thinks "... what kind of an old woman I want to be". The participant is a young woman, in her preparation for old age, she said she likes to teach her daughters to care for the elderly, through the older animals she rescues, stressed that she does not want to be a grouchy old man. She portrayed the care she has with her mother, because Luisa commented that her mother is bipolar and tried to commit suicide. It is noted that Luisa wants to prepare her daughters to care for her one day when she is at a later age, which is a possible need that she missed when she cared for her mother.

As for the subject of work, Luísa says that she has not yet related the fact of working after 60 years, since she recently completed that age. She repeats this argument when talking about retirement, even though she is retired, she says she has not thought of it yet. Regarding the meaning of the work for Luísa, this is represented by the feeling of being useful, the participant says that stopping her professional activities implies not being more useful. She asks herself: "... will people love us the same way. The person does not feel more useful, and questions, will they love me in the same way".

As for aging and working, Luisa said she felt "very hot as if it were a menopause that does not pass", previously reported, which harms her a lot. She said she's feeling the tiredness of the extended routine, said she cannot stand to stay all day and all week in college anymore. Luísa added that combining all these factors makes her feel discouraged for work and so she thinks about lowering her professional pace.

The vision of the job market for the elderly university professor is ambivalent for Luísa, since it can be so positive if the professor has a doctorate and scientific production, or negative depending on the place that resides. The participant mentioned her own example, said that she was hired at age 57 for the good curriculum, but stresses that this is difficult in the region that resides (interior of SP), but in greater São Paulo it could be easier to get new opportunities. It is becoming more and more common for private universities to raise the quality of teaching, to prioritize the hiring of doctorate professors and to have a good scientific production (AVELLAR, 2015).

### *Pietro*

Regarding the perception of aging itself, Pietro recognizes physical and cognitive losses, but emphasizes the need to remain active, that is why he exercises and cares for food. The participant realizes that being active practicing physical activity, can eliminate the losses. The life expectancy of the Brazilian has been increasing and with this comes the need for people to take better care of their health and this includes practicing physical activities regularly. However, this is a recent concern, so the elderly have not always been aware of this need. It can be observed that the practice of physical activities by the elderly brings several benefits, both physical, psychological and social, being a factor of great relevance for the promotion and maintenance of their health and quality of life (CAMARA, 2016).

As for the meaning of the work, Pietro said: "Without work I would not know how to be, I cannot stand still ...". It is noted that the work for Pietro is associated with his identity, he recognizes himself and is seen by others by the teaching profession. As for the retirement Pietro makes visible the concern with the instability of the social security. The participant says that it is a benefit he is adding, but he does not know how long it will be possible. On the relationship between aging and working, Pietro argued that the fatigue comes faster and there is no more strength in the voice, he says: "The willingness is the same, but tiredness is bad." Concerning the view on the labor market for the elderly university professor, Pietro argues that there is a devaluation of the teacher in every sense. The participant says that for the

teacher to be valued in the financial aspect, he needs to update and renew himself to demand something. According to Pietro: "... but you have to see that the teacher has to change and follow the technology" Sá and Almeida (2015) say that the relationship of technology and teaching work, require that the teacher is constantly updated professionally.

### Júlia

As for the perception about aging itself, Julia said: "I never cared much about it in appearance, I'm not a vain person, I'm sloppy, I could be more vain. But in old age you get more tired ... ". Júlia highlighted the tiredness she feels in her old age associated with work, she mentioned some habits that changed, for example, using elevator to go to the first floor of the college and the choice to work only in an institution to slow the pace of work.

Regarding the meaning of the work, Júlia emphasizes the pleasure in the profession allied to the interaction with the students and also by the financial necessity. Morais et al. (2016), Nunes and Ramos (2015) argue that intergenerationality in old age can be favorable and beneficial for the elderly. This interaction between student and teacher is marked in the academic environment, because the incoming students always have the same age groups, while the teacher continues to age. It is verified how much is required of the teacher, the practice of welcoming the new generations of students.

As for the influences of aging at work, Julia said she feels some forgetfulness, and for this reason, tries to be attentive in the classroom, she justifies that in the Exact Sciences Area, errors cannot happen. After the interview ended, when the researcher asked if Julia would like to say something else, the participant highlighted an agreement she made with her colleague, we agreed on watching over each other in regards of forgetfulness. Julia said that she is afraid to be reminded " that teacher who retired because she became obsolete", this is why she decided to make this deal with her friend so they will have the freedom to tell each other when it will be time to stop teaching.

Julia's view on the job market for the elderly university professor is somewhat optimistic, she says that it is one of the few areas where the elderly work and is valued. However, Julia argues that teachers over 60 are hired by the curriculum rather than by age. The participant realizes that in other professions this does not happen, because, companies prefer cheap labor. In general, it is seen that private higher education institutions choose doctorate professors and with high scientific production, to leverage the quality and score of the course (Avellar, 2015).

### Integrative discussion of results in the horizontal perspective

The general characteristics of the group, among the singularities and individual differences, are initially noted. Some aspects stand out, among them, for example, the fact that half of the participants started the teaching career later, motivated by several factors. Melissa and Angelica after graduation, chose to take care of their children and dedicate themselves to the family alone. In the generation to which they belong, women often

occupied the social role of "housewife" and left their professional careers in the background (CEZAR ET AL. 2017, FURUNES ET AL. 2015, SCHLICKMANN and PIZZARRO, 2013). Pelegrini and Martins (2016) emphasize that in most cases the feminine functions were: to take care of the house, the husband and to reproduce, and that only women of superior social condition learned to read and to write, already the man performed all the other functions.

It is observed that the late teaching career is also due to other factors. Ana Carolina, Pietro, and Francisco began teaching classes in higher education after a long period in their training careers, so they first consolidated their professional skills and then began to teach. It turns out that they sought some initial financial stability and then risked new career horizons. In the case of Pietro and Francisco, one was driven by unemployment and the other by the difficulty of working in the country of origin. In the cases of Antônio, Tadeu, Luísa and Júlia the professional insertion was different, since they began to teach classes still in the time of the college. It should be noted that the fact that Melissa, Angelica and Francisco started a late professional career directly influence professional perspectives, since they say they do not think about stopping work in the coming years.

According to Duarte & Silva (2013), the person who chooses to continue working after age 65, most of the time, is a professional who has had a late career. Furunes, Stavanger, & Norway (2017) on late career research of older workers found that respondents were positive about continuing to work in their current positions, with work and learning demands being appreciated and retirement decisions being postponed.

Still in relation to the teaching career, it was observed the need to reduce the work rhythm for the majority of the participants. The reason given by teachers is the physical exhaustion of teaching in overcrowded classes, an extensive workload, double working hours and physical factors characteristic of the aging process. As examples brought in the interview, we can mention the participant Angelica who said that she is choosing to take fewer classes and dedicate herself more to research. Antonio a few years ago, is only dedicated to graduate classes, Júlia decreased classes and helps in the administrative sector, Melissa is recently teaching classes in the morning for a few groups. Some participants, such as Luísa and Pietro, who are younger people, intend in the future to reduce the workload of the working day. According to Melo (2014) the teacher may have the capacity to work reduced as a result of the aging process, so the way of work, the length of service and the workload can interfere in the decision to reduce the workday. Faced with these reasons, university professors when they reach a certain age can choose to take fewer classes to teach classes, with few students, in morning hours and also to work in an institution.

With regard to the meaning of the work, it was verified that the participants associated the main reason to continue working after the 60 years to the important place that the occupational activity occupies in their lives. It is noteworthy that most teachers mentioned the sense of usefulness due to the importance of transferring the knowledge they hold and training people, thereby contributing to society. Although the financial aspect was quoted by some participants, it was not considered the most important aspect related to the work.

Melissa mentioned pleasure in exchanging experiences with students, Francisco associated pleasure in teaching practice with entertainment, Antonio and Pietro emphasized the pleasure of transferring knowledge. Julia highlighted the pleasure and happiness of seeing her students doing well in the exams and graduating, Angelica and Luisa spoke of the pleasure of feeling useful helping people through their work.

Oliveira (2017) points out that the teaching practice is much more than transferring knowledge, since it is an action that enables the means for the construction of students' knowledge. From the perspective of Freire (1996-2015) there is an exchange of knowledge between students and teachers, in this sense who teaches learns, and who learns grows with this knowledge.

It is noted that teachers occupy the social role of transforming and educational agents, being committed to individual and collective transformation, but rather than transferring knowledge, teachers are transformers of educational and social reality, understanding that the university constitutes a space propitious for reflection on ethical issues and the development of the art of dialogue (OLIVEIRA, 2017; GONÇALVES, 2012).

The work is a multifaceted action, which can be attributed countless meanings, and one of them that was pointed out by some participants, such as Melissa, Antonio, Tadeu, Pietro and Angélica is social interaction, because according to them, the fact of being socially inserted and sharing both good and frustrating moments becomes of fundamental importance for each one.

For Freud (1925/1997) work is a form of social bond, since it is in the work that can establish relations of lasting friendships, besides contributing to the extension of the cycle of social relations of the individual. Emphasis is placed on the importance of work as a form of social insertion for the elderly, since it is an action that allows the elderly to continue being active not only in physical capacity but also in their participation in the workforce. As previously seen, the work enables professionals over the age of 60 to feel useful and recognized in society. It is seen as a transforming practice of reality that makes possible the survival and fulfillment of the human being, since it is through this that man identifies himself and occupies a position in society (FRANCO and FRANCO BARROS JR, 2013, MALVEZZI, 2014 AND ZANELLI ET AL. 2010).

According to Coutinho *et al.* (2011) the work constitutes for the teachers as an important space of social insertion and establishment of interpersonal relations. This aspect is highlighted by Francisco who is a foreigner. According to Pereira (2017) the professional insertion of a foreigner can carry many challenges. One can note the broad sense that work occupies in people's lives, because it is through the teaching practice that Francisco can feel accepted, exchange experiences between colleagues and students. In this way, the interpersonal and support relationships established among the teachers, institutes possibilities of coping with the difficulties encountered in the daily work, and this, can influence directly or indirectly in the professional performance of the teacher (VARELA, 2013, COUTINHO *et*

al. 2011).

In the professional course of the teachers participating in the research, the meaning attributed to retirement is associated with a financial value complementary to the family income and was not directly related to the termination of professional activities. Social Security in Brazil is undergoing a reformulation with no forecast of short-term stability, and with this, a meaning of retirement is occurring. The dissatisfaction with the value received is not only of university professors but is unanimous for other professional classes. The social security issue in Brazil is an unprecedented challenge for economists and government leaders to offer solutions, since there is a large public deficit. Although it is a value to receive low for the elderly, it still helps in the contribution of family financial income (SOCIAL SECURITY 2017; SANTOS ET. AL 2016).

Lampert (2018) in a study on the vision of retirement for elderly teachers found the same data of the present research, it was verified the earnings dissatisfaction, being necessary the teachers to have another source of income to complement the financial budget. Teachers stressed, just as in the present study, the importance of the values they receive to help family members, saying that many still depend on them. An interesting piece, pointed out by Lampert, is that teachers feel pressured to retire soon because of the unstable reforms taking place in the current political landscape.

Some participants, such as Angélica, Luísa, Melissa and Antônio, emphasized the importance of Social Security reform, since for them, due to the increase in life expectancy, the elderly man can be productive for longer. As an example of the current discussions on pension reform, it can be observed that this vision can be common, for the elderly of cities (urban) and of good purchasing power. But when residents in rural areas or situations of vulnerability, the elderly do not agree with the changes of the retirement. This disagreement is due to the changes made and proposed in the new rules that are being processed in the Senate. According to data from Social Security (2017), currently the retirement of farmers is by age at 55 years (women) and 60 years (men). With the new rules retirement, under these conditions will be at 60 for men and 57 for women, with at least 15 years of contribution.

Regarding the perception about aging itself, the participants showed positive views, as much related to active aging and to being productive and not feeling old, as well as related to the losses. With regard to the negative view of aging, participants such as Antônio, Angélica and Júlia talked about aspects of reality that they experience in this stage of life, such as memory difficulties that result in forgetfulness. Júlia, Francisco, Bernardo, Pietro, Ana Carolina, Antônio and Luísa, in the same way, approached the lack of physical vitality, fatigue and the presence of pains by the body.

It is noted, according to Marigliano (2016), that positive and negative views about aging can be based on the socio-cultural context that the elderly are inserted, and that aging has always been understood in several ways in the history of humanity, sometimes as a period of wisdom and perpetuation of the culture of a people, sometimes as a period of loss that

announces finitude. Currently the heterogeneity of this process is observed, both with an old age marked by losses related to functional and cognitive capacities, but as a phase of a healthier life cycle, autonomy and control over the environment.

Still with regard to the memory difficulties presented by some of the participants of the study and that interfere in some cases in the teaching activity, the example of Júlia stands out, she talks about the concern to forget some formula and that this cannot happen in her area that is accurate. France and Stepansky (2016) argue that in cognitive and physical terms some aspects are accentuated in old age, eg memory for past events and others diminish, as well as memory for recent events. The authors argue that much of the limitations can be circumvented or corrected. In addition, memory can be stimulated with practice and exercise, as well as the stimulus produced by contact with others, especially with young people.

It is emphasized that the perception of aging is usually based on the last events of the person's life, in this sense, it is observed that the confrontation of illnesses or recently healing of one, influences directly, since the person tends to become more fragile. In the present study, Ana Carolina was recently cured of breast cancer and Antônio is a carrier of lung cancer. Antonio, in particular, addresses how bad it is to see that he is no longer the same as when he was young and that now in old age he needs care. The two participants cited the importance of work to better deal with the diagnosis (ARTHUSO, 2017).

Rasmussem and Elverdam (2008) in research on the meaning of work for cancer survivors reveal that the vast majority of people diagnosed with cancer try to return to work after treatment and seek to re-establish the old structure of everyday life. They verified that the work contributes to the perception of the individual as a participant and active being, as well as making it possible to socialize with colleagues. They noted that it is difficult for many to resume work, and when they are unable to work, they establish new, lighter work activities that also give meaning to life.

Although elderly people are often related to loss, an increasing number of healthy, well-disposed older people with better physical and mental conditions are found to enjoy a more pleasurable life (CAMPOS ET. AL, 2015). It is noted in the speech of some participants, among them Melissa, Angelica, Francisco and Tadeu, the affirmation of not feeling old and that they do not perceive physical changes occasioned by the old age. It is observed that they, in general, attribute the meaning of "feeling old" to a state of mind and not just chronological age.

It is observed that little by little old age is being associated with being active and productive, so much so that the majority of participants in the present study, such as Melissa, Angelica, Tadeu, Pietro, Francisco and Luisa, say they feel that way (NERI 2013). This data can also be seen in the study by Moreira, Freitas and Vieira (2014) that address successful old age for university professors, who emphasize that the ability to remain active for teachers is linked to the continuity of work. It is noted that the term "being active" is often associated with being working and producing. Andrade (2018) in research on the perception of aging for



teachers was verified, that the teachers affirmed a good vision of aging, being this a predictor for healthy aging. This data, collaborates the results of the present research.

A central point to be discussed concerns the relationship that participants establish between aging and a teaching career. Some teachers such as Júlia, Luísa and Pietro brought this relationship and the influence of the physical losses that they feel more explicitly in the interview, whereas Antonio, Francisco, Bernardo and Tadeu adopted more defended positions and were favored by the stimuli of the projective technique and the DE-with Tema, to express these feelings better. Ana Carolina, Melissa, Angelica and Luísa talked about the positive aspects of getting older in the profession.

Regarding the balance between gains and losses in this process, some cited strategies to deal better with losses in the professional environment. It emphasizes the example of Julia, she said that she has some forgetfulness and when this happens it usually replaced by other names and combined with its friend of to warn it when it is "expiring". Melissa, while privileging the good aspects of getting older in the profession, at another point in the interview, cites that she uses a microphone because her voice is failing. Antonio also talks about his forgetfulness in another moment, and to deal with it, he tends to be attentive, replacing the names, and his students do not realize it. It is observed that they seek to minimize any kind of stress and adversity at work.

The way that participants seek resources to overcome losses can be understood in the light of the theory of selection, optimization and compensation (SOC) of Baltes and Baltes (2000). It is verified that the mechanisms that predominate in the reports of Júlia, Melissa, Pietro and Antônio are selection and compensation, since they reorganize in hierarchies the development of new goals compatible with the available resources to ameliorate any type of loss, compensate these with new resources. In this vision, the teachers make a revision of the life of what one wants and what is more important.

Still in this view of SOC theory, it is seen that the participants Júlia, Melissa, Pietro and Antônio can effectively manage the changes in the biological, psychological and social conditions that constitute opportunities for their developmental trajectories. The way teachers in the present study allocate and reallocate their internal and external resources through selection, optimization, and compensation maximize gains and minimize losses over time (NERI, 2006 E TEIXEIRA and NERI 2008).

Still related to the existence of negative contents associated with aging as a university professor, one should consider prejudice against the elderly teacher, a subject addressed by Bernardo. Another aspect observed relates to the tiredness and physical wear that is felt when aging in the profession. This theme was mentioned by the participants Pietro, Julia and Luísa. The authors Batista and Matos (2016); Pecora and Vinhos (2011) affirm that the elderly person who chooses to continue working feels more intensely the physical fatigue, since the physical vitality is no longer the same as when he was young, being a great challenge to remain in the work market without harming professional performance.

The need for technological updating was an issue addressed by Pietro and Julia. They talk about the importance of the elderly teacher if they modernize and know how to deal with students who come to the classrooms more and more updated on technological issues. The example of Julia is interesting, because she says that the teacher has to know how to handle the cell phones inside the classroom. With regard to this theme, Sá and Almeida (2015) and Freitas and Gil (2016) emphasize that the relationship between technology and teaching work requires that the teacher be constantly updated professionally. The previous generations of teachers do not belong to the technological age, and with this they may find it difficult to keep up with the rapid advance of didactic technologies and some resistance in adapting. Nierotka, et al. (2014) argue that the elderly may find it difficult to accept and learn to use the new technologies, and when it comes to inserting them into the work environment, little education is perceived by the institutions.

Ana Carolina and Angélica were the participants who highlighted positive aspects of teaching, which, according to them, is one of the few careers that the accumulation of knowledge and experiences due to old age are positive and valued aspects. They note that the older teacher feels safer and more experienced in dealing with certain teaching situations. For Masseto (2012) in the context of teaching the positive aspect in aging, for example, is to have a better theoretical framework. It becomes valued that teacher who always has an author to cite as an example in a certain theme. It is observed that the relation, student and teacher, can be better according to the degree of maturity and security that the teacher transmits.

It is noted, according to Masseto (2012), that at the beginning of the teaching career the novice teacher can show insecurity to transmit knowledge and only with time can acquire more confidence in himself. Lima, et al. (2015) in a study on the social representation of work and aging for teachers, found that teaching experience and wisdom stand out as central elements of the representation of aging in a positive way, demonstrating the gains that this process provides.

The vision of the job market for the elderly university professor was a theme that allowed many participants, such as Bernardo, Francisco and Tadeu, to bring personal experiences in this regard. We highlight the case of Francisco who, when talking about the labor market, addressed his fear of being exempted from his professional activities. It is observed in relation to this theme, which preponderated a negative view, which is related to low earnings, teacher devaluation, fear of dismissal and fear of professional replacement in old age.

The positive aspects that help to alleviate difficulties were also expressed in this theme, for example, the job market is good for the older teacher because of the accumulation of experience. The view that a good curriculum, magazine publications that have high Qualis, specializations, are factors that contribute to hiring, and with that, help improve the grades awarded to the programs in universities. These visions were present in the reports of some teachers, such as Antônio, Angélica and Bernardo. The example of Angélica, who says that she is valued in the profession because she has many good publications, is currently the

invited editor of a scientific journal.

As discussed earlier, the job market today is not conducive to virtually no professional class or age group. Thus, the labor market for the elderly teacher is also being impacted by the country's current economic and political system, with few opportunities for university professors (DELUIZ, 2017; MOREIRA, 2014). Despite the existence of the valorization of the working elderly, the crisis in Brazil does not provide an advantageous labor market for this population (OLIVEIRA, 2017).

It is noteworthy that the teacher over 60, the vast majority, built a curriculum that is well accepted, it turns out that in many cases, they are free professors or doctors and accumulate high index of publications. The good curriculum of older university professors can influence hiring, because as discussed earlier, the hiring of these teachers helps in the score of new courses and thus provides a better development and recognition of higher education programs with funding agencies (AVELLAR, 2015).

In addition to the content presented in the interviews, the participants were able to express through the instruments aspects that had not appeared previously and also to reinforce other contents that they had already brought. Regarding the initial objectives, to propose the projective technique of thematic apperception addressed to the elderly (SAT), the presented figures were chosen with the purpose of favoring contents related to the work and / or the dynamics between work and leisure, although none of them addressed directly this theme. It is observed that the figures presented, favored subjects related to relations in general, which also includes the relations presented in the context of the work.

Thus, to what refers to the board one of the SAT whose theme is "conversation", what was more frequent in the projections of the participants, were stories that spoke of the relations of support in daily situations of personal as well as professional. Antônio, Júlia and Pietro were the participants who brought contents, in a more or less explicit way, related to the professional environment. The content projected by Antônio related to problems of the teaching practice stands out, being that the negative aspects of the teaching activity had not been brought by him in the interview. It is verified that the technique favored the expression of Antônio's opinion regarding the criticism of the level of education in Brazil and about the students who arrive at universities with little preparation. Pietro designed content about the future of Education in Brazil and which are the best ways. It is observed in the teachers' report, a concern and an opportunity to express themselves on the problems that the teacher finds in higher education.

Some participants cited typical situations in the daily life of a teacher, Júlia projects a future concern about the positive image she wants to leave to her classmates and students. Therefore, it is expressed by Julia, an anguish related to preserving the positive professional identity that she has built throughout her career and thus avoid any disloyalty. Luísa designed a meeting between friends of other professions that discuss about the little time that they had with the family. Pietro designed the meeting of friends from other professions who discuss

the problems of the teaching profession.

The other participants made projections that do not speak directly about the work but emphasize the relationships and that can be generalized from the personal and professional point of view, often presenting the conflicts in relation to this and the resources that they use to deal with them. So, Luisa talks about how difficult it was to devote herself to work and have little time with her children. Melissa managed through her projection to express the importance of friends and how important this is in maturity.

Francisco and Ana Carolina also designed conflict relations that may be associated with the content brought in the interviews. The example of Francisco, who projects content on acceptance, stands out. Note the conflict of being accepted and the need to be accepted, it is verified that the fact of being a foreigner can enable the feeling of exclusion. In the projection made by Ana Carolina, it is highlighted the feeling of mistrust that may be related to the professional moment that she is facing, as discussed previously, because she is in the probationary period of the teaching career in public university and this generates a certain stress by feeling questioned and charged.

The position defended was a feature of the projections made by Thaddeus, Angelica and especially by Bernardo, who in telling their stories was more descriptive. It can be observed that the defense may have been more intense due to the fact that the three participants were from the health area and Bernardo, more specifically, belonged to the area of aging. It can be observed that they are accustomed to evaluate and not be evaluated, or even more broadly they always take the place of researchers rather than research participants. Angelica and Tadeu designed content that may be associated with the transference relationship established between them and the researcher, at the time of the interview, and in the application of the instruments. Tadeu in his projection highlighted the relation of submission of the female figure to the male authority, and this content was observed in the posture of the participant during the interview, Thaddeus at all times tried to master the test situation.

It stands out the projection made by Bernardo in describing the figures and not delving into the content. According to Sá (2015) the defensive attitude manifests itself unconsciously, because it is as if the person is protecting himself from who he is, and he can still show some fear of being approved, accepted and right. Gil (2010) in research with the elderly, used the projective technique SAT and verified that some participants, as well as those of the present research, initially adopted more defensive aspects and remained talking about general themes and not being placed in an individualized way.

Regarding SAT board 17 on "Leisure", the main objective was to elicit associations between leisure and work. In the stories presented, the content of the relationship between leisure, family and friends was highlighted, but they may also be associated with work. Julia was a participant who spoke more clearly about the meaning of work when related to leisure, and the stimulus of the figure presented favored that she put herself personally. It is verified that the projective technique, facilitated the expression of contents that were not brought by

Júlia in the interview, mainly about having dedicated more to the work than to moments of leisure. In old age, according to Zanelli et al. (2013) is often a review of life, and through the stimulation of the board, Julia managed to have a moment of reflection on the space that professional activity occupied and still occupies in her life.

Melissa and Pietro in their projections brought content that referred to the importance of the balance between personal and professional life, they portray a moment of leisure away from work. The other participants talk about leisure in general connected with family and friends. It is observed that in addition to the theme of leisure, the participants brought other content, for example, Francisco and Thaddeus designed stories related to the submission of the female to the male figure. It stands out Angelica's projection, on the character woman is entering the masculine universe, Francisco also projected the overcoming of the female figure in a masculine environment.

With respect to these contents presented by Angélica, Francisco and Tadeu, it can be observed that they may reflect the current scenario of the labor market, in which women are slowly gaining space and facing barriers related to the differences between them and men related to issues salaries, positions and tasks. As previously discussed, the participants belong to a generation that tended to consider women submissive to men, but we are now seeing the beginning of a cultural change on this theme (PELEGRINI; MARTINS, 2016).

It is verified that Bernardo remained defended in the projection made on board 17, because he was one of the participants who designed a content beyond the leisure theme, note in its history the association of leisure with error and embarrassment. The content brought in the interview by the participant about the prejudice in teaching and the fact of not being well used, refers to a conflict that brings some constraint. Although the participant was only in the descriptive tone, it turns out that the technique favored Bernardo to highlight a conflict that also appeared in the interview.

Regarding the use of the DE-com Tema procedure, it is observed that, because it is a more directive stimulus on the theme "work in old age", it was possible for the participants to design diverse contents related to this aspect. The expression of aspects related to the conflicts, desires and projections associated with work and/or old age appeared. We highlight the projections about the desire to re-signify work in old age, expressed by Melissa, Luísa and Ana Carolina. It is noteworthy that the participants expressed the desire to be in contact with the new generations, as Luísa's example, which projects in the old age more advanced the pretension of writing a "blog" and insert all the professional content that has built throughout life. Ana Carolina designed a character who is cooking for her grandson and Melissa portrayed a children's book writer. In the projections made by them, there is a new possibility of continuing to work without being teaching, in addition to being idealized a lighter dynamic in the work day.

Tadeu and Bernardo also project teaching work in old age associated with a lighter

routine. It is observed that the two participants were able to express their perceptions and feelings better in the DE-com Tema procedure than in the SAT. The other participants, Francisco, Júlia and Pietro highlight the pleasure in the profession.

Trinca (2013) states that the projected content of the stories reaches the deeper side of the unconscious because the contents brought in are a tip of the iceberg of themes central to one's life. According to the author this happens because it is a free, loose and spontaneous stimulus that offers a welcoming and gives an associative freedom to the examinee to express freely. In the present study, it was observed that the order of choice of the two SAT and DE-com Tema instruments, elicited to the participants the elaboration of more extensive contents in the last instrument. It is found that it is as if the initial stimuli of the SAT facilitated a better expression in the last one chosen.

The importance of the use of SAT and DE-com Tema in the present research is emphasized, since these instruments were mediators of the established relationship between researcher and teachers. The authors Gil (2010), Gil (2005) and Tardivo (2007), discuss that the projective techniques facilitate the expression of emotional aspects and the elaboration of psychic contents of the individual. In addition to promoting the projection of latent and unconscious contents, according to the authors, the projective instruments can have a fundamentally mediating function in the contact between patient and psychologist, participant and researcher.

## Final Considerations

Considering the initial objectives of analyzing the perceptions and experiences about work and aging for elderly university teachers who continue to work professionally, it is verified that these were reached. The results were diversified, being this data justified by the heterogeneity of the participants. Firstly, it is important to observe a youth-related scenario of university teachers even at middle age, revealing that today's seniors are no longer the elderly than our grandparents. It is noted that teaching work in old age is linked to pleasure and the possibility of contributing to the formation of students and a better society. As regards the view of aging itself, the balance between the gains and losses of this process were highlighted by the participants. Teachers have evoked both the negatives of aging in the profession and the positives. The contents related to the physical limitations are highlighted, however being compensated by the pleasure that the teaching profession offers and by the valorization of the knowledge that the teachers carry in their professional trajectories.

It should be emphasized that the instruments used, the SAT projective technique and the DE-com Tema procedure, contributed in a relevant way to the research, since they enabled latent contents related to the study topic to emerge, which could not be expressed in a manifest way. As a limitation of the present study, it can be highlighted the desistence of some participants. It is hoped that this study may contribute to a better understanding of the university professor over 60 years of age, thus favoring that this teacher, when being better

known, can promote reflections and questions, both in society and in the institutions in which they are inserted. result in actions that promote a better quality of life at work. It is important to emphasize the need for a better understanding and appreciation of the mature teacher, since in addition to training the students, he also collaborates in the training of teachers who are starting their careers, being an element of fundamental importance for the construction of a better society.

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