

EXTRACURRICULAR INTERNSHIP AND PURPOSE IN LIFE: PERCEPTIONS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Gabriela Pagano Vieira ¹; Letícia Lovato Dellazzana-Zanon ¹

ABSTRACT

Emerging adulthood is a stage of development in which individuals prepare to enter adult life. Due to its characteristics, it is a favorable period to study a purpose in life. This study aimed to investigate the conceptions of university students about extracurricular internship and its relationship with the development of the purpose in life. A focus group was carried out with three students from the psychology course. For data analysis, a content analysis was performed. The results showed that purpose in life and extracurricular internship are perceived as related. These themes are seen as beneficial for development, helping to establish identity, in the self-perception of these young people as adults and in decision-making.

Keywords: purpose in life; college students; content analysis

Pasantía Extracurricular y Proyectos de Vida: Percepciones de Estudiantes Universitarias

RESUMEN

Adulthood emergent is a phase of development in which individuals prepare to enter adult life. Due to its characteristics, it is a favorable period to study a purpose in life. In this study, the objective was to investigate the conceptions of university students about extracurricular internship and its relationship with the development of the purpose in life. A focus group was carried out with three students from the psychology course. For data analysis, a content analysis was performed. The results point out that purpose in life and extracurricular internship are perceived as related. These themes are evaluated as beneficial for development, helping in the establishment of identity, in the self-perception of these young people as adults and in the taking of decisions.

Palabras clave: proyectos de vida; estudiantes universitarios; análisis de contenido

Estágio extracurricular e projetos de vida: percepções de estudantes universitárias

RESUMO

Adulthood emergent is a phase of development in which individuals prepare to enter adult life. Due to its characteristics, it is a favorable period to study a purpose in life. This study had as its objective to investigate the conceptions of university students about extracurricular internship and its relationship with the development of the purpose in life. A focus group was carried out with three students from the psychology course. For data analysis, a content analysis was performed. The results showed that purpose in life and extracurricular internship are perceived as related. These themes are seen as beneficial for development, helping in the establishment of identity, in the self-perception of these young people as adults and in the taking of decisions.

Palavras-chave: projetos de vida; estudantes universitários; análise de conteúdo

¹ Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas – Campinas – SP – Brasil; gabrielapaganov@gmail.com; leticiaellazzana@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The emerging term adulthood has been used to refer to the phase after adolescence, in which individuals gradually prepare to enter adulthood (Arnett, 2000). In this way, emerging adults would no longer be adolescents, presenting characteristics that differ from this period of development, at the same time they would be emerging in adulthood (Arnett, 2000).

Emerging adulthood, in addition to being a distinct term, is also a different phase from the others that precede or follow it. In relation to adolescence, it is noteworthy that it is marked by a series of physical, psychological, cognitive and social changes, making it a period with its own characteristics. Most adolescents, classified according to the Statute of Children and Adolescents (1990) as individuals aged between 12 and 18, live with their parents, go through puberty and they are in school. However, after the age of majority, none of the aforementioned characteristics remain normative, so the age group from 18 to 29 years old should not be called late adolescence (Arnett, 2000).

For Arnett (2011) there has been a change in the insertion of young people into adulthood, in modern Western societies, so that the age group between 18 and 29 years old has become a time of great experiences and unique experiences. Thus, for this author, it is necessary to name and study this period of development. In this sense, it is important to contextualize that emerging adulthood is a typical phenomenon of industrialized or recently industrialized Western societies, and is therefore culturally constructed (Arnett, 2000; Pereira, Dutra-Thomé, & Koller, 2016). Emerging adulthood, like other stages of development, has unique characteristics. The following particularities of this period stand out: (a) exploration of identity, (b) instability, (c) focus on oneself, (d) feeling of "being between" (in-between) and (e) future possibilities (Arnett, 2000, 2011).

Due to its characteristics, emerging adulthood has become a favorable period for the study of the purpose in life. Bronk (2014) highlights that, historically, the first studies that addressed the theme of purposes in life considered it as a characteristic of adulthood. However, studies with adolescents and young people have shown that these populations are already committed to purpose in life, in addition to emphasizing the relationship between purpose in life and identity formation (Damon, 2009; Damon, Menon, & Bronk, 2003). The relation between these two themes has already been addressed by Erikson (1976), who maintains that the individual, during adolescence, goes through the identity *versus* role confusion stage. When the resolution of this crisis is satisfactory, it provides the basis for building a purpose in life. In industrialized societies, it is believed that it is possible to extend exploration for identity, which begins in adolescence but intensifies in emerging adulthood

(Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1976).

For the study of purpose in life, adolescence and emerging adulthood are important stages of development, because it is in them that individuals intentionally engage in the construction of a purpose in life (Bronk, 2014; Mariano & Going, 2011). For this population, having a purpose in life is associated with greater life satisfaction, in addition to being a protective factor (Bronk, Hill, Lapsley, Talib, & Finch, 2009; Damon, 2009). Damon (2009) highlights that having a well-structured life project is a protective factor against self-destructive and risky behaviors, in addition to offering a direction, ensuring moments of resilience in difficult times and joy in good times.

Individuals who have a purpose in life have more positive experiences than those who do not (Bronk, 2014; Bronk et al., 2009; Mariano & Going, 2011). Research also suggests that, for young people, having a life project makes them feel good, as it provides a conciliatory vision of the present and future, which generates comfort. A purpose in life also relates to optimism and hope for the future for adolescents and emerging adults (Bronk et al., 2009; Mariano & Going, 2011).

Some characteristics must be taken into account during the construction of the purpose in life. Studies indicate that variables such as age, gender, socioeconomic and cultural level can influence the construction of the life project (Damon et al., 2003; Bronk, 2014; Riter, Dellazzana-Zanon, & Freitas, 2019). While for young people seeking a purpose in life increases satisfaction with life, the opposite occurs with the adult population, who believe that they should have already identified their project (Bronk et al., 2009). Regarding socioeconomic level, a survey showed that adolescents from low socioeconomic classes had more purpose in life that involved helping other people, when compared to individuals from high socioeconomic levels (Valore & Viaro, 2007).

Regarding the meaning of a life project, there is no single definition among scholars about the subject (Dellazzana-Zanon & Freitas, 2015). However, a very important definition is that of Damon et al. (2003), who describe the purpose in life as a stable and generalized intention to achieve something that is both meaningful to the self and that generates a productive engagement with some aspect of the world beyond the self.

Research with Brazilian adolescents indicates that these individuals develop purpose in life focused on three areas: (a) work, (b) study and (c) family (Miranda & Alencar, 2011; Nascimento, 2013; Riter et al., 2019). For these young people, professional activity plays a central role in life projects, as it is related to survival, financial stability, independence and social advancement (Riter et al., 2019). The work activity has this highlight, as it

is seen by adolescents as an organizing aspect, being necessary for the realization of other projects.

Considering that one of the spheres of the purpose in life would be work, research shows that when they think about their vocational development, Brazilian adolescents and emerging adults tend to think about entering higher education to become professional or enter the job market (Bardagi, Lassance, Paradiso, & Menezes, 2006). However, studies that investigated the insertion of university graduates in the job market suggest that many of them feel unprepared, apprehensive and dissatisfied with their professional performance (Bardagi et al., 2006; Teixeira & Gomes, 2005). Despite this, some experiences can make this transition easier, such as extracurricular academic activities such as monitoring, scientific initiation and internship (Bardagi et al., 2006; Silva & Teixeira, 2013).

Silva and Teixeira (2013) highlight the internship in relation to other academic experiences since it has the character of a work rehearsal. Thus, the university student can apply theoretical knowledge in practice and assume responsibilities, which helps in the transition from the educational context to the work environment. For these authors, the internship helps university students to define their interests and develop their professional projects more clearly, so that they become more confident about the future.

The internship is supported by Law 11.788/08, which defines it as a supervised school educational act, developed in the work environment, which proposes to prepare the young person for insertion in the job market. Furthermore, the Internship Law details that internships may or may not be mandatory. In the case of the first, called curricular internship, it is part of the pedagogical project of the course, being necessary for the approval and obtaining of the diploma. In the case of the non-mandatory or extracurricular internship, it is an optional activity, which must be added to the regular workload.

Considering that: (a) one of the spheres of the purpose in life refers to the professional aspect, (b) entry into the university takes place during the period of emerging adulthood, (c) the extracurricular internship can be the first contact of university students with the job market, the research question of this study is what young university students think about the extracurricular internship and what is the role of this internship in their life project. This study aims to investigate university students' conceptions about the extracurricular internship and the role of this experience in the development of their life projects.

METHOD

Outline

An exploratory qualitative research was carried out.

Exploratory research aims to provide greater familiarity with a specific issue, aiming to explain and build hypotheses (Silveira & Córdova, 2009). The exploratory research is justified by the objective of the study, which seeks to know conceptions, acquire knowledge about a poorly researched topic and, in the future, raise hypotheses.

Participants

Three university students from the psychology course participated in this study, all female and 22 years old. The inclusion criteria were: (a) young people aged between 18 and 25 years old, (b) who were attending or had already attended the 5th semester of the course, (c) who were doing or had already done an extracurricular internship, and (d) who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study (by signing the Free and Informed Consent Form).

Characteristics of the group participant

Andressa * is in the eighth period of the course and lives with her parents and a sister in the same city where she studies. The student has been doing an extracurricular internship for four years. In addition to the current internship, Andressa has also performed an extracurricular internship in a social assistance center and in a Human Resources (HR) company. This time, the camp is a school and she has been in it since July 2017. The duration is 30 hours a week and is paid. The participant has a grant from ProUni – University for All Program – to subsidize the college.

Bianca * is in the tenth period of the course, has two brothers, but lives only with her parents, in the same city where she studies. His extracurricular internship is at the Public Defender's Office of the State of São Paulo and began in March 2017. The duration is 20 hours per week and is paid. That's the only stage she's done.

Carla * is in the tenth period of the course and has divorced parents, so she spends the week at one of them and the weekend at the other's. In addition to the parents, their respective companions also live in the residences. As far as the extracurricular internship is concerned, this is the first one that Carla has ever done and it is in a technology company, in the Human Resources area. The duration is 28 hours per week and is paid. She has been doing this internship since May 2017.

Instruments

Focus Group: For data collection, the focus group technique was used, defined by Gondim (2003) as a technique that collects data through group interactions when discussing a topic presented by the researcher, who plays the role of facilitator. The focus group has a greater focus on the group, and not on the individual, which means that an opinion can be seen as belonging to the group (Barbour, 2009; Gondim, 2003).

Sociodemographic data sheet: created specifically for this study, it aimed to better understand the characteristics of the sample. It was filled in by the participants themselves and asked them about their internships, such as, for example, which area of activity, remuneration, number of hours per week, if they had already done other internships; and personal data, such as age, marital status, who they lived with and what period of the course they were in.

Illustrated tale from the book *The Bell Jar*: an excerpt from the book by Sylvia Plath (1963) was used to start the discussion in the focus group. In order, to make the content more visual, an illustration of the tale was presented, made by Than (2013).

Semi-structured script for research on extracurricular internships and life projects: it aimed to know the experiences and opinions of the participants about the themes. Open questions were asked about life project, extracurricular internship and about the relation between these two themes.

Data collection procedures

The present research was submitted and approved by the Ethics Committee in Research with Human Beings of the university where the study was carried out (CAAE: 88807218.1.0000.5481). Then, contact was made with the director of the faculty of psychology, so that she could authorize the research. After the authorization, the researcher contacted the entity responsible for dealing with matters related to the extracurricular internships at this university, in order to access the possible participants. Thus, a list with the names of all students was offered along with their e-mails. An email was sent inviting all 30 interns on the list, explaining about the research and who the researcher was. There was a low response rate, so that only 12 people responded, and of this number, five students did not participate, due to unavailability of time or withdrawal.

Thus, seven students participated in the study, four of which participated in the pilot study and three in the study itself. The pilot study aimed to verify the adequacy of the instruments and allow possible changes in the methodology. After its completion, minor changes were made to the semi-structured script. Both the pilot study and the focus group were carried out in a single meeting at the university, in an idle classroom during an after-school hours common to all participants. The students signed a Free and Informed Consent Term and the meetings lasted an average of one and a half hours, being audio recorded for transcription. The moderator was the author of the research.

Data analysis procedures

Focus group sessions were transcribed literally, to then be submitted to a content analysis according

to Laville and Dionne (1999). The categories were elaborated from the speeches produced in the group and organized in core themes, following the open model suggested by the same authors. This model proposes that the categories are not fixed, however, they take shape in the course of the analysis. This model was adopted because it is an exploratory study.

In this way, the researcher grouped units with similar meanings, in order to obtain a first set of categories (Laville & Dionne, 1999). Subsequently, matrices were constructed that allowed to gather the verbalizations presented based on the similarities. All these coding, categorization and data analysis processes were performed by the researcher. Then, the data were interpreted based on the literature. The study also followed the *Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREQ)* (Tong, Sainsbury, & Craig, 2007).

RESULTS

The following categories were found in the data analysis: (a) life projects, (b) extracurricular internship, and (c) relationship between extracurricular internship and life projects. Each category is made up of subcategories. Since the present research sought to know the implications of the extracurricular internship experience in the development of the purpose in life, the study will focus and discuss in the light of the literature the results of the category "extracurricular internship and life projects". Most of the discussion about the two themes originated with a question asked by the researcher about the possible relationship between the two themes. This category has two subcategories.

Participants Andressa and Carla believe that the extracurricular internship is part of their purpose in life, as seen in the following sentence: "*I think the internship is part of the life project... things in her, her experiences...*" (Carla). The internship is seen as another component or experience that helps shape the participants' purpose in life. For Carla, the extracurricular internship is a fundamental part for her to achieve her life project, being strongly related, as seen in the following statement: "*I need this internship, I need this name on my resume, to achieve my goals, which are part of my purpose in life*". The participant reports that her work-related purpose in life is to be a clinical psychologist, however her internship in HR offers her benefits such as strengthening her curriculum and financial gain, which are important for her to achieve her goal.

Carla's opinion is shared by Andressa, as can be seen in this speech: "*I need money, so I'm going to do the extracurricular internship, to get the money to do the things I want... I want to work in such a place, so I'm going to do the internship to have experience to work*

in such a place...". In the case of Andressa, who showed interest in working in the field of school psychology in the future, the internship is important due to practical experience and importance in the curriculum. In addition, the participant reported wanting to use the money from the internship on trips that are part of her life project. In this way, this participant's internship offers conditions for her to conquer the life project she wants, for the money or for the experience in the area.

Although she agrees with the other participants, for Bianca, her internship is her purpose in life, since she intends to work in the place where she is intern. The participant was also the first to associate changes in her life project caused by the extracurricular internship, when she thought about the relationship between the two themes. Her experience as an intern caused some changes in herself, which had an impact on her life project, as seen in the following statement: "Everything I thought changed [...] Everything I want for my life, my purpose in life. The main change I think was when I was in this search for meaning in college, that I thought "ah, I want to be a teacher" [...] and then I saw that no, that I can do other things and the experience that I have there, I feel that this purpose in life has completely changed, yes...". For Bianca, the experience and activities of the internship introduced activities that she liked and that she would like to perform when she graduated. Thus, she can build a different purpose in life.

In view of Bianca's speech, the participant Andressa also highlighted changes in her purpose in life caused by her experiences in the extracurricular internship, mainly related to knowing a new area of work in psychology and rethinking the work she wants to perform after graduation, as it can be noticed in the following statement: "Related to the life project, it changed because I entered psychology thinking [...] that at most I would have a clinic and do therapy with children and such [...] and then I started to do an internship and I said "no, I don't want a clinic, I think I want to experience in such a group" and then the fact of going to HR and already being another one, cut it". Andressa's internships helped her to think about new work possibilities, both in areas of interest and lack of interest, generating changes in the life purpose in life outlined previously.

The three participants also highlighted changes caused by the extracurricular internship, which had an impact on their identities and, indirectly, on their life projects. Carla believes that the new responsibilities acquired in the internship caused an idea of "maturing", as can be seen in her speech: "I felt that I matured a lot. I feel like an adult, which was something I didn't feel until I entered the internship...". For the participant, her internship routine, responsibilities and financial independence caused her to change her self-perception,

so that she feels that she has reached adulthood thanks to it. The other participants also feel that that work and financial independence have made them feel they have reached adulthood, although Bianca claims not to fully see herself as an adult.

From the speeches and responses of the participants, it was observed that the students believe that there was a mutual relationship between the themes of the extracurricular internship and those of purpose in life. For them, the extracurricular internship would be part of their purpose in life, directly or indirectly, at the same time that it would influence the purpose in life they are building.

DISCUSSION

Considering that the present research sought to know possible implications of the extracurricular internship in the purpose in life of university students, it can be said that the two themes influence each other, being present in the students' lives and being relevant factors for the identity and professional development of young women.

The influence of the purpose in life in the extracurricular internship is highlighted in different ways by the students. The participants believe that the internship is part of their purpose in life, since it can help them achieve the desired goals, especially those related to the professional life project. In addition, the internship provides a source of income, which is important for them to achieve their purpose in life related to material goods, such as living alone and traveling.

The extracurricular internship is seen as part of the working purpose in life in three different ways: the first as an experience that made it possible to know a certain area of activity, whether of interest or lack of interest. The second way is the internship being the final objective of the working life project, an opinion shared by Andressa and Bianca. The third is the extracurricular internship as part of the purpose in life to reach a different work objective, according to Carla, who sees her work as part of her final working life project as a clinical psychologist.

In the case of Carla, it was observed that her final work objective and her extracurricular internship are quite different, in addition to the fact that the young woman showed several dissatisfactions regarding the internship. In this case, the strong focus on the future work project that the participant presented can be seen as a way to face an aversive situation. For some authors, the purpose in life can provide resilience in difficult times, as the individual focuses on his project to face aversive situations, so that the purpose in life would reconcile the present and the future, offering some comfort (Bronk, 2014; Damon, 2009; Mariano &

Going, 2011).

In the same way that the internship is part of the life purpose in life, it also influences the purpose in life. The participants stated that the experiences lived in the extracurricular internship generated changes in their purpose in life, in two different ways: (a) showing that a certain area of psychology is or is not in agreement with their life project and (b) generating identity changes and values that consequently impacted their purpose in life. In the first case, the experience of the extracurricular internship showed the participants the practice of a work area of psychology, which may or may not please. If it was positive, it could cause a change in the purpose in life, indicating a new area of interest, which could be configured in a new work purpose in life. This was the case with Andressa's school internship and Bianca's judicial internship. In the case of a negative experience, a working purpose in life could cease to exist, which was the case of Andressa's internship in an HR company.

The second way that the extracurricular internship influences the purpose in life is when it generates identity changes. The participants reported that some of the experiences they had during the internship were important in the formation of their own identity, mainly due to social relationships. Participants report having more ability to deal with different people and situations, in addition to getting in touch with individuals with different experiences. These experiences made them question who they were and how they positioned themselves in the world. Research indicates that the experience of the extracurricular internship can have an impact on the subject's identity, since it promotes vocational exploration, which in turn leads the person to contrast information from the work environment with their preferences, favoring self-knowledge (Silva & Teixeira, 2013). For Silva and Teixeira (2013), it is necessary to test hypotheses, imagine yourself in different scenarios and experiment with various activities to determine interests and skills. From these experiences, the personal preferences of young people and their own identities change, which was observed in the study participants.

The exploration of identity can also be seen as a characteristic of emerging adulthood. For Arnett (2011), this period of life provides different experiences in several areas, such as professional and social life. In addition to offering a range of life experiences, these experiences can be pleasurable and prepare for the role of adult. In this way, both the extracurricular internship and social life make students explore their identities. Identity, in turn, is important in the elaboration of the purpose in life. Erikson's Psychosocial Theory (1976) considers the purpose in life as an essential component of identity. For this theory, the successful resolution of the identity crisis provides the basis for the life project.

In this way, identity changes would have an impact on purpose in life, by altering the participants' values and goals.

When one thinks about the objective of this study, which would be to know the role of the extracurricular internship experience in the students' life project, it can be said that there are mutual implications and influences. The extracurricular internship can be seen as part of the purpose in life, directly or indirectly, at the same time that it would influence the construction of this purpose in life.

In view of the results presented, it is believed that the extracurricular internship had a catalytic effect on the students' development, in order to accelerate the arrival of adulthood. It is believed that the experiences and positive aspects of the internship, such as responsibilities, autonomy, learning and financial independence, contributed not only to the professional project and purpose in life of the participants, but also to their development. The interns presented statements that attribute to the internship experiences a "maturity" and a vision of themselves as adults.

Thus, although the participants are in the age group of emerging adulthood, two of them already see themselves as adults, a fact attributed to the completion of the internship. Financial independence may be a factor that explains the perception of students as adults, since research with young people indicates that being able to pay one's own bills is one of the criteria that evidence the transition to adulthood (Arnett, 1997). Still, characteristics of emerging adulthood are perceived, such as identity exploration and self-focus in the participants (Arnett, 2000).

In this sense, although most students seek an extracurricular internship for practical experience and financial remuneration, it offers more development benefits. It is believed that when the internship offers activities consistent with professional practice, autonomy and learning, the benefits go beyond professional life, being a factor that helps in development.

It is noteworthy that the internship has an expiration date. In the case of the participants, only one claimed to have any chance of being effective. According to the Internship Law, the maximum duration is two years (Brasil, 2008). Therefore, it offers a momentary idea of what it is to be an adult, since the financial independence and responsibilities of the interns will end with the end of the internship. Even so, it is believed that the changes caused by these experiences will make the students more motivated and engaged in continuing this self-perception as adults through their professional life projects.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aimed to know the conceptions of

university students about extracurricular internship and purpose in life. It was observed that these two themes are quite present in the lives of university students, which also indicates that this population tends to think about them. It is noteworthy that the extracurricular internship and life projects are mutually related. The extracurricular internship is shown as a component of the university students' purpose in life, in addition to assisting in decision-making, especially regarding professional choices. On the other hand, the purpose in life is influenced by the experiences in the extracurricular internship, which cause identity changes and help to better understand an area of interest.

Regarding methodological issues, it is believed that the technique used proved to be adequate to access the objective of the study. The focus group fulfilled its objective, offering in-depth discussions and allowing to know the perceptions and attitudes of the group. In addition, it is believed that the stimuli presented were well understood by the participants and helped in the group discussion.

However, this study has some limitations. The low response rate of psychology students to the invitation to participate in the research, added to the time limitations they had due to internships, meant that the study had few participants. In addition to a low number of participants, they have a very similar profile, so the sample is not representative for a more comprehensive analysis of the results.

It is noteworthy that the socioeconomic level of the students must be taken into account, both in the construction of their purpose in life and in the meaning given to the extracurricular internship. The fact that the students are studying psychology should also be considered, as they can be more familiar with the themes and because this course already requires curricular internships. Therefore, it is suggested that future studies investigate characteristics such as gender, undergraduate course and social class.

It is believed that the present study fulfilled its objectives of knowing the perceptions of university students about the extracurricular internship and purpose in life. The positive result of these two themes in the development and professional project of the participants provoked the questioning of possible differences between life projects of university students who do and who do not do extracurricular internships. Future comparative studies would be interesting.

Finally, it is worth highlighting the importance of the university and the psychologist for the study population. Both the life project and the extracurricular internship proved to be important for development, since an internship that meets their requirements and an elaborate purpose in life would be factors that benefit the development of young people. Thus, the university,

having a character that forms the integral student, and psychology as a vector for promoting the well-being and healthy development of individuals, can think of ways to work with this population.

Two points stand out when considering the practical impact of this research. The first would be the importance of a local supervisor in the internship field, who offers theoretical-practical support in the internship field and ensures that the activities carried out are related to the future profession. The other point is that the university has contact with the place of the extracurricular internship, to ensure that the activities developed promote learning, practical knowledge and approximation with the world of work. Only with these conditions will the internship help students to develop their purpose in life.

REFERENCES

- Arnett, J. J. (1997). Young People's Conceptions of the Transition to Adulthood. *Youth & Society*, 29(1), 3–23.
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55(5), 469–480. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.5.469>
- Arnett, J. J. (2011). Emerging adulthood(s): The cultural psychology of a new life stage. In L. A. Jensen (Ed.), *Bridging Cultural and Developmental Approaches to Psychology New Syntheses in Theory, Research, and Policy* (pp. 255–275). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195383430.003.0012>
- Barbour, R. (2009). *Grupos Focais*. Porto Alegre: Artmed.
- Bardagi, M.; Lassance, M. C. P.; Paradiso, Â. C.; Menezes, I. A. de. (2006). Escolha profissional e inserção no mercado de trabalho: percepções de estudantes formandos. *Psicologia Escolar e Educacional*, 10(1), 69–82. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-85572006000100007>
- Bronk, K. C. (2014). *Purpose in Life: A Critical Component of Optimal Youth Development* (Springer). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-7491-9>
- Bronk, K. C.; Hill, P. L.; Lapsley, D. K.; Talib, T. L.; Finch, H. (2009). Purpose, hope, and life satisfaction in three age groups. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 4(6), 500–510. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760903271439>
- Damon, W. (2009). *O Que o Jovem Quer da Vida?*. São Paulo: Summus.
- Damon, W.; Menon, J.; Bronk, K. C. (2003). The Development of Purpose During Adolescence. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7(3), 119–128.
- Dellazzana-Zanon, L. L.; Freitas, L. B. de L. (2015). Uma Revisão de Literatura sobre a Definição de Projeto de Vida na Adolescência. *Interação Em Psicologia*, 19(2), 281–293. <https://doi.org/10.5380>
- Erikson, E. (1976). *Identidade Juventude e Crise*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar.

- Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente – ECA. (1990). Ministério da Justiça: Lei Federal no. 8069/1990. Diário oficial da união, Poder Executivo, Brasília: DF.
- Gondim, S. M. G. (2003). Grupos Focais como Técnica de Investigação Qualitativa: Desafios Metodológicos. *Paidéia*, 12(24), 149–161.
- Laville, C.; Dionne, J. (1999). *A construção do saber: manual de metodologia da pesquisa em ciências humanas*. Belo Horizonte: UFMG. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Decreto de Lei n. 11.788/2008. (2008). *Dispõe sobre o estágio de estudantes; altera a redação do art. 428 da Consolidação das Leis do Trabalho – CLT, aprovada pelo Decreto-Lei no 5.452, de 1o de maio de 1943, e a Lei no 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996; revoga as Leis nos 6.494, de 7 de dezembro de 1977, e 8.859, de 23 de março de 1994, o parágrafo único do art. 82 da Lei no 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996, e o art. 6o da Medida Provisória no 2.164-41, de 24 de agosto de 2001; e dá outras providências*. Diário Oficial da União Seção 1 (26-09-2008), p. 3.
- Mariano, J. M.; Going, J. (2011). Youth Purpose and Positive Youth Development. In R. M. Lerner; J. V. Lerner; J. B. Benson (Eds.), *Advances in Child Development and Behavior - Positive Youth Development* (1 ed., Vol. 41, pp. 39–68). Elsevier Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-386492-5.00003-8>
- Miranda, F. H. de F.; Alencar, H. M. de. (2011). Moral e Ética: a Importância dos Projetos de Vida. In *II Congresso de Pesquisas em Psicologia e Educação Moral - Conflito nas instituições educativas: Perigo ou oportunidade?* (pp. 511–524). Campinas, SP.
- Nascimento, I. P. (2013). Educação e Projeto de vida de adolescentes do ensino médio. *EccoS Revista Científica*, 31(1), 83–100. <https://doi.org/10.5585/EccoS.n31.4328>
- Pereira, A. S.; Dutra-Thomé, L.; Koller, S. H. (2016). Habilidades sociais e fatores de risco e proteção na adultez emergente. *Psico*, 47(4), 268–278. <https://doi.org/10.15448/1980-8623.2016.4.23398>
- Plath, S. (1963). *A Redoma de Vidro*. São Paulo: Biblioteca Azul.
- Riter, H. S.; Dellazzana-Zanon, L. L.; Freitas, L. B. L. (2019). Projetos de vida de adolescentes de nível socioeconômico baixo quanto aos relacionamentos afetivos. *Revista da SPAGESP*, 20(1), 55-68.
- Silva, C. S. C. da; Teixeira, M. A. P. (2013). Experiências de Estágio: Contribuições para a Transição Universidade-Trabalho. *Paidéia*, 23(54), 103–112. <https://doi.org/101590>
- Silveira, D. T.; Córdova, F. P. (2009). A pesquisa científica. In T. E. Gerhardt; D. T. Silveira (Eds.), *Métodos de Pesquisa* (1 ed., p. 120). Porto Alegre: Editora da UFRGS.
- Teixeira, M. A. P.; Gomes, W. B. (2005). Decisão de Carreira entre Estudantes em Fim de Curso Universitário. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa*, 21(3), 327–334.
- Than, G. A. (2013). Sylvia Plath: The fig tree. [Imagem]. Recuperado de: <https://zenpencils.com/comic/130-sylvia-plath-the-fig-tree>.
- Tong, A.; Sainsbury, P.; Craig, J. (2007). Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): A 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 19(6), 349–357.
- Valore, L. A.; Viaro, R. V. (2007). Profissão e Sociedade no Projeto de Vida de Adolescentes em Orientação Profissional. *Revista Brasileira de Orientação Profissional*, 8(2), 57–70.

Acknowledgements: The article has been developed with the support of the CAPES (Coordination for higher Education Staff Development) - Brazil - Code for funding 001.

This paper was translated from Portuguese by Ana Maria Pereira Dionísio.

Received on: February 06, 2020
Approved on: September 05, 2020