Contextual influences on the decision to recareer from an occupational role to a contemporary career for workers aged over 50

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of Professional Doctorate in Organisational Psychology (DOccPsy)

CLARE MULLIGAN-FOSTER

Supervised by Dr Rachel Lewis and Dr Joanna Yarker

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Abstract

Older workers, especially those who are well educated, are engaging in activities known as 'recareering' (Rice, 2015). 'Recareering' means a decision made in later life to embark on a new career in a new industry, after leaving a long-term primary career (Johnson & Lewis, 2009). With high numbers of the baby boomer generation already recareering, there is a 'Silver Tsunami' of workers who are experiencing their career transition with little research available to manage or understand this change (Rice, 2015). Further understanding will help older workers to experience a more successful and planned transition. Further insights will support organisations to be better equipped to create authentic support for those who are beginning to consider their career options for later life (Rice, 2015).

This thesis consists of an introductory chapter outlining the context of retirement planning and demographic shifts. A methodology chapter explains the researchers philosophy of a constructivist paradigm. The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) chapter collates existing research on recareering studies to explore theory used in the research, with a lens on protean career and boundaryless career. The Systematic Literature Review found limited studies focused on recareering in later life (Rice, 2015). Studies looking at second contemporary career options following a move from a 'stable traditional system' are 'scarce' (Vigoda-Gadot, Baruch, & Grimland, 2010). Little evidence for the use of consistent career theory was evident in the SLR. 8 papers were synthesised with 6 themes discussed in terms older workers recareering. 4 antecedents of health, finance, formal/informal learning, and workplace influences and 2 outcomes of social network and intrinsic motives were developed from the analysis.

The empirical study explores contextual influences on the why older workers recareer to help understand decisions made and to inform career longevity options. The study included 15 participants aged over 50 who have recareered from an occupational role to a contemporary career who were interviewed to explore the reasons and influences for their recareer decision. Reflexive thematic analysis method was used to study findings and core themes, discussed within an IGLOO framework (Nielsen, Yarker, Munir et al., 2018). The IGLOO framework examined themes under the hierarchy of 'individual', 'group', 'leader', 'organisational', and 'outside'. A further hierarchy level of 'outcomes' was added to the IGLOO framework.

Although elements of a protean career mindset and boundaryless orientation can be seen within the findings, there was little support or awareness with the participants of how they used insights or knowledge to support career decisions. One key outcome was that most had created a portfolio career for themselves without the knowledge of this career option.

Although there is modern career theory to support this cohort of workers, it is not being used in an effective way for older workers who recareer from an organisational role. This is a growing demographic of workers and there is room in HR and Organisational Psychology to provide a stronger support. As this group of workers can be difficult to access due to their independent work status and lack of professional network, new and novel ways will need to be created to reach this group and provide the support needed.

Further ideas for practice were identified within the IGLOO framework including career model development for older recareerists.

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Abbreviations used within the thesis

SLR – Systematic Literature Review

DC – Defined Contribution (pension scheme)

DB – Defined Benefit (pension scheme)

NI – National Insurance

PCA – Protean Career Attitude

Glossary of relevant career terms

Career – sequence and variety of the types of roles, jobs and occupations, as well as learning and development undertaken by an individual during their life.

Careers – plural of career to provide a collective view of career choices, theory or the study of career options. A collective overview of how the concept of career is being discussed.

Recareering' - means a decision made in later life to embark on a new career in a new industry, after leaving a long-term primary career (Johnson & Lewis, 2009). The process of recareering is the decisions involved in the transition.

Recareerists – individuals who have left their long-term organisational role for a different industry or different way of working such as self-employment, consultant, freelance or portfolio career (a contemporary career).

Contemporary careers are "an individual's work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside organisation, which form a unique pattern over individual's life span" (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009, p.1543). Can include choices such as self-employment, entrepreneur, consultancy, freelance or portfolio career.

Portfolio career - Charles Handy coined the phrase 'portfolio career' as part of his reflection on contemporary careers, and described it as a collection 'bits and pieces of work", supported with seeing life as a collection of groups and activities (Handy, 2002, p.71).

Protean Career Attitude - workers with a higher level of intention for self-directed career management - linked to lower levels of both organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Supeli & Creed, 2016).

Protean careers - Core to protean careers is psychological success achieved by meeting personal goals. Psychological success for a protean career can be achieved many ways is unique as each human (Hall, 1996)

Free Agents – a term named by Daniel Pink (2001) in relation to workers who have left organisational roles as ‘free agents’ and defines them as “people who are working untethered from a large organisation. The ‘free-agent’ includes freelancers, e-lancers, self-employed professionals, and proprietors of small businesses.

Professional Practice statement

I am a Chartered Psychologist, therefore am exempt from part 1 of the Professional Doctorate. This thesis satisfies the requirements for part 2 of the Professional Doctorate for which I have been studying for two years part-time while working as a practicing Psychologist.

Organisational Psychology is my second career. I previously worked in financial services for 25 years. I worked my way up to MD of a financial services company so had a successful career. However, I knew from early on that I did not want to work in an organisation for my whole working life. I wanted to do something different but was never sure what that would be. To kick off my second career, I returned to education. After getting my psychology degree and MSc in Work and Occupational Psychology, I realised I wanted to prepare myself for my own contemporary career. On reflection, it is interesting that I never considered an occupational or in house consultancy job within psychology – for me it was always a way into self-employment.

My masters thesis was focused on 'Work Values and the impact of Generational Diversity'. This subject was very much influenced by my work in the pensions industry as I had developed an interest in changing demographics in terms of pension coverage, retirement and engaging younger people. I was interested to understand the longevity of working lives and the generational differences as we had four or five generations working together for the first time. I think the industry I worked in was certainly one of few that was already dealing with such generational diversity as we worked with those from aged 16 up to end of life.

I started working as an independent Organisational Psychologist once I qualified. The first year was daunting as I felt the transition moving from MD to sole practitioner was such a shock. I remember thinking how strange it felt to not have my calls returned as easily. There is a type of respect that comes with a senior role in an organisation that is not awarded to the self-employed worker. There is an assumption that the self-employed person is always going to be selling something! I always had a view that a portfolio career would suit me and my preference for risk for my career. I therefore developed a portfolio approach to include consultancy, coaching and lecturing.

I have been practising as a psychologist for 10 years with my main focus as a practitioner as an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion specialist. Through my MSc research, I developed an expertise in generational diversity. This was a time when Diversity and Inclusion was becoming a big topic for organisations and my timing was fortunate as a lot of companies were starting to show interest in the topic. There were not many practitioners working in this field in Ireland and as I became well known for being an EDI consultant, I had the privilege of working with a lot of organisations to help them understand the topic. I initially worked supporting large organisations on building awareness of Diversity and Inclusion, and then evolved to work on diversity strategies and audits. I developed specialism in decision making, unconscious biases and how the ‘brain at work’ influences thinking and behaviour. This has evolved from my inclusion consultancy work, leadership training programmes and MBA modules I lectured on. This portfolio approach of academic work alongside my consultancy work was essential for achieving my chartership status as it allowed engagement with projects to help develop the skills and experience needed.

In addition to client work, I have also been heavily involved with the Psychological Society of Ireland. I wanted to develop my professional network and was delighted to be elected to chair elect for the Division of Work and Organisational Psychology (DWOP) and then to chair during my time in Ireland. It was an exciting time to be chair as Dublin were hosting the European Association of Work and Organisational Psychology (EAWOP) conference. On my move back to the UK I have since been involved with British Psychology Society and am a part of the EDI taskforce and the Rewards and Recognition committee. I recognise the importance of peer support and engagement for professional and personal development. Being involved with PSI and the DWOP network were another essential part in the support for chartership as it allowed access for further observation from my supervisor.

I feel my own career story has influenced my research and when the opportunity came to study for this Professional Doctorate, I was delighted to develop myself and my research skills. I hoped that my past career experiences could come together to hopefully give a new insight on career transitions for older workers.

Chapter 1 - Introductory Chapter

1.1 Introduction

The focus of this research is older workers; exploring reasons why workers aged over 50 leave occupational roles, pre-retirement age to recareer to a contemporary career. ‘Recareering’ means a decision made in later life to embark on a new career in a new industry, after leaving a long-term primary career (Johnson & Lewis, 2009). Traditionally careers have been studied in terms of an individual’s relationship with their organisation and the majority of workers are still working within that relationship (Zeitz, Blau, & Fertig, 2009). However, there are a growing number of workers are choosing more independent career paths. Older workers may face particular challenges in comparison to their younger counterparts (Wang, Olson, & Schultz, 2013) and tend to see more barriers to their career transition (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes, & Hughes, 2012). Understanding the challenges and decisions of older worker recareerists is the focus of this research.

Career choices should be considered with the context of the changing world and its impact on career decisions (Mayrhofer, Meyer & Steyrer, 2007). Yet, career research has mostly focused on the individual context for career choice with neglect towards the wider context (Gunz, Mayrhofer & Tolbert, 2008). Environmental factors such as globalisation, technology, work contexts, outsourcing arrangements, and demographic shifts are some examples of why careers are now being considered on a more independent basis rather than through an organisational context (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Recommendations for understanding the context for career research have been suggested to aid with understanding career choice in response to our environment; “research exploring the broad context within which careers are lived helps us understand better the nature of career” (Gunz et al., 2008. p.164). The interplay between context and the individual is critical for how workers will construct their career (Kim, 2014) so understanding the context at different levels provides a lens for the concept of ‘career’ for this study.

Contextual influences impact workplaces and career management for all workers and organisations. The macro themes particularly relevant for older workers who may consider a career transition are considered initially as an introduction to the influence on recareering decisions. To develop an understanding of the context why older workers could be recareering from their occupational roles three broad influencing factors were explored within this introductory chapter. Firstly, the macro environment context is explored including demographic shifts and the influence of pension provision. Secondly later life career management and ‘Recareerists’ are explored to understand how career decisions are being considered in current times especially in relation to older workers. Finally organisational support for older workers in occupational roles are discussed as a basis for understanding some of the context that may prompt recareer decisions.

1.2 Macro Environment influence - Demographic Shifts

The first macro contextual trend is how populations are ageing and the impact of this demographic shift on careers. Demographic shifts in the UK and Global population have led to an increase in the numbers and percentage of older people in society. People are living longer and as a result are considering a longer career to support longevity of life (Andrews, Ferrari & Saia, 2019). In the UK, life expectancy has increased from 55 (males) and 59 (females) in 1920 to 79.9 (males) and 83.6 (females) in 2018 (Raleigh, 2020), which demonstrates the huge shift in demographics over the last century. The demographic of over 65's has increased in the UK from 5.3 million in the 1950's, which equalled 10% of the population, to 11.9 million in 2018, which is 18% of the population. This is set to increase to 17.7 million, or 24.8% of the population, by the middle of this century (Statistics, 2019). Our older population is growing and there is a need for research and study of how society will manage this shift.

The total number of people within the demographic of traditional retirement (65 years or older) will be larger than the working population in Europe within the next few decades. This group will make up 31.3% of the EU's population by 2100, compared to 19.8% in 2018 (European Commission, 2015). This increased longevity is accepted to have 'major implications' on peoples career (Gratton & Scott, 2017) and to the labour force available to employers. Many companies are still working to the traditional career which includes full time employment with a hard stop at traditional retirement age of 65 (Gratton & Scott, 2017). This demographic shift demonstrates that as people are living longer, some workers will need or want to work later, past their traditional retirement age and importantly, employers will need them to do so. This shifting demographic is therefore leading to new forms of career whereby people are keen to work beyond retirement but to continue working in a different way (Mayrhofer et al., 2007). There is a need for organisations to build supports for longevity of career for their workers. If organisations look after specific needs of older workers, then they may stay with the organisation until post 'normal' retirement ages (Zappalà, Depolo, Fraccaroli, Guglielmi & Sarchielli, 2008) which may become an important consideration as we see talent pools shrink.

1.2.1 Silver Tsunami

So significant is the demographic shift, that 'Silver Tsunami' is a metaphor used to describe population ageing and is also known as the 'grey tsunami' or the 'silver wave'. It is defined as “the ageing of the world’s population is like a tsunami: it is large, it is beyond our control, and it is predictable” (Barusch, 2013, p.182). The silver tsunami has an impact on many aspects of society, including the way we work. There will be a decrease on the global working population (Henderson, Maniam & Leavell, 2017) and this will impact the decisions that individuals and organisations will have to make regarding career options and talent availability. Organisations will have to make decisions on their talent pools to overcome loss of productivity and knowledge as their older workers leave organisations due to reaching retirement age (Henderson et al., 2017), or seek new ways to retain their ageing workers. Yet, it has been noted that “The UK is not making the most of the opportunities afforded by an ageing population. Too many people are forced out of work in later life by poor health or unwelcoming attitudes in the workplace” (Agents et al., 2018, p.3). This indicates that there is a societal need to understand more inclusive career guidance for older workers.

1.3 Macro Environment Influence - Retirement and Pensions in the UK

A further macro influence is how pension provision can support the shifting demographics. There is a financial impact of the numbers of people due to retire and limited financial knowledge has left workers with lack of clarity on how to be financially prepared for a traditional retirement (Henderson et al., 2017). A lack of planning for retirement may lead to older workers realising that their income may not be sufficient to fund their later life (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005), thus leading to a need for later life career choices to create a longer working life. Awareness of the pension provision and retirement trends is important to understand how this macro element impacts the need for understanding older workers career options.

The concept of retirement has and is going through challenges to its traditional perception. The standard retirement age is increasing in many countries (Truxilllo & Fraccaroli, 2013). Traditional retirement age is an artifact of society laws (Dendinger et al., 2005) and may not be in line with current working trends and demographic realities. Demographic trends show that people are working longer and past the traditional retirement age: Omparisons & Orkers (2016) found that 45% of workers aged 55 and older thought that they would now retire after age 65, up from 15% of such workers in the 1996 survey. Research from the US found that 52% of workers expect that they will work past age 65, with 68% of those already over the age of 65 still working (Transamerica Survey, 2020).

Traditionally workers would work to a ‘normal retirement age’ and retire with an occupational pension scheme and/or a state pension scheme. The UK state pension is paid when a worker reaches state retirement age, currently 66. The funding for state pensions comes from the ‘National Insurance (NI) Fund’ which is paid by those currently working and paying into the National Insurance scheme. Currently there are 1000 workers to every 310 pensioners (Tait, 2018), meaning that there are more workers paying into the National Insurance Fund than pensioners drawing from it. The current state pension is 94% of the National Insurance fund so state pensions already account for most of this fund. As the demographics continue to shift then there will be fewer workers paying into the NI fund to support the growing demographic of those who should be eligible for the state pension. This issue is further exacerbated by the declining birth rates (Daykin & Lewis, 1999: Gratton & Scott, 2017), meaning that the dependency ratio for the state pension will continue to decrease resulting in a situation where there are more people due a state pension and fewer workers to support them via the NI fund contributions (Daykin & Lewis, 1999).

It is well accepted that the state pension scheme in its current form is not sustainable. The awareness of pension provision shortages led to the shift to encourage private pensions and the introduction of automatic enrolment for pensions in 2012 (Robertson-Rose, 2019). In 2020, 78% of workers were in a workplace pension compared to only 50% in 2012 (Office for National Statistics, 2019) due to auto enrolment for workers by their employers. Auto enrolment has created a ‘defined contribution’ arrangement where individuals save in a pot alongside their employer to save for retirement. The defined contribution (DC) arrangement has shifted many workplace pensions away from the defined benefit (DB) arrangement (Robertson-Rose, 2019). DB pensions provided a guaranteed income comparable to the worker’s salary, whereas the DC scheme provides a pot of money that is dependent on investment returns (Robertson-Rose, 2019). This shift from a guaranteed income increases the risk of inadequate pension provision to the worker rather than the organisation and may leave a lot of workers with insufficient funds in their pension pot to support their retirement, possibly forcing some workers into career longevity without planning for it. The benefit of DC arrangements does mean that individual pension pots can move with the worker and allows them more freedom to move their career. Moving from DB to DC pension arrangements has created a broken link between pre and post retirement income (Robertson-Rose, 2019), which will likely change the way people plan for their retirement. The shift from DB to DC has also been found to effect the relationship between worker and employer, moving from a traditional mindset of loyalty and job security to a more transactional relationship (Robertson-Rose, 2019). This transactional relationship is thought to increase job turnover and has initiated the increased use of contract positions (Fudge & Strauss, 2015). “The shift from DB to DC plans may be viewed as simply another component of the ongoing trend toward more transactional employment” (Westerman & Sundali, 2005, p.101).

The UK state pension was created through the National Insurance Act 1946 in which a state pension was created for males at age 65 and females at age 60 (UK Government, n.d.-b). In 2018 the state pension age was increased to 65 for both males and females, and then to 66 in 2020 with a further increase to 67 in 2027 (UK Government, n.d.-a). Research by the Official National Statistics carried out in 2015 found for those working past state pensions age, over half did carry on working because they wanted work, and 15% felt they had to work due to financial obligations. Their research highlighted that there is a need for further exploration into the reasons why people will work past state pension age. Reasons for working past retirement age are felt to differ due to socio-economic status (Statistics, 2019), as some people will have financial security to support their retirement, whereas others may be fully dependent on state pensions. Due to increased longevity and the growing demographics of people aged over 65, there will be a pressure on governments to support state pensions and challenges to be able to provide financial support for retirees.

Pension laws and regulations are challenging for most people to understand (Mayrhofer et al., 2007) and this will impact on the informed decisions individuals will make. There is evidence to suggest that some individuals are aware that their pension provision will not be adequate and they will required to make additional pension provision to maintain their standard of living (Robertson-Rose, 2019). The majority of younger people do not think that there will be state pension for them by the time they retire (Tait, 2018). It is anticipated that people in their 40's would be expected to work into their 70's and those in their 20's could be working into their 80's (Gratton & Scott, 2017) to meet the financial needs of life longevity. Workers who are below average incomes may be more likely to suffer from post retirement poverty due to exclusion from pension schemes or inadequate cover (Fudge & Strauss, 2015). Those less likely to be in a UK pension scheme are part-time employees or workers on low incomes (Office for National Statistics, 2019). The impact and potential gaps in pension provision for older workers along with the ageing demographics will mean that there will be a need for people to create income for a longer period than the 'traditional' retirement age will allow. This has prompted the need to research and provide more knowledge and guidance of longevity of career and career management in older workers as essential for all workers.

Pension reform is a global issue and most developed countries have been looking at pension reform for the last few decades (Daykin & Lewis, 1999). Reform will include a variety of ideas, some countries like the UK will be increasing their retirement age, or looking for workers to provide their own personal pension provision (Daykin & Lewis, 1999). As can be seen the changing pension provisions in the UK are impacting the worker and employer relationship. The lines between income generation pre and post 'normal retirement age' are blurring. There is also a risk for many in that they may not have the finances to meet their longevity of retirement years. For those on lower salaries, paying the default option of 5% of earnings into an auto enrolment scheme will not provide enough retirement income and on reaching pre-retirement year, may realise they need to create income for post the traditional retirement age.

For many, the realisation that they must be responsible for creating their own retirement plan is dawning and changing their standard of living or providing longevity of their career may be options to consider (Zappalà et al., 2008). This awareness of pension provision and demographic shifts brings to sharp focus the need to examine options for later life career management including career paths for older workers and organisational support for older workers.

1.4 Later Life Career Management

The need to support workers and organisations to respond to the 'Silver Tsunami'. However there is little research available to manage or understand this change in relation to career longevity or career transitions of older workers (Rice, 2015). This highlights an important gap for researchers to look at how career theory can support older workers. Due to the increased number of older workers wanting to extend their career, there is an interest in studying career trends for this demographic to meet societal, economic, and socio-economic macro trends. This research focuses on how workplaces and career support industries can create more age friendly career options; "The career construction of older workers is therefore is no longer a niche topic but of interest for research and practice like" (Fasbender, Wöhrmann, Wan & Klehe., 2019, p.24). Well-designed interventions which support later life career options, will enable organisations to develop more open, trusting conversations and foster the development of more meaningful psychological contracts (Bal, Jansend, Velde, Lange & Rosseau, 2010). Mid-life career reviews are felt to be essential for many especially those who only had career advice when leaving school but there is not a one-size all approach to managing a mid-career review (McNair, 2015). Research from the broader careers field provides a useful starting point for example, the research examining career choices such as 'contemporary careers' and 'recareering' may aid our understanding of older worker career needs. Contemporary careers are "an individual's work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside organisation, which form a unique pattern over individual's life span" (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009, p.1543). By understanding career needs and being more agile in how they manage older workers, organisations can be more informed to manage knowledge drain/transfer and talent loss from their organisations.

1.5 Recareerists – Who is recareering and why?

There are several career options available for workers and possible contemporary career choices made by workers who want to look at non-occupational routes. There has been research on why people may continue to work post retirement which include reasons such as financial factors, work values, social engagement, self-enhancement and stability (Fasbender, Deller, Wang et al., 2014; Fasbender, Wang, Voltmer et al., 2016; Wöhrmann, Fasbender & Deller, 2016). However, there is some research that suggests that people do not want to continue in their same job into later retirement but choose to 'recareer'. "Recareering is embarking on a new career in a new industry later in life, after leaving a long-term primary career" (Rice, 2015, p.7). While recareering is not a new phenomenon – with career changes examined for many workers, less is known about recareering in later life. The true definition of recareering does represent older workers who are starting a new career with clear career goals and intentions (Johnson et al., 2009). Workers have traditionally stayed in one organisation or industry for as long as possible and phased out of their work via retirement at age 65 (Rice, 2015), however many older workers are extending their working life which can include via the option of a recareer. Daniel Pink (2001) names workers who have left organisational roles as 'free agents' and defines them as "people who are working untethered from a large organisation. The 'free-agent' includes freelancers, e-lancers, self-employed professionals, and proprietors of small businesses. The reasons for recareering can be due to lack of opportunities for older workers within their industry, the want to do something new, or because of financial needs (Johnson, et al.,2009), or to keep being productive or develop a better work life balance (Gratton & Scott, 2017). "The phenomenon of recareering in later life is new, and very little has been written about it in the existing academic literature" (Rice, 2015, p.8), demonstrating that there is a gap in knowledge for this cohort of recareerists. This gap is further enhanced with the lack of career theory, or adult development theory supporting recareering or for older worker career decisions (Rice, 2015), which creates a lack of understanding the psychological impact of this career stage. Psychological disposition is considered as an influence on career transition decisions, including role identity, coping strategies, resilience, personal response to adverse conditions and attachment to role/work identity (Van Solinge, 2014). Although a second career has gained interest for a few decades in certain fields, such as military, professional sports, aviation and law enforcement where people are forced to retire early (Rice, 2015), there is limited research in those who choose to leave their occupational role for an independent career (Biemann, Zacher & Feldman, 2012). Independent careers are when an individual takes ownership of their career as opposed to being dependent on an organisation to plan their career are becoming more popular (Rodrigues, Guest, Oliveira & Alfes, 2015), with 24% of workers aged over 50 moving to self-employment with another 12% moving to be self-employed with their previous employer (Johnson & Lewis, 2009).

1.6 Organisational Support for Older Workers

Workforce ageing is considered a defining social issue of the 21st century (Martinez, Nelson & Craig, 2007). Older workers are becoming a 'dominant demographic group' in the workforce so more understanding of solutions for them has created a need for further understanding (Phillipson & Smith, 2005; Riach, 2009). Dealing with an ageing workforce is a new challenge for organisations and for the field of Organisational Psychology. Truxillo and Fraccaroli (2013) note "facing the issues related to the ageing workforce offers an exciting new focus for the field of work and organisational psychology, and it is imperative that we stay ahead of the curve to address this issue" (p.251). Organisations are not thought to be prepared for longevity of career (Gratton & Scott, 2017), and this lack of preparation provides a gap for Occupational Psychology to provide research and evidence based practice and guidance to support recruitment and retention of older workers. Age friendly work practices for older workers can include equal opportunity for training and development, knowledge transfer programmes, career development, life course development, flexible working practices, health promotion and workplace design (Frerichs, Lindley, Aleksandrowicz, Baldauf & Galloway, 2012). Age friendly work practices may aid improved retention or by considering new work arrangements to suit the needs of all workers, and not those who just want to stay in a permanent full-time capacity.

By being more age aware of their workers, organisations will also be responding more effectively to the demographic changes in both their employees and customers by being age friendly, thus retaining or improving their competitive stance through knowledge retention and by representation through their employees of their customer base (Kluge & Krings, 2008). Recognising that workers may be expecting longevity from their career brings a lens on workplaces to consider how they can provide more age friendly career. Organisations that wish to improve their retention or attraction for older workers could benefit from thinking of how to support career exploration to improve engagement at this time of their career (Brown et al., 2012).

1.7 Summary

There are macro level factors such as demographics and pension provision that influence why workers may want or need to extend their career. Despite the 'silver tsunami' approaching retirement, it appears that organisations are not set up as effectively as they could be to support this growing demographic of older workers. Many older workers are unemployed or underemployed (Paullin, 2014). As such, many individuals are taking their career into their own hands with a demand for longer career (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013), however, less is known about the individual and psychological mechanisms at play. This lack of awareness impacts the career support available to older workers from organisations or from other parties such as coaches, networks and even from the Organisational Psychology field.

Organisations will need evidence and guidance to help with the creation of more age friendly and age aware workplaces. This research aims to contribute to the gap on understanding later life career choices by focusing on understanding the cohort of workers who leave an organisational job to recareer prior to retirement age. In understanding, organisations support career planning needs for their workers whilst allowing the organisations to be more age friendly in responding to career trends for older workers.

1.8 Research Questions and Aims

What are the contextual influences on the decision to recareer from an occupational role to a contemporary career for workers aged over 50?

The aim of the systematic literature review within this thesis was to explore the research regarding why workers aged over 50 may recareer from an occupational role prior to retirement age to explore a contemporary career rather than move to another organisational role. More specifically, to explore what is known about the experiences of ‘older workers’ who opt for a second contemporary career away from a traditional organisational career.

The empirical research within this thesis is to explore the contextual factors that influence workers aged over 50 decision to recareer to a contemporary career based on the sharing of a retrospective view of recareerists.

Chapter 2 - Methodology Chapter

2.1 Epistemological Approach

To consider the epistemology of one's research, the first criteria is to be clear about the question your research is asking (Willig, 2008). Due to the gap identified in the research for older workers, this study aims to understand individual's perception of their recareering experience though interpreting the stories shared through an interview format. Career decisions are felt to be more complex in the 21st century and are no longer a simple job/person matching activity (Schultheiss, 2005). Career theory has focused on finding a job rather than consideration of the constructs of an individual's life and work (Bassot & Reid, 2013). The context for each individual decision is a consideration to understand their decision and life experiences which creates a need for a constructivist approach (Schultheiss, 2005). A constructivist paradigm informs the context for the question for this research and for the observation and understanding of each person's decision-making process in their career transition. Critical theory is the foundation perspective for research (Given, 2008) and will influence the research core. Critical theory is about a critique of a current state (Given, 2008). This researcher has a clear foundational belief about the future of retirement and how later career options are managed within an organisational setting. The aim is to bring a critical perspective to later life career management and on social policies and practices that support the 'traditional retirement'.

The research paradigm incorporates components of ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Each of these components should be considered as part of any research to improve the application, practice, and engagement with academic debate. Methodology is considered further within this chapter, and methods within the empirical research paper. In this section, the epistemology and ontology will be discussed. Ontology is regarding the phenomenon to be studied in terms of its existence, and what is the nature of its reality (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). The key question to ask is there a single truth, or multiple truths? Epistemology is about how research will aim to uncover the knowledge to understand the reality (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

The empirical research study aims to allow space for exploring themes via the understanding from the individuals perceptive and so takes a interpretivism philosophy (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Phenomenology is a variation of interpretivism (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). A phenomenological philosophy would explore a deep view of the world from an individual perspective to the research topic, however, there is an ontological perspective that there is more than one possible reality or truth (Finlay, 2014). The view is that there are possible different realities about why a person would recareer rather than one absolute truth (Willig, 2008). The epistemological view of this researcher is that the realities of individuals cannot be measured but rather their realities will need to be interpretated. The combination of the epistemological and ontological perspective lead to the constructivist paradigm being the right fit for this research question. Constructivist approaches to understanding work in people's lives are an alternative paradigm to explore personal meaning is constructed within individual career context (Schultheiss, 2005).

Phenomenology is the study of our experience and how we experience. It is a separate field of philosophy, separate from ontology and epistemology, but should be considered as part of qualitative research (Smith, 2018). Phenomenology is "the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view" (Smith, 2018, p.1). Before engaging in phenomenological inquiry a researcher must engage phenomenological attitude and be able to push past what is already known from experience and existing knowledge (Finlay, 2014). There are parallels of phenomenology research with coaching practice (Finlay, 2016), and this researcher felt there was some influence on interviews within qualitative research. Phenomenology as practice as part of the reflexive journey whilst exploring philosophies, resonated in terms of openness, curiosity, relationship and dialogue (Mitchell, 2021). This learning has already impacted this researcher's practice as a coach and to some extent research practice in preparation for the interviews as towards the latter half of interviews, confidence in the research interview grew and there was more openness to the participants experience they were sharing. However, phenomenological inquiry requires that the "researcher's previous experience and beliefs are temporarily pushed aside to probe the "is-ness" of the phenomenon further" (Finlay, 2014 p.123). The ontological perspective is that there is more than one reality and although a phenomenological perspective was decided not to proceed with, a phenomenological attitude supported by reflexivity of the researcher bias will assist with the exploration of new knowledge (Mitchell, 2021).

2.2 Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

"Undertaking a review of the literature to provide the best evidence for informing policy and results from research undertaken in any discipline, is a key research objective for the respective academic and practitioner communities" (Tranfield, Denyer & Smart, 2003, p.207). It is essential for any researcher to have awareness of what is already known about their topic to then inform what should be the focus for their research (Rojon, McDowall & Saunders, 2011). Academic advancement builds on previous work and part of academic work is to understand and know where knowledge is and where it has reached so we then know where to work from (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Scientific work should be valid, reliable and repeatable, and this should include the review into existing work (Xiao & Watson, 2019).

The definition for a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is “A specific methodology that locates existing studies, selects and evaluates contributions, analyses and synthesises data, and reports the evidence in such a way that allows reasonably clear conclusions to be reached about what is and is not known” (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009, p.671). A SLR is a methodology that has been adapted from the medical profession to synthesise research, a particular hypothesis or question that is transparent and can be reproduced (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Although the roots of SLR are for medical research, it has been adapted by many other fields including management studies and psychology (Senivongse, Bennet & Mariano, 2017). The discipline of using SLR has evolved from the medical profession and it is felt that that the field of organisational studies should learn from other fields that have used SLR as part of their evidence based approach to research (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Part of the doctoral programme is to learn new academic and evidence-based techniques. Understanding how SLR’s have become part of the evidence-based approach within occupational psychology was interesting and I felt it was essential to my own professional development to engage in the application and learning of SLR methods.

A literature review can be a stand-alone piece or as a background for an empirical study (Xiao & Watson, 2019). A background review is often used to inform decisions for further research by identifying a gap in the theoretical knowledge. It is recommended that a SLR is completed prior to an empirical research so some of the findings from the SLR can be used a background research for empirical research (Xiao & Watson, 2019). The SLR for this study was completed as part of a thesis so the purpose was to meet the requirements of the doctorate programme, but also as a background for the empirical research.

The mitigation of researcher bias is one of the core benefits of a SLR. Bias is mitigated through the process involved in identifying, appraising and synthesising all the relevant studies for a research topic (Rojon et al., 2011). Through the SLR process all details of how research is identified, appraised and synthesised is recorded, which supports transparency and also enables replication of the search (Rojon et al., 2011). Research bias was mitigated during this SLR through clarity over the research question to ensure the question being asked provided clear direction for the SLR methodology. Each step of the data analysis and the results were also checked by supervisors. Researcher bias often found in a traditional literature review can occur because of conscious or unconscious preference to a particular, author, journal, or article. Completing a quality assessment on the final articles can further mitigate this bias.

The challenge for SLR's is that they are time consuming and take months to complete (Rojon et al., 2011). Questions arise as to whether a SLR is worth the time and effort in the field of organisational behaviour (Rojon et al., 2011). To answer this question: Are the benefits of a SLR worth it compared to the other forms of research traditionally completed within the social sciences? Firstly, it is important to really clarify what makes a review systematic "A review earns the adjective systematic if it is based on a clearly formulated question, identifies relevant studies, appraises their quality, and summarises the evidence by use of explicit methodology. It is the explicit and systematic approach that distinguishes systematic reviews from traditional reviews and commentaries" (Khan, Kunz, Kleijnen & Antes, 2003, p. 118). The difference between a SLR and a literature review is that is has clear principles for research and what will be included and excluded for the search (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). A traditional literature review attempts to identify what has been written on a subject or topic but does not have a formal methodology so does not have the transparency and replication of a SLR (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Bias is less likely to be mitigated, as the research is led by researcher bias in terms of what journals to search or which articles to pick from, or which theories/methodologies they are familiar with therefore leading to a possible biased review and 'the file drawer phenomena' (Davies, 2000). Within the traditional literature review there is not an attempt to seek a general or cumulative view of the research (Davies, 2000), as would occur with the methodology of a SLR. The term 'Meta-analysis' is attributed to Gene Glass (1976) who described it as 'the statistical analysis of a large collection of analysis results from individual studies for the purpose of integrating the findings' (Davies, 2000. p.368). A meta-analysis can create a good level of insight and research for other researchers as it gives a 'solid starting point' for others interested in the same topic (Paré, Trudel, Jaana et al., 2015). A meta-analysis can have clarity about what research is selected and why it is selected, so can also support the replication of a SLR, however there is still a possibility of researcher bias in terms of the selection (Davies, 2000). The methodology for a meta-analysis is not a rigorous one so clarity over inclusion and exclusion may not be as explicit (Davies, 2000).

There has been a rise in the use of SLR's since the increase of evidence based practice in the 1990's (Dixon-Woods, Bonas, Booth et al., 2006). A SLR can be defined as an 'evidence based research method' (Senivongse et al., 2017). However, there are criticisms of the use of SLR within the social sciences due to the application of a process developed for the medical field (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Some of the criticisms that are found in the replication of this methodology are that the ontological and epistemological position can differ between fields and therefore there are questions as to whether the theory from one field can be applied within another field (Tranfield et al., 2003). With the increase in evidence-based practice for organisational behaviour, then the discipline of evidence-based work is realised and accepted from the medical field. The ontology and epistemological stance have therefore even more support for ensuring clarity in developing the research question. The understanding of the use of SLR and its foundations has helped with this researcher's understanding the link between epistemology and methodology.

Answering the question is a SLR worth it for organisational behaviour, research found three benefits (Rojon et al., 2011). Firstly, compared to a traditional literature review, the results from an SLR do result in transparency, explicitness, and replicability. Secondly. using a panel to review the research question does improve the academic rigor. Finally, inclusion and exclusion criteria ensures quality whilst not departing from the research question (Rojon et al., 2011).

From a personal point of view the engagement in a supported learning environment to really learn about SLR was invaluable. It helped understand why it should be used and what engagement in the process felt like. As a research practitioner I felt I had a good awareness of evidence-based practice, but this can be seen as more of a practitioner led view. With the awareness of SLR I now feel both my future research and practitioner work will be clearer in terms of its evidence-based values, systems and methodology.

2.3 Empirical Study Methodology

Methodology is the approach engaged to study the research topic, as opposed to 'method' which is specific research techniques (Silverman, 1993). Methods are discussed in detail in the SLR and Empirical paper chapters. This section will provide an overview of the selected methodology and bases of decision that influenced choice of methods used.

In deciding on methodology, there is a view that positivism is linked clearly with quantitative methodologies as there is an observable reality (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Qualitative research methodology would suit a study which is researching variables and factors within a context (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Interpretivism has a sensitivity towards the meaning from the individual and assumes that the meaning is subjective (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). It is the individual meaning and view that is to be explored within this research as new insights into why individuals recareer is the main curiosity leading this research.

Within the SLR studies that used interview techniques, one applied Moustakas's (1994) Modified Kaam method of data analysis (Rice, 2015) and the other used constructivist grounded theory (Kim, 2014). Therefore, there is not an established methodology to follow for this research. Different methodology was considered, including the examples from the SLR. The modified Kaam method had several steps and required an 'imaginative' look at data (Bednall, 2006), while Kim, (2013) used constructivist grounded theory which does allow for the generation of new theory to develop (Strauss & Corbin, 1994) and is practical and flexible (Charmaz, 2003). In my research of this methodology, there was a warning for novice researchers that the coding can become overwhelming and is subject to methodological errors (Hussein, Hirst & Osuji, 2014) which was a negative for using that method. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), which is another qualitative approach which aims to provide detailed examinations of personal lived experience (Smith & Osborn 2015), was considered for this research. IPA seemed to be suitable for emotionally laden research or that which was particularly unique (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Also, that it involved the researchers' interpretation (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014) and I have been conscious in my approach of challenging my own biases, this led me to 'Reflexive Thematic Analysis' as the methodology to support a constructivist paradigm. Thematic Analysis felt like the right approach and met the need for this research to explore themes or patterns in data with some flexibility, and yet still allowing detailed description of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The aim was to allow an open-minded and iterative approach (Frith & Gleeson, 2004). Reflexive Thematic Analysis allows a hands-on approach with a clear but flexible process (Braun & Clarke, 2006) whilst also allowing a chance for the researcher to be hands on with the data and contribute to a domain of knowledge by locating existing knowledge within the study and challenging it too

(Sage, 2019). Reflexive Thematic Analysis allows for an awareness of the researchers role in the production of knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2019), and with the reflexive element being an essential part of the Doctoral journey, this method felt like the correct fit for this research.

2.3.1 Interviews

A small number of participants were studied through semi-structured interviews and observation to identify shared patterns in the meanings of the experience of their recareering journey. There is limited research using a phenomenological research approach to study later life careers (Rice, 2015). This approach will allow an exploration of the individuals experience of recareering and allow an understanding of reasons for recareering. Many studies in the SLR were based on large data collection sets that were analysed, however, these did not focus on the job choice of the participants (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2004; Cahill, Gianrea & Quinn, 2006; Kautonen, Kibler & Minniti, 2017; Van Solinge. 2014). The research that included interviews focused on workers that were classed as 'professionals' identified as having a third level education (Rice, 2015; Kim, 2013; Dendinger et al., 2005). There is a gap in interview-based research that will allow exploration into older workers who have recareered and with more focus on their roles they are transitioning from.

Other research on older workers has often used interviews to explore and inform research (Rice, 2005, Bimrose et al., 2013). I wished to use established research methods, applying this approach within a focused cohort of recareerists that has not been studied. The cohort selected are workers who have left an occupational role for a contemporary career without a professional identity. This cohort have been identified as non-professional workers due to the absence of professional associations to which they are a member of (Moliner, Martínez-Tur, Peiró, Ramos & Cropanzano, 2011). Interviews were used as the primary method of data collection. They were used to produce the data through the interaction between the participant and the researcher (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). A semi-structured interview process allowed an exploration of shared patterns in the meanings of the experience of the recareerists (Moustakas, 1994).

Although protean and boundaryless career models were explored as theoretical underpinnings to this research, there are some challenges to how protean careers and boundaryless careers should be used (Rodrigues et al., 2015). Some research focused on protean and boundaryless careers refer to individuals having particular 'mindsets' or 'attitudes' (Briscoe, Henagan, Burton et al., 2012), whilst some research refers to protean and boundaryless 'orientations' (Baruch, 2014). This research explored how workers perceive their career transition as to whether it is a mindset where career decisions come from an individual's value base (Briscoe et al., 2012) or if it is an orientation which means the individual takes responsibility for their own career and its transformation, rather than it being an organisations responsibility (Baruch, 2014). Surveys based on these theories were decided not to be applicable as the exploration of workers views and their experience was the focus of this research.

Interviews were selected as the preferred data collection method for the qualitative research. Although a face-to-face interview is the preferred option, and what is considered the ‘gold standard’ (Saarijärvi & Bratt, 2021), the interviews had to be conducted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions in force at the time. A face-to-face interview allows both the interview and interviewee to be physically present and direct as there is not any technical interference (Saarijärvi et al., 2021). Technical challenges were evident in two interviews that were unable to be included due to sound issues that meant transcription of the interviews were not possible. During the time when interviews were carried out there were travel restrictions, therefore the option for video interviews were supportive of managing personal safety and abiding by UK restrictions. The benefit was that there was a global reach to the sample supported with people being more comfortable with the use of online video conferencing software. It does create a socio-economic bias for participants as internet access, as well as camera and microphone access were required to be able to participate (Saarijärvi et al., 2021).

The research project was subject to ethical approval from Birkbeck University of London, and ethical approval was granted in November 2020. As a chartered occupational psychologist, BPS guidelines also support the research process including consent, confidentiality and ensuring participants welfare was considered at all stages. Confidentiality measures were undertaken for the online interviews, although as the person was on camera, it would not be obvious if another person was in the room (Saarijärvi et al.,2021). The participants for this age group were over 50 and there was an assumption that they would have a strong enough voice or confidence to share if they were under any influence from others. There also was not a concern about sensitivity of topics that were to be addressed if the person did not have complete privacy. Microsoft Teams was selected for the software for the video due to its enhanced encryption and security measures. Further confidentiality for participants was considered in how to protect their identity. Pseudonyms were used in any write up and any demographic data was aggregated rather than reporting individually to protect any person being able to identify participants (Morse & Coulehan, 2015). As the sample of 15 is a small sample, individuals may be at risk of someone noticing what has been transcribed from the interview and then identifying the person through demographic data (Morse et al., 2015). A further measure of confidentiality was undertaken in reading through the findings with a perception of the participants and a mindset considering what their view would be to ensure they would feel their confidentiality had been protected (Morse et al.,2015).

2.3.2 Recruitment

In terms of sample size, “qualitative sample sizes are large enough to allow the unfolding of a ‘new and richly textured understanding’ of the phenomenon under study, but small enough so that the ‘deep, case-oriented analysis of qualitative data is not precluded’” (Vasileiou et al., 2018, p.2). Considering saturation of themes is important to ensure adequate data is collected. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) analysed 60 interviews and found that after 12 interviews, saturation would be reached. Green and Thorogood (2004) suggested that for interview-based studies in which the research question is specific that no further information would be gathered in participant numbers over 20. Taking this research as a level of advice for sample numbers, the number of interviews for the empirical study was agreed to be 15.

Part of the sampling design was to look at workers who could be classed as ‘non professional’. This was decided as there was a gap in researcher from people recareering from roles that were not classed as professional (Rice, 2015; Petriglieri et al., 2018) It is a challenge to measure define what is classed as a professional role or professional identity (Rutter & Duncan, 2010). The support for this inclusion in the sampling was to consider how individuals may manage a transition when their professional identity may be linked to their organisational role as opposed to a ‘profession’ (Eby, Butts & Lockwood, 2003). A professional identity assumes a level of growth and development in one’s profession via their network and engaging in learning through conferences (Rutter & Duncan, 2010) so it was also interesting to explore a persons social capital and network away from a profession member network. The criteria that has been used to identify non-professional workers is the absence of professional associations in which they are a member of (Moliner, Martínez-Tur, Peiró, Ramos & Cropanzano, 2011). This is the criteria applied for context for this research.

In this initial research, it was hoped that there would be access to more people who would have a work identity to include ‘blue collar’ workers. On reflection the recruitment process did not accommodate this requirement explicitly. Also research found that socioe-conomic differences were less impactful on later life careers, and that experience had a greater significance (Mayrhofer et al., 2007) so although research on different career options is important, the importance of socio-economic differences for older workers may not be as critical as it would for early career choices. The majority of participants responded to recruitment information posted via LinkedIn which is a professional networking site and there is some bias in the make-up of users as research regarding US users found that only 9% of people with a high school only education use LinkedIn (Anderson & Smith, 2018). There is a bias in regards to age as 60% of LinkedIn users are between age 25 and 34 and only 3.1% of users are over 55 (Statista, 2021). Recruitment was also completed via Facebook groups, but this did not gain the expected responses. The implications of the recruitment for study findings are discussed in the empirical chapter.

2.3.3 Thematic Analysis

As discussed, following the analysis of the philosophical stance, Reflexive Thematic Analysis (TA) was decided on the chosen method. Thematic Analysis is a flexible method that can be applied across different methods and methodology (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic Analysis will support explorational studies like this study and allow research in understanding in detail a person's experience of reality so that we can gain understanding of the phenomenon in question (McLeod, 2001).It also supports the constructivist approach of understanding the narrative from individuals to consider, themes, meaning and life constructs in career research (Bassot & Reid, 2013).

The process and description of Reflexive Thematic Analysis resonated most clearly for this study and was selected as current preferred methodology as it was seen as a 'foundation method for qualitative analysis' (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and one that is 'flexible, straightforward and accessible' (McLeod, 2011. p.146). Reflexive Thematic Analysis has a clear role for the researcher subjectivity to be seen as a resource within qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Although there are some themes emerging through the SLR process, this is for a specific group of older professional workers and the themes had not created a theory to base further research on so this methodology allows space for creativity in developing themes for a new area of study (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The process has a systematic and rigorous coding approach yet, is fluid in allowing flexibility in the development of themes (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Thematic Analysis is flexible but there is a need for some specificity in how you use it (Braun & Clarke, 2006). There are many ways that Thematic Analysis can be applied but there are three approaches to consider as part of the theme development. The choice is between 'Coding Reliability Thematic Analysis', Codebook Thematic Analysis', or 'Reflexive Thematic Analysis' (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Coding Reliability Thematic Analysis is linked to a positivist approach and would incorporate a structured thematic codebook (Clarke & Braun, 2018). As there were not pre-determined themes, 'Coding Reliability Thematic Analysis' was not applicable (Braun & Clarke, 2019) as the aim was to support a more organic approach to coding. There was a pull in the decision as to whether the choice for methodology for this research was between 'Codebook Thematic Analysis' or 'Reflexive Thematic Analysis'. Codebook is a more structured approach in which the coding process is guided by a coding framework (Clarke & Braun, 2018). Codebook TA requires some element of early codebook (Braun & Clarke, 2019) so this was not applicable to this study. "Reflexive TA needs to be implemented with theoretical knowingness and transparency; the researcher strives to be fully cognisant of the philosophical sensibility and theoretical assumptions informing their use of TA; and these are consistently, coherently and transparently enacted throughout the analytic process and reporting of the research" (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p.594). Reflexive TA is what

Braun and Clarke feel is most applicable to their view of Thematic Analysis with the researchers role being at the 'heart of the research' (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Reflexive TA allows for the subjectivity of a researcher to be used as a resource in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This view of researcher subjectivity being part of the research requires that researcher is active in their reflexivity and creates space for analysis and debate around questions in their research. The methodology of TA is 'rigorous and systematic' in the approach to coding, however it is also fluid and flexible in how it can inform theory based on the interpretation and application of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The flexibility is what allows the researcher to consider and reflect on the elements of their TA and intalls the active element of the researcher role (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The reflexivity element of TA is essential in that this is the practice of critical interrogation of why, how and what is considered as part of the research project (Braun & Clarke, 2022)

2.4 Reflexivity Statement

In approaching the research as what felt was from an evidence-based psychologist practitioner, it was clear that there was a challenge in understanding the theories and disciplines of academic research. This learning process has informed practitioner identity in ways that were not expected. As a researcher, your research can be influenced by the personal reflexivity and the epistemological reflexivity (Willig, 2008). This journey to understand the theoretical requirements of research has been challenging but rewarding. There were decisions to make towards the ontological and epistemological beliefs which come from the researcher and their belief in the questions to be asked. From an ontological stance, I believed that there were multiple realities, and that people could decide for recareering on numerous levels. This comes from the evidence-based practice of understanding workplace behaviours at an individual, group, organisation, or macro level. This view also informed the choice of IGLOO framework for the analysis (Nielsen et al., 2018). The epistemological stance was that the reality of participants would need to be interpreted. This was because there was no established theory for later life recareering that could built on, so the individual's story should be interpretated to inform a space which this researcher felt was currently under researched. Once there is a confidence in epistemological and methodology viewpoints then the research philosophy could be decided. At this stage there was also space to reflect more on practitioner experience and understand their own professional identity in a new light. Understanding the role of reflexivity as a practitioner has recognised that the ontological view that there is more than one reality and the epistemology that reality does need to be interpreted creates a new space for coaching and consulting as a psychologist. The research for this doctorate has informed practice and will continue to do so.

As part of the research, it was essential to understand the viewpoint as a researcher was being brought into all stages of the doctorate programme. Reflexivity is a practice of self-awareness to provide a lens of understanding the role of the researcher and the subject that is being researched (Ibrahim & Edgley, 2015). There are different aspects of reflexivity to consider, personal reflexivity and interpersonal reflexivity (Ibrahim & Edgley, 2015). The researchers personal reflexivity is the considerations of personal 'presumptions, suppositions and reactions' to the research and interpersonal reflexivity is the interactions between the researcher and participants (Ibrahim & Edgley, 2015).

I recognised that understanding my own viewpoint and biases was critical to the interview and analysis process. My interpretation of the stories that were shared meant I was in the research. As Victoria Clarke stated "Acknowledging your role and taking responsibility feels like a more accountable approach"(Lainson, Braun & Clarke, 2019, p.8). One of the appeals of Thematic Analysis is that it does embrace the subjectivity of the researcher as a resource to be utilised in the research project.

Early reflections during this doctorate programme were to consider the reasons for this research. My background is in financial services, and I have an interest but also a good level of knowledge in pensions and retirement planning. This knowledge has led me to be aware over the last 20 years of the challenges to 'normal retirement age' and that globally and in organisations there was a lack of understanding of the need to reconsider later life career choices. I believe my interest in the subject to be a positive contribution and I know my knowledge will give me insights that other psychologists would maybe not see. Other researchers can and will take different insights and findings from similar research (Finlay, 2002). However, I realise that this experience also brings with it bias and shortcut of thinking as there are many influences at each context level used for the empirical research. Some researchers will select certain contextual influences as part of their career model usage or development (Mayrhofer et al., 2007), and I note my own background created a lens for the macro analysis for this research.

An example of interpersonal reflexivity during the interviews was that I noticed clearly when someone discussed their financial knowledge. I felt a sense of being impressed or maybe more honestly it was surprise when someone discussed this. As a female independent business woman who has been the breadwinner for her family, I did feel an affinity when especially female participants commented on their financial knowledge. I am conscious during my coding, that areas like this that stuck in my memory may also impact on how I strongly I then assessed that theme. However, my subjectivity can also be seen as an opportunity (Finlay, 2002), as I was could be more likely to ask the question to uncover this information, or to be able to interact with the participant. I note that when participants discussed their finance, I was able to interact and react with positivity whereas another research may have found that the discussion of ‘money’ triggered a more negative bias, and their reaction would have been different.

A personal bias that I brought to this research was that I have been self-employed for a decade. I actively created a portfolio career for myself. I found that this experience allowed me to notice when people were talking about a portfolio career, even, if they had not been aware of this themselves. I hope that this experience helped draw out those conversations. The negative bias from my experience of being self-employed for 10 years, I should have been more conscious that the participants were only in the first year or two of the self-employment journeys. This stage can be tough as there is steep learning curve. In my view I could see the journey, which was past that steep learning curve, but maybe by being more conscious of their view I could have expanded more on their experience rather than using my optimistic lens.

I am the youngest of a large Irish working-class family, I am the first of my family to reach this level of education. My working-class roots are part of my formative identity formation and I know this led me to want to study a non-professional sample. I did not reach the aim, and I reflected that my own network is other professionals, and my privilege clouded the view of the work I needed to do to reach the sample I wanted. In the research, I have assessed the interpretation of professional and how we can consider what is professional in this era of the knowledge worker. I realise that I was looking for those who made a career transition without a professional network or professional identity. I also realised, that part of the working-class history is challenged as I work in a world that is no longer really working class. This reflection is disappointing and will stay with me to inform future research and engagement. However, this awareness allowed me to consider how we would study this group and if class or socio-economic status can be studied for older workers. For older workers work experience was found to be more relevant than socio-economic status and this is partly what my own sampling exercise found. Also does class really matter for a contemporary worker? How can it be assessed if salary is no longer an indicator of class or socio-economic status (Mayrhofer et al., 2007) if we consider salary of people in a role such as a politician or a CEO of a manufacturing firm. Both could have very different salaries which are not in line with their possible social class distinction. Class concept is more related to a person’s identity (Mayrhofer et al., 2007), hence this is probably a view I as the researcher brought to my research, as further reflection is that my own network is not the same as the class I identify with. This knowledge has opened an awareness to further consider the impact of class transition within a professional network and within a professional career and has been a very interesting reflection that I wish to continue to explore post this current research.

This also links to another reflection which I accept is a key limitation of my work. I am a Diversity and Inclusion practitioner and feel I am passionate about inclusive practice, but I have not fully engaged with what I believed were core work values to me. First for my sample, but also, I did not purposefully recruit for diversity. I noted that the SLR findings did not assess diversity of participants and I followed this and included it as part of the criteria (or lack of) for my sample. The challenges in securing participants, within the context of the pressures of the pandemic, may be in part attributable however I should have tried to be more inclusive. I now must acknowledge that my research is limited in the view from my privilege and did not account for race or culture diversity. This frustration had to be acknowledged, but then as part of the reflexive practice, I realised that this does not detract from the value of these findings for this specific population and therefore what I have found can contribute to my field of research. Although the researcher should reflect on self, this should not then impact the focus they have on the participants and the insights to be drawn from the transcriptions that are being analysed (Finlay, 2002).

The transcription process requires layers of interpretation, in transcribing the spoken word, and then by applying meaning to the spoken and written word. Reflexivity is important within the transcription process as subjective interpretation of the text will be required by the researcher (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). What words are noticed will be from the researcher's perspective and influenced by human bounded awareness. As part of this research, the interviews were transcribed with an awareness that the interpretation of words and their meanings would be influenced by the researchers 'social, cultural, political and epistemological judgements' (Kvale, 1996). In the steps included in the transcription process there were decisions to be made. The choices made are important to describe for academic rigor and transparency (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). The choices were based on reflexivity by the researcher influenced by the depth of literary analysis expected from the epistemology stance and also by the ongoing knowledge developed throughout the research project. "As qualitative researchers, we understand that the researcher is a central figure who influences the collection, selection, and interpretation of data" (Finlay, 2002, p.531). When I first read this quote from Linda Finlay, I wondered about the validity of my research, if 'I' as a researcher was actually that influential, however, then, I realised asking this question was core to the reflexive process required. Using Thematic Analysis as a method does allow for flexibility in the methodology and space for reflexivity so the role of 'I' as a researcher could be examined. As a doctorate student, both self-reflection and reflexivity are a key part of the methodology.

Being open about each research decision has been a key part of my methodology. I have shared questions, decisions, learnings, and reflections in the methodology write up in this chapter and in the empirical research chapter. I have also shared questions about the validity of my research in the reflexive process report and during group meetings with my doctorate group and in supervision. Allowing external scrutiny of the methodology is a valuable part of reflexivity (Finlay, 2002). Showing your weakness and questions allows others to understand your perspectives and decisions. This then allows the researcher to understand your own perception of your research, hence then improving the quality of your research. If others can offer a view of your decision as well as offering their perception, then this is a more collaborative view which works towards developing our thinking and learning from each other's research. This mindset and approach to me then allows reflexivity to being part of the methodology but then it hopefully improves the validity of this qualitative research.

Chapter 3 - Systematic Literature Review Chapter

Transitioning from an occupational role to a 'contemporary career' for workers aged over 50

3.1 Abstract

The focus of this research is upon older workers and the reason for leaving an occupational role. Older workers are becoming a dominant demographic group in the workforce due to ageing populations. Older workers are engaging in recareering which means a decision made in later life to embark on a new career in a new industry, after leaving a long-term primary career (Johnson & Lewis, 2009). This review examines what is known about over 50's who have recareered. We examine the career theories informing research and explore the individual reasons for workers leaving an occupational role for a contemporary career.

2769 studies were identified using a systematic search of which eight met the inclusion criteria. Career theory supporting the research was limited and there was a lack of consistency in theory used. Six themes regarding recareering in older workers were identified: four antecedents of health, finance, formal/informal learning, and workplace influences and two outcomes of social network and intrinsic motives.

Findings highlight five priority areas for further research were identified including, use of modern career theory to understand the transition in older workers, more understanding of personal reasons for recareering, focus on those who have a non-professional identity, identity transition and its role in the transition, and the context of Covid-19 and its impact on numbers who are recareering.

3.2 Introduction

The focus of this research of is on 'older workers' which due to demographic shifts, pension provision and career longevity, have provided a lens for understanding more age friendly career options for the 'silver tsunami' of the ageing workforce. Even with this urgency of the tsunami that this demographic shift is causing, it is felt that that the understanding of the impact on career choices is still not clear (Wang et al., 2013). Demographic shifts in society have created an increase in age related research (Weber, Angerer & Müller, 2019) but not in terms of their mid and late career stages (Wang, Olson & Shultz, 2012). It is felt that there is a need for a deeper understanding of the solutions for older workers that will enable them to sustain work (Phillipson & Smith, 2005; Riach, 2009).

Early career theory focused on the promotional ladder (Weber, 1947) or individual differences in performance (Binet, 1905; Galton, 1892), or the Organisational Man (Whyte, 1956: Wang et al., 2012). Career theory as we know it evolved in the 1950's with theories such as life span development (Super, 1957) or age graded career stages (Schein, 1990). Most career theories have not focused on mid and late career decisions (Wang et al., 2012). Even life span theories saw mid-career as a time to maintain your career, and late career as a time of decline (Super, 1957), or as a time of maintenance until an older worker become obsolete through decline and disengagement (Schein, 1990).

20th century career theory has been focussed on organisational career, whether is how to begin your career or how to develop with person-organisation fit model (Schneider, 1987), or the RIASEC model which involved matching your personality to the correct work environment (Holland, 1995). There has been a reaction to the changing concept of what a career is since the 1990's with a view of the changing organisation structures and individual definition of career success (Biemann et al., 2012).

Many theories considering changing demographics and the individual view of career, make much of career theory that focuses on organisational career progression or is related to age stages feel irrelevant for this study of older workers. In general, career models have been the main focus of younger people with much less known about how older workers construct their career (Fasbender et al., 2019). Career management for older workers has had a focus on reasons for working such as a typology from Smyer and Pitt-Catsouphes (2007), where they proposed older workers will be either those who must work, those who want to work, or a mixture of the two.

As options for working life become more varied, there are more options for career choice and perceptions of career choice leading to more variety and individual responses (Handy, 1994).

There is more likely a series of shorter learning spans than the traditional career plan (Hall and Mirvis, 1995), which should inform a challenge to ageism in which we perceive the 'career age' for each career choice rather this biological age (Hall, 1996). These shorter spans lead to more mini stages of a career – with start, middle and end of these processes (Hall, 2004). Older workers in career transition may feel like they have fewer psychological resources than their younger counterparts and feel like there are more barriers to their career transition goals (Heppner, Multon & Johnston, 1994). The career needs for older workers require a different model accommodating their specific needs and challenges.

Career theory that has evolved over the last few decades have had an awareness of the continued 'potential for growth' and for career change for mid and late career (Wang et al., 2012). Career models have started to look at the aspect of mid career and take on that there is an on-going potential for learning, development, and growth (Wong et al, 2013). So much of the research on later life career has been in relation to early or late retirement behaviour rather than on career development.

This research will present a systematic review of research into later life career transitions from occupational roles and what career theory has informed the lens in how they are assessed. It will further review what has been assessed in terms of the decisions and different contextual influences on workers who have recareered.

3.2.1 Older workers

There is limited agreement on what age an individual is considered to be an 'older worker' (Charness, Czaja & Sharit, 2007). Researchers often use 55 or 65 years of age as a definition (Rupp, Vodanovich & Credé, 2005) Sometimes 45 years can be used to define older at work (Smyer & Pitt-catsouphes, 2007) or even 35 (Platman, 2003). Older age was generally viewed as the start of retirement old age as it was considered the start of old age, however, this is shifting (Statistics, 2019). Research into what organisational decision makers class as the age which someone is classed as older ranged from 28 to 75 with a mean age of 52.4 (Mccarthy, Heraty, Cross & Cleveland, 2014). Using a bimodal distributions, the most common indicator of an 'older worker' was aged 50 (Mccarthy et al., 2014). This common indicator of an older worker being aged 50+ was in line with the perceived expectation and was selected as the focused age group for this study. The use of age 50 to determine older workers has the advantage of being in line with the clarification used by the financial services industry and early retirement options (Platman, 2003), and this links to the context of this research having a lens of considering pension provision.

3.3 Career theory relevant for older worker recareerists

Career theories of the 20th century are felt to be less suited to the workforce requirements of the 21st century in which workers are having to adapt to employment trends and societal changes (Kim, 2014). There are several modern career theories that allow us to explore career decisions for older workers such as protean careers, boundaryless careers and contemporary careers. These models adopt a more holistic view of the person and their need for happiness and satisfaction and are less dependent on the organisation hierarchy (Wong et al, 2013). These careers models are recognising that there is a move away from the traditional occupational career and that there is a need to look at both subjective and objective career factors (Wang et al., 2012). Protean and boundaryless careers are presented in research as different ways to assess and study contemporary careers (Rodrigues et al., 2015). Both these theories are considered the most influential career theories in studying contemporary careers (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009) and are therefore used as a basis for exploring what theory has been used to study older workers.

3.3.1 Protean careers

"The career is dead – long live the career!" (Hall, 1996, p.8) was the infamous quote by Douglas Hall as he shared Protean Careers as a new career concept and an alternative to the traditional occupational career progression path. This theory suggested that a career goal was psychological success, pride and personal accomplishment which is achieved through the meeting of life goals (Hall, 1996). Protean evolved from Proteus who was a Greek god who could change at will to any form (Wong et al, 2013). A protean career is individually driven by a person and their own values rather than an organisation's reward structure (Hall, 2004). The key drivers are psychological success, personal satisfaction, and personal development (Hall, 2004).

Protean careers are when the individual takes responsibility for their career and not the organisational responsibility which would be expected for a traditional organisational role (Hall, 2004). The core values of a protean careerist are freedom and growth. Success in career is seen as subjective psychological success as opposed to the salary and position of an organisational career (Hall, 2004). Protean career theory is felt to address many of the contextual and organisational changes that we see in modern career studies (Wang et al., 2012).

Protean careers support the need for 'flexibility and autonomy' for older workers who are often more willing to take on a more flexible career option than their younger colleagues (Barrington & Hall, 2007). Although protean orientation was found to be higher with younger workers (Hall, 2004), older workers are often found to be able to take on a more flexible approach to their career due to changing financial commitments, health issues, career goals, and often a wish for more social availability time (Muller, Lange, Weigl, Oxfart & Heigden, 2013).

Protean career models support that career decisions are managed by and change is decided by employees/workers and should align with their own personal values and goals (Hall, 2004). This model shifts the view of the path to a traditional retirement, and instead, creates potential to view a new career stage for older workers where they can align their values and goals in life to their work goals (Shultz & Wang, 2011). Protean careers can be debated as to whether they are a state or trait, and therefore, some people are more naturally inclined to consider a career transition (Ibarra & Obodaru, 2016). There is a question of whether people are protean minded throughout their life or if they develop protean mindset as a result of their life experiences (Hall, 2004). These differing views present a challenge in studying protean careers but also an opportunity to study this within the demographics focus for this study of older workers to understand the context of their life experiences has a possible influence.

3.3.2 Boundaryless careers

Boundaryless careers were developed by Arthur and Rousseau (1996), and they stated that "…the Boundaryless career does not characterise any single career form, but, rather, a range of possible forms that defies traditional employment assumptions" (p.6). Career options have traditionally been focused on the organisation a person was 'bounded' to (Wang et al., 2013), and this theory reflects on this 'unbounding' of career planning away from one organisational bound. Arthur and Rousseau (1996, p. 6) state that the common factor is "one of independence from, rather than dependence on, traditional organisational career arrangements". Boundaryless careers are also felt to be across occupational or cultural boundaries (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). There has been debate around boundaryless careers, and Zeitz et al (2009) felt that the theory was taking people too far away from the organisation driven career and they suggested the term for this theory should be boundary crossing or boundary converging.

Research has focused on the physical mobility of boundaryless careers which are changes to employer and traditional hierarchy, but there has been less research regarding mobility and psychological boundaries (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Arthur, Khapova, and Wilderom (2005) looked at 80 articles that reviewed boundaryless careers and found 68 of articles considered objective and/or subjective career success. From this review it was felt that there has been an emphasis on physical mobility across boundaries in organisational terms, and not enough focus on psychological mobility and its link to physical mobility (Arthur et al., 2005).

Sullivan and Arthur (2006) presented a model for the boundaryless career with two dimensions of physical mobility and psychological mobility, creating four quadrants. The fourth quadrant represents a career with high physical and psychological mobility. An example provided for this quadrant is a consultant who changes employers regularly to build experience with a goal of starting their own consultancy business. This example reflects on mature employees who may be carving their career within organisational confines but with an independent mindset and could inform some thinking about older workers career planning.

Sullivan and Arthur quote “those with greater career competencies are more likely to experience more and have more opportunities for psychological and physical mobility than those with lower career competencies” (2006, p25). In addition, they propose that individuals who enhance their career competencies are therefore more likely to increase their opportunities for career choices. They did note that career competencies would have to be developed to then enhance psychological mobility which in turn would then support physical mobility.

3.3.3 Contemporary careers

Evidence suggests that older workers are engaging in activities known as ‘recareering’ (Rice, 2015). ‘Recareering’ means a decision made in later life to embark on a new career in a new industry, after leaving a long-term primary career (Johnson et al., 2009). Bridge employment thinking based on research from the 1990’s (Cahill et al., 2006), was the view of career change between occupational roles and a full exit from the workplace due to retirement. Bridge employment involves leaving an organisational role but still participating in the labour force between retirement from full-time work and complete workforce withdrawal (Wang et al., 2013). Bridge employment in terms of work choices “can be either in the same occupation or different occupations, on a part-time, temporary or full-time basis, and either in salaried modalities or self-employment/entrepreneurship form, and often involves a combination of fewer hours with greater flexibility, less workload, responsibility or stress, and fewer physical demands” (Topa, Alcover, Moriano & Depolo, 2014, p.226). Bridge employment may involve a ‘blurred’ exit from the workforce explained as ‘one in which there are repeated patterns of non-work, work and unemployment, and a ‘crisp’ exit was one that is represented as a single exit out of the workplace’ (Dendinger et al, 2005, p.22). Bridge employment is paid employment after a person has retired from their main occupational job but has not had a complete withdrawal from the workforce (Feldman, 1994). ‘Atchley’s (1989) continuity theory of ageing which suggests that bridge employment will create a continuity for workers who had ‘high career identification’ and not having a career role may feel psychologically stressful (Richardson & Kilty, 1991). Since the 1990’s, the concept of later life career, recareering and retirement has shifted considerably. Recareering is the change to a new type of work but without the view of it being a ‘bridge’ to retirement. Recareering has opened up further options for studying later life career transition options for pre/post retirement work as workers consider contemporary career options for their later life career stages.

Over the last few decades new contemporary career theories have evolved in response to the changing workplace which assume that workers are more mobile and self-directed in relation to their career management (Gubler, Arnold & Coombs, 2014). A growing number of workers have decided not to follow an ‘institutionalized career blueprint’ (Petriglieri, Petriglieri & Wood, 2018), and instead create a contemporary career. ‘Contemporary careers’ was suggested as a term to encompass the combined view of mobility, uncertainty and individual agency (Arthur, 2008). Contemporary careers are “an individual's work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside organisation, which form a unique pattern over individual's life span” (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009, p.1543) which allow a career to be viewed through all its stages and how it weaves and connects in a person’s life. Older workers who have a contemporary career may have different types of roles, jobs, and definitions of career success during their working life and may already be challenging the traditional boundaries of how career is viewed “Contemporary careers are characterized by discontinuities, such as non codified transitions between organisations and sectors” (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010, P.136).

The decision for workers to leave an organisational role to create a contemporary career is not a new concept. Charles Handy wrote about ‘second curve career’ which was about preparing for your second career before you reached plateau at your first career (Handy, 2002). Handy uses the Sigmoid Curve to represent a career and that the secret of growth is to start a new Sigmoid Curve before the first one starts to flatten or dip (Handy, 2002). He places an emphasis on taking responsibility for your own career and that we cannot rely on organisations or institutions to look after us (Handy, 2002). Charles Handy coined the phrase ‘portfolio career’ as part of his reflection on contemporary careers, and described it as a collection ‘bits and pieces of work”, supported with seeing life as a collection of groups and activities (Handy, 2002, p.71).

Contemporary careers provide an alternative perception to the traditional career model and aim to provide insight on alternatives to career management on the new varied ways of working – with a focus on older workers. Understanding personal motivation for recareering through the lens of contemporary career model allows some new insights for older worker recareering trends.

3.4 Rationale for the Present Study

The total number of people within the demographic of traditional retirement (65 years or older) will be larger than the working population in Europe within the next few decades. This group will make up 31.3% of the EU's population by 2100, compared to 19.8% in 2018 (European Commission, 2015). This increased longevity is accepted to have 'major implications' on a persons' career (Gratton & Scott, 2017) and to the labour force available to employers. Many companies are still working to the traditional career which includes full time employment with a hard stop at traditional retirement age of 65 (Gratton & Scott, 2017). Therefore, the primary research question of this review is to specifically examine the contextual factors and influences on the decision making leading to recareering on older workers. Context for career research has mostly focused on individual context for career choice with neglect towards the wider context (Gunz, Mayrhofer, & Tolbert, 2008). Career options should be considered with the context of the changing world and its impact on career decisions (Mayrhofer, Meyer & Steyrer, 2007). Macro trends such as pensions, demographic shifts and country specific legislation are possible macro influences. Dealing with an ageing workforce is a new challenge for organisations and for the field of Organisational Psychology so organisational and leadership influences should be considered. Group support and networks may impact opportunities and support for career shifts. Many individuals are taking their career into their own hands with a demand for longer career (Bimrose, McMahon, & Watson, 2013), however, less is known about the individual reasons for recareering.

A further objective of the study is to explore the career theory research regarding why older workers may leave an organisational job prior to retirement age to explore a contemporary career rather than move to another organisational role. Career theory has been challenged by changes in the way of working and in how both organisations and individuals are responding to the world of work with a need for theory to represent new realities (Lee, Kossek, Hall & Litrico, 2011). Career theory has evolved over the last few decades, but there has been limited amount of 'systemic research on later life career' (Wang et al., 2013). Studies specifically looking at contemporary careers following a move from a 'stable traditional system' are 'scarce' (Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2010), and gathering the research from scattered areas of study may allow space to collate what is known in terms of older worker recareerists. The protean (Hall, 1996) and boundaryless (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) career theories have become the most recognised felt to suit contemporary careers and are therefore theories to research to build knowledge of this cohort.

Therefore, this review aims to understand how new contemporary career options are being studied with modern career theory. Models can provide insights and support for the view of older workers managing career transitions. A review of existing literature may shed more light on the reasons why workers are leaving organisational roles and on what they are looking for in their mid and late career. A focus on career theories such as protean careers or boundaryless careers will be analysed to understand if they are being used to provide an insight to older workers career change.

Recareering in later life has some interest for post-retirement researchers (Fasbender, Deller, Wang & Wiernik, 2014; Fasbender et al., 2016; Wöhrmann et al., 2016), however there is much less known about the reasons for recareering prior to retirement so there is a gap in our knowledge about this cohort (Rice, 2015).

3.5 Study Objective and research questions

The primary review question to be asked is:

What is known about the experiences and decision of workers aged over 50 may recareer from an occupational role prior to retirement age to explore a contemporary career rather than move to another organisational role?

Further research questions to be asked are:

What are the contextual influences on the recareer decisions?

What career theory is used in research to support the analysis of recareerists?

3.6 Methodology

For this study a systematic approach was used as outlined in Briner & Denyer (2012), and as applied by Donaldson-Feilder, Lewis & Yarker (2019). 11 typical stages for the systematic approach were adapted for this study to include the following steps:

i) Identify and clearly define the question the review will address.
ii) Search the literature to locate relevant studies.
iii) Sift through all the retrieved studies to identify those that meet the inclusion criteria (and need to be examined further) and those that do not and should be excluded.
iv) Extract the relevant data or information from the studies.
v) Critically appraise the studies by assessing the study quality determined in relation to the review question.
vi) Synthesise the findings from the studies.
vii) Consider potential effects of publications or other biases.
viii) Write up report.
ix) PRISMA checklist was used to support the search procedure (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff et al., 2009)

As the review retrieved a small number of papers, a full meta-analysis was not possible. An exploratory synthesis was carried out to explore the methodological approach and the outcomes of each study. Findings are presented in a narrative form in the following section. A narrative form for synthesis allowed SLR to address and explore the aspects of each paper to build into a bigger picture in answer to the research question (Hammersley, 2001).

3.6.1 Search Strategy

A systematic search was completed in 2019 using three electronic databases which were EBSCOhost business source premier, Proquest ABI/INFORM Collection & ASSIA and PsycINFO. Keywords for the search were discussed and agreed with the research supervisors. Part of the exploration of the key terms was to review existing literature to ensure that there was applicable research to support the SLR process.

The key terms to search were as follows: work* or employ* (for employee or employed) to set the scene for studies that are based within the workplace AND old* (for old or older) OR middle-age OR ageing OR aged OR senior OR mature OR gray OR grey OR elderly OR later life, AND second career OR career transition OR career change OR later life career change

OR phased career OR mid-career OR career choice OR reemployment OR employment transition OR horizontal career change AND boundaryless OR protean OR contemporary career OR portfolio career OR independent career OR flexible career.

The key terms were entered in the search for each database selected.

Some further criteria were set. Only papers post 1995 were selected to ensure that research was relevant to more recent work trends and demographic shifts.

All papers were stored in a reference software system that managed the studies identified and removed any duplicate records.

3.6.2 Selection of papers for inclusion

The first screening of all papers was reviewed by assessing the title of the paper. Papers that were about retirement only or about transition related to ill health reasons were excluded. Any papers that did not focus on participants who were older adults were also not included. Abstracts were screened using the eligibility criteria outlined which had been developed through a study design based on SPIO framework – Study Design, Participants, Interventions and Outcomes (Donaldson-Feilder et al., 2019; Robertson, Cooper, Sarkar et al., 2015). The SPIO inclusion and exclusion criteria is displayed in table 1.

3.6.3 Eligibility criteria: criteria for inclusion and exclusion

The eligibility criteria for inclusion and exclusion are displayed in table 1

Inclusion Criteria	**Exclusion Criteria**
1. Study population: older adults (50) 2. Study settings: organisations, individuals 3. Time period: from 1995 4. Publication: English language, peer reviewed 5. Psychological factors leading to second career decisions 6. ‘Bridge employment’ if referencing second career management	1. Articles about other career models that are not protean careers or boundaryless careers 2. Articles focused on retirement stage only 3. Unpublished or no-peer reviewed articles 4. Not ill-health retirement or transition specific e.g., cardio incident 5. Job search strategies 6. Unemployment 7. Students and graduates 8. Workers under 50

	9. Individual case studies 10. Evaluation of pre-retirement education programmes/interventions 11. 'Bridge employment' if focusing on retirement planning only

Table 1 – Inclusion and exclusion criteria for SLR

Study Design	**Participant Population**	**Intervention**	**Outcomes**
Empirical Research	Work based	Career transition (not related to retirement or ill health)	Outcomes related to career theory applied to career transition
Explores an intervention(s)	Older workers (over 50)	Career transition from occupational role	Exploration of reasons for decision making process involved in career transition

Table 2 – Design criteria for inclusion

Papers were searched using the criteria discussed via the SPIO model (Robertson et al., 2015). Each paper title was screened using the SPIO criteria to identify which papers were eligible. This search criteria is a variation on PICO's (Population/ Participants, Intervention, comparison, and outcomes). PICO was first developed by Richardson, Wilson, Nishikawa & Hayward (1995). The model has evolved to support SLR studies and provide a template for building evidence based questions (Schlosser, Koul & Costello, 2007).

Each stage was supported with an independent review by two other researchers.

3.7 Data Set

The initial search consisted of 2769 papers. The PRISMA (Moher et al., 2009) diagram in figure 1 demonstrates the flow of extraction that was applied through the SLR process. The final set of papers totalled 8 are shown in the reference list, highlighted with *

PRISMA 2009 Flow Diagram

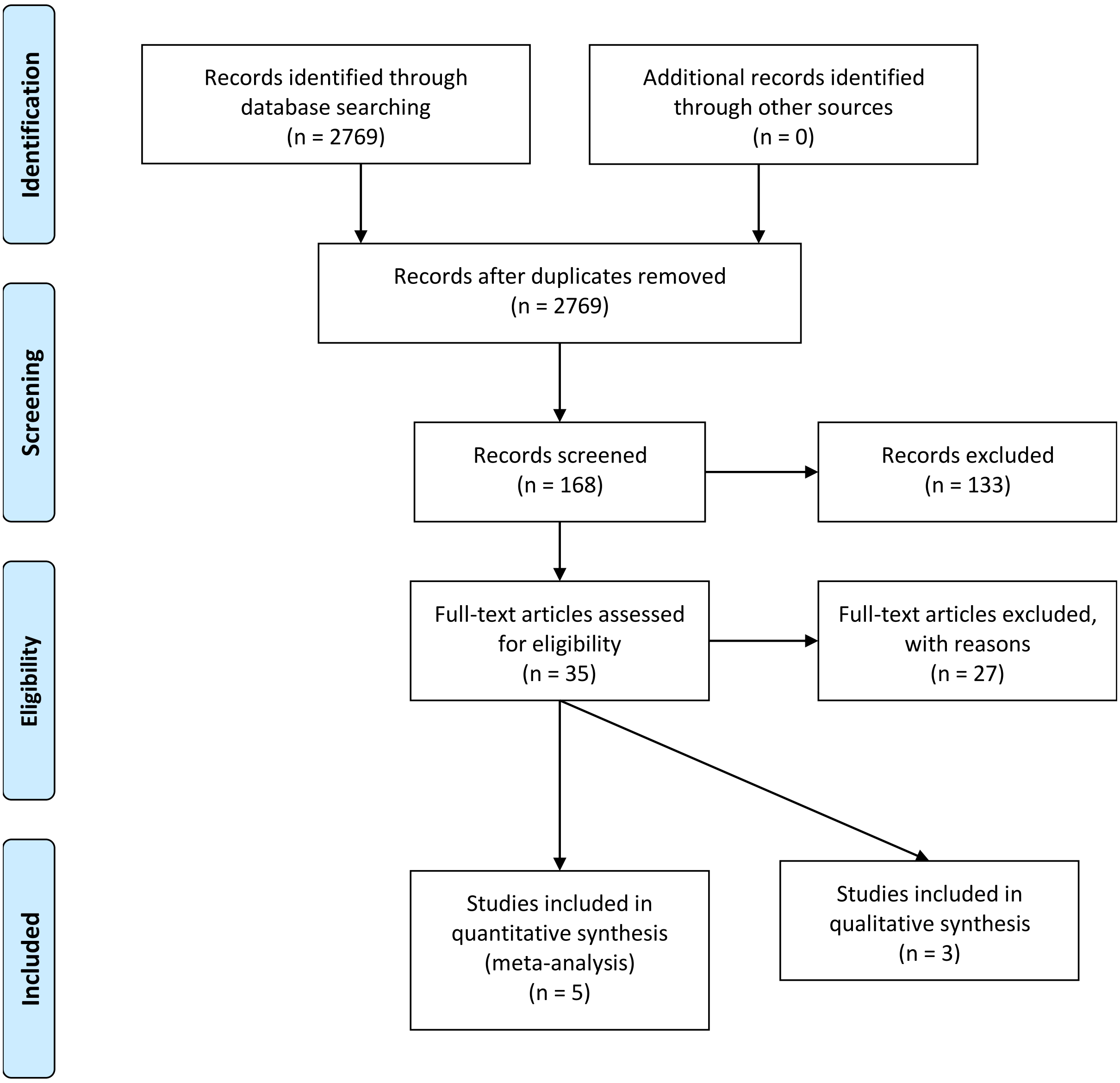

Figure 1 - PRISMA flowchart (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff & Altman, 2009)

3.8 Data extraction

A data extraction tool that had been adapted from other systematic review papers was utilised for this study (Donaldson-Feilder et al., 2019; Robertson et al., 2015). The data extraction process included data on the study design, study aims, participants, sampling, selection methods, career transition, outcomes measured and found in each paper. For each paper, the extraction process ensure that all data was collated and entered into a spreadsheet to allow for analysis, comparison, and synthesis. This data extraction process was carried out by the researcher, but the process was also reviewed by another researcher. Any queries or disagreements were reviewed by a third researcher.

3.9 Assessment of Quality

The results of this SLR included papers that used both quantitative and qualitative research methods, so the quality assessment selected was for mixed methods research. Mixed methods research is "a research approach in which a researcher or team of researchers integrates (a) qualitative and quantitative methods (b) qualitative and quantitative research designs and methods (c) techniques for collecting and analysing qualitative and quantitative data, and (d) qualitative findings and quantitative results" (Hong & Pluye, 2019, p.2). Research by Hong and Pluye (2019) suggested that the term for a critical review of research as part of the SLR process can be defined as 'critical analysis'. This critical analysis helps to identify strengths and weaknesses of studies and therefore the level of confidence that can be applied to the findings (Hong & Pluye, 2019). Studies were examined using the framework developed by Hong and Pluye (2019) that outlines three levels of quality: methodological, conceptual, and reporting. Methodological quality is related to how trustworthy a study is and the judgement is made against the methods that were used for the study and the risk of bias. Conceptual quality is related to insightfulness and looks at how clear and deep a phenomenon can be understood (Q. N. Hong & Pluye, 2019). Reporting quality examines how a research paper "provides information about the design, conduct and analysis of a study" (Hueiler-Muntener, Juni, Junker & Egger, 2002, p. 2801). The quality assessment of the each of the papers within this study is provided in Appendix 1 – table 16.

Features	**Quality Dimension**		
	Methodological	**Conceptual**	**Reporting**
Definition	Extent to which a studies design, conduct an analysis have minimised selection, measurement, and confounding biases	Extent to which a concept is clearly articulated to facilitate theoretical insight	Extent to which a paper provides information about the design, conduct, and analysis of the study
Constructs	Trustworthiness	Insightfulness	Accuracy Completeness Transparency
Component	Study	Study	Research Paper

Example of criteria (Downs & Black, 1998; Toye, Seers, Allcock, Briggs, Carr, Andrews & Barker, 2013)	Were the statistical tests used to assess the main outcomes appropriate?	Are there clear translatable concepts?	Is the hypothesis/aim/objective of the study clearly described?

Table 3 - Quality Dimensions (Hong & Pluye, 2019)

Each quality dimension was used to assess the papers for this SLR. Each element was rated on a scale for each quality dimension which was

0 – no evidence

1 – low quality

2 – medium quality

3 – high quality

The maximum score for each paper would then be 3 which is if a paper received high quality for each of the three dimensions. Table 16 provides a detailed review of the quality assessment and table 4 provides an overview of the quality assessment.

As critical appraisal does involve judgment making, it is essential that there are other reviewers involved in the process. For this process two independent reviewers also completed a critical analysis of the papers to review the rating used.

Paper	**Rating**
Bimrose, Jenny (2013)	1 - Low Quality
Cahill, Kevin E., Giandrea, Michael D. & Quinn, Joseph F. (2006)	2 - Moderate Quality
Dendinger, Veronica M., Adams, Gary A.& Jacobson, Jamie D. (2005)	3 - High Quality
Kautonen, Teemu, Kibler, Ewald & Minniti, Maria (2017)	3 - High Quality
Kim, Seon-Joo (2014)	2 - Moderate Quality
Rice, Candy K.	2 - Moderate Quality
van Solinge, Hanna (2014)	2 - Moderate Quality
Zissimopoulos, Julie M. Karoly, Lynn A.	3 - High Quality

Table 4 – Summary of SLR quality assessment

3.10 Results and data synthesis

Initial search generated 2769 papers and the initial screening process reduced that to 169 papers for abstract review. 35 papers were reviewed as a full paper review. Eight papers were considered suitable for inclusion in this study, following the screening process.

The results are presented in three sections to follow the SPIO framework, which are, 1) Study characteristics including study design, 2) Participants which details information about participants include country, gender, occupational setting, educational level, 3) Intervention – which is career transition and theory and then finally 4) outcomes are analysed via antecedents and outcomes of the career transition. Career transitions in which the transition explored is highlighted along with any career theory lens that was applied to the research. The final results are the outcomes of interest.

3.10.1 Study characteristics

Study characteristics area displayed in table 5 with a further narrative on each heading in the following section.

Study	Country	No of participants	Age range and gender of participants	Occupational Setting	Education Level	Study Design
Cahill, Kevin E. Giandrea, Michael D. Quinn, Joseph F. (2006)	USA	10540	Age range 51 – 61 M=5344, F=5196	Various	Unknown -	Quantitative - analysed data from existing longitudinal research
Bimrose, Jenny (2013)	UK, South Africa, and Australia	36	Age range 45 – 65 F=36	unknown	7 sub degree and remainder had at least a degree	Qualitative - Semi-Structured Interviews
Dendinger, Veronica M. Adams, Gary A. Jacobson, Jamie D. (2005)	USA	108	Age range 56 – 77 M=77, F=31	University	Unknown -	Quantitative - Survey
Kautonen, Teemu Kibler, Ewald Minniti, Maria (2017)	UK	2851 individuals	Age range 50 – 67 M=1340, F=1511	unknown	Unknown -	Quantitative - analysed data from existing longitudinal research
Kim, Seon-Joo (2014)	South Korea	9	Age range 45 -65 M=6, F=3	Various	BA =3, Med = 1, PHD = 5, MA = 1	Qualitative - Interviews
Rice, Candy K. (2015)	USA	5	Age range 60 - 68 M=2, F=3	Various	2 master's level and 3 doctorate level	Qualitative - Semi-Structured Interviews
van Solinge, Hanna (2014)	Netherlands	1,221	Age range 50 plus M=928, F=293	Various	Education attainment 18% low, 49% medium and 33% high	Quantitative - analysed data from existing longitudinal research
Zissimopoulos, Julie M. Karoly, Lynn A. (2005)	USA	subsample consisted of 12,255	Age range 60 - 75 M=6825, F=5463	Various	College graduate 23%, some college 20%, high school 36%, high school dropout 21%	Quantitative - analysed data from existing longitudinal research

Table 5 - Study characteristics

3.10.2 Country of origin

Four studies were from USA (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007; Dendinger et al., 2005; Cahill et al., 2006; Rice, 2015). One was from UK (Kautonen, Kibler & Minniti, 2017). One from Netherlands (van Solinge, 2014) and one from South Korea (Kim, 2014). One was a mix of researchers from UK, South Africa and Australia (Bimrose et al., 2013) in which there was 12 participants from each country.

3.10.3 Age of participants

Although the inclusion criteria were for participants over 50, studies used different age boundaries within their research. The research by Bimrose et al (2012) interviewed 36 females between the ages of 45 and 65. They picked this age bracket as they felt their research found 45 was the age at which people would find it hard 're-enter the workforce', and that 65 was the retirement age at the time they completed their research. Only one participant was in the age bracket 45 – 50, the rest were between 50 and 65.

Cahill et al (2006) focused on data from the HRS from people aged between 51 and 61 in the first wave carried out in 1992, and then had left their full-time career for another role in the later waves of data. Research by Zissimopoulos et al (2007) also used a data set from HRS and the range of their participants was 51 to 67. Their focus was people who had work experience and were aged over 50. Research from Van Solinge (2014) also used a data set from the NIDI Work and Retirement Panel, and they selected a sample of workers aged over 50 for the first survey in 2001 and then a follow up survey with the same group in 2006/7 and a further survey in 2011.

The research from Kim (2014) was based in South Korea, and their mandatory retirement age is 60 but over half of older workers retire between 50 and 54 (Korean Labor & Income Panel study, 2010) and retirement there means to "'retire from one's primary work' rather than 'retire entirely from work'". Post-retirement work after voluntary retirement in South Korea was noted to be a new phenomenon and was in felt to be a growing area due to ageing population, longer life expectancy and globalisation. Their study therefore included 'middle aged' workers between 45 and 65. The age range of participants were 48 to 65.

Age range for the research by Kautonen et al., (2017) was a range from 50 – 67. The range for participants in the study by Dendinger et al., (2005) was 56 to 77. The age range for the interviewees as part of the study by Rice (2015) was between 60 and 68.

3.10.4 Gender of participants

The gender split of participants withing the SLR studies was felt to be a balanced representation with an overall split of males = 14,693 (54.3%) and females = 12,365 (45.7%). All 36 participants in the study by Bimrose et al (2013) were female. Cahill et al (2006) sample included 5344 males and 5196 females. Study by Zissimopoulos et al., (2005) had a split of 6825 males and 5463 females. Study by Dendinger et al., (2005) had a split of 77 males and 31 females. Rice (2015) had two male and three females in their sample. Kautonen et al., (2017) had a sample that included 1511 females and 1340 males. Van Solinge et al., (2014) had 928 males and 293 females. Kim (2014) had six males and three females in their sample.

3.10.5 Occupational Setting

The reporting of occupational setting was variable, with only three studies reporting the occupation of participants before their transition.

Three papers that used large data sets and limited details regarding occupational setting were available in the reported data (Cahill et al., 2006; Kautonen et al., 2017; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). For example, Zissimopoulos (2005) distinguished between executive, admin & managerial, professional speciality, sales, services, farming, forestry, and fisheries, and production, craft, repair, labourers.

Bimrose et al. (2013) interviewed 36 females who were felt to have professional roles, but their role and industry was not recorded.

Participants in the study by Dendinger et al., (2005) were 108 people who had retired from one US university, and still in employment. The mix was both academic and 'blue collar' workers but the breakdown between this group not communicated as part of the findings.

The five participants interviewed in the research by Rice (2015) were all summarised as 'well educated professionals'. Previous industries were identified for the group as advertising, brewing & beverage, education & training, higher education, and K-12 education, but their specific roles were not described. The study by Kim (2014) was also included if they identified as working in 'professional positions'. Primary careers were identified as professor, high level civil servant, educational civil-servant, cofounder, civil servant, fund manager, engineer, CWO, PR specialist.

Participants involved in the research by Van Solinge (2014) were all from three large Dutch multinationals (Unilever, IBM & VendexKBB) and from the Civil Service. However, job roles or descriptions were not included in the analysis.

3.10.6 Educational Level

Three studies did not collate data on education level (Cahill et al., 2006; Kautonen et al., 2017; Dendinger et al., 2005). While Dendinger et al. (2005) did not collate data on education level, their sample included academics and 'blue collar' workers within one University suggesting high educational attainment of some participants.

Bimrose et al. (2012) did collate education details for their 36 participants, and this included sub-degree (n=7), degree (n=12), post grad (n=3), honours (SA qualification) (n=1), masters (n=8), doctorate (n=5).

Van Solinge (2014) reported participants education 'attainment' in to three descriptive; Low (18%), Medium (49%) and High (33%). For the group who had moved to self-employment the split was Low (4%), medium (38%) and High (58%).

Kim (2014) collated education level for their 9 participants and educational attainment was BA (N=3), MA (N=1), Med (N=1), PHD (N=4).

Data from the study by Zissimopoulos (2007) reported their participants to be split between four educational descriptive; High School (M=0.362), High School Dropout (M=0.211), some college (M=0.195), and College graduate and above (M=0.232).

One of the inclusion requirements from the research by Rice (2015) was that participants would have at least four years of higher education, and participants were described as 'well educated'. The education level was split between master's level (N=2) and Doctorate level (N=3).

3.10.7 Study design

The studies that were analysed for this SLR were mixed in design and used different methodologies. Of the eight studies, five were quantitative in design (Cahill et al., 2006; Dendinger et al., 2005; Kautonen et al., 2017; van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007), four of the quantitative studies researched longitudinal data from national surveys. Zissimopoulos & Karoly, (2007) and Cahill et al., (2006) analysed data from longitudinal research from US Health and Retirement study (HRS) between 1992 and 2000. Kautonen et al., (2017) analysed data from longitudinal research from English Longitudinal Study of ageing (ELSA) between 2002 and 2011. Van Solinge (2014) analysed data from longitudinal research from NIDI Work and Retirement Panel between 2001 and 2011. Dendinger et al (2005) carried out a survey with their 108 participants at one time point.

Three were qualitative studies (Bimrose et al., 2013; Kim, 2014; Rice, 2015) and two included semi-structured interviews (Bimrose et al., 2013; Rice, 2015) and one included open-ended interviews (Kim, 2014).

3.10.8 Career transitions

There was no consistency in the type of career transition each paper assessed. Although they all included participants who had left an occupation role for another career not all papers were explicit in the career options. Three papers did not clarify the new roles (Dendinger et al., 2015; Rice, 2015: Van Solinge et al., 2014; Kim, 2014). Another paper was not clear about whether the career transition role was as an independent worker (Bimrose et al.,2013). Two papers looked at bridge employment but included self-employment as part of their analysis of bridge employment (Zissimopoulos et al., 2004). Two papers focused on a transition to self-employment (Kautonen et al., 2017).

Zissimopoulos et al., (2004) used the HRS survey over a period from 1992 to 2000. The researched participants who had transitioned to self-employment from an occupational role within this period. They found an increase in the number of people who were self-employed for each wave of their study. They also found the average age for retirement was higher for self-employed compared to those who were in paid employment. This study also found several people who were self-employed via a second job.

Dendinger et al., (2015) surveyed participants who had retired from a US university but were now working in another role. This study looked at attitudes to bridge employment and reasons for working. However, it did not explore what roles participants were engaged in after their career transition.

Rice (2015) focused on older workers who had a transitioned within 24 months from occupational role. The five participants had all experienced a complete change from original career, but they had moved to roles such as 'business consulting, career coaching, federal government and higher education'. Although the roles were clearly described, it was not clear if the new roles were paid employment or a form of self-employment. Although one participant was identified as not actually leaving their original role but adding a second career as part of a portfolio career.

Research from Bimrose et al. (2013) looked at career histories of 36 females and noted each of them included transitions but this study was not clear in describing the transitions so does not provide a strong addition to the research for this SLR. The transitions were about changes in their career, but not so clearly described if they were about transition from full time employment to another role.

Kautonen et al., (2017) used data from English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) to examine transitions from paid employment to entrepreneurship for individuals aged 50 to 67. Seventy-five percent of the individuals in the sample who switched to entrepreneurship reported working for themselves or being subcontractors, freelancers, or partners in a professional practice (the remaining 25% reported running a business or professional practice). Their study found that switching to entrepreneurship in later life is positive and statistically significant in terms of quality of life but also with a reduction in income.

Cahill et al (2006) focused on data from the HRS from people aged between 51 and 61 in the first wave carried out in 1992, and then had left their full-time career for another role in the later waves of data. Their criteria for a full-time career were at least a ten-year tenure in an occupational role. This study then explored people in the study who had moved to bridge employment. They compared participants who stayed in full time employment after aged 50, with those who had retired completely or had taken bridge employment. Bridge employment was classed for this study as a new role “with a new employer, or, if self-employed, at a new business” (Cahill et al., 2006, p.517). Their research found that the total number of men in bridge employment had increased from 27% in 1996 to 47% in 2002, and for women it had increased from 20% to 40%. The study did not provide data on the split of bridge employment between self-employed and new salaried role.

The study by Van Solinge et al., (2014) used data from the NIDI Work and Retirement Panel over a ten-year period from 2001 to 2011 with a sample from three large Dutch multinational companies and one public sector company. From the participants who had left their occupational role, 30% had engaged in a form of bridge employment. Bridge employment for this study was classed as another paid role or self-employment. 11% of the group who engage in bridge employment had selected self-employment.

The study by Kim (2014) was on nine middle-aged workers who were in postretirement employment. Post retirement was classed as those who were ‘voluntary retirees from their primary career’. Each participant had changed their career, however, although the new job title was provided, their employment status was not explored.

Table 6 summarises the career transitions explored in the SLR explaining what the career transition that the study was exploring and what theoretical base was applied to their study.

Career transition and theoretical career framework

Paper	Type of Career Transition	Application of Career Theory
Bimrose, Jenny (2013)	Focus on career history of 36 female participants. Each career history included transitions, but each transition was not clearly described	No career theory informed research.
Cahill, Kevin E. Giandrea, Michael D. Quinn, Joseph F. (2006)	Transition from occupational job to bridge employment (job with another employer or self-employment)	No career theory informed research.
Dendinger, Veronica M., Adams, Gary A. Jacobson, Jamie D. (2005)	Bridge employment post occupational university job	Meaning of work for older people (Mor Barak1995).
Kautonen, Teemu Kibler, Ewald Minniti, Maria (2017) Late-career entrepreneurship, income, and quality of life	From paid organisational job to entrepreneurship. Seventy-five percent of the individuals in the sample who switched to entrepreneurship reported working for themselves or being subcontractors, freelancers, or partners in a professional practice (the remaining 25% reported running a business or professional practice	No career theory informed research.
Kim, Seon-Joo (2014)	Post retirement employment after ***voluntary*** retirement - in South Korea the average age of exit from the workforce is 70 whereas mandatory retirement age from an organisation is 60	No career theory informed research.
Rice, Candy K. (2015)	Recareered to new roles but not clear if new org job or new self-employed. New roles included, business consulting, career coaching, higher education, and government role	No career theory informed research.
van Solinge, Hanna (2014)	Bridge employment post-retirement, after a worker has left a regular salaried position. Bridge employment classed as another paid role or self-employment	No career theory informed research.
Zissimopoulos, Julie M. Karoly, Lynn A. (2005)	Transition to self-employment. This study examines engagement in paid work after retirement among older adults in the USA. Specifically, we focus on one particular type of post-retirement work arrangement: self-employment (defined as any person who owns a business or works for him/herself, who may or may not hire workers).	No career theory informed research.

Table 6 – summary of the career transitions explored in the SLR

3.10.9 Theoretical Career framework

Only one study referred to any form of career theory (Dendinger et al., 2005). Protean careers, boundaryless careers and contemporary careers were not mentioned in any studies.

Dendinger et al., (2005) focused on bridge employment. They discussed that bridge employment could be differentiated between a 'blurred' exit from the workplace rather than a 'crisp' exit. Their focus was on those preparing for retirement. They did not use career theory to inform their research, but rather they explored theory that may provide understanding of the motives of working for older workers. Their study was based on research by Mor Barak (1995) of which the theory looked at the meaning of work for older adults and suggested that there were 4 factors that created meaning for older workers. The four reasons were social, personal, financial, and generative (Mor Barak, 1995). Social reasons are a need to interact with others and be seen in a positive frame by others (Dendinger et al., 2005). Personal reasons can include self-esteem, self-efficacy, personal satisfaction and sense of pride (Dendinger et al., 2005). Financial reasons include income and benefits that influence decisions for employment in older workers (Mor Barak, 1995). Generative reasons are a need to teach and share knowledge with a younger generation (Mor Barak, 1995). Their research assessed the relationship between working based on Mor-Barak's (1995) theory and attitudinal responses to bridge employment, which are, job satisfaction, attitudes towards retirement and occupational self-efficacy (Dendinger et al., 2005). Their study found that generativity was a predictor of job satisfaction and attitudes towards retirement. Social reasons for working were a predictor of attitudes towards retirement (Dendinger et al., 2005).

No career theory was used in six studies (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013; Cahill et al., 2006; Kim, 2014; Rice, 2015; van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007).

Bimrose et al., (2013) focused on career choices for older women, and found that research into career transitions for women was limited. The aim of their research was to understand the career guidance available to women. Career guidance is about 'assisting people to reach their potential' (Bimrose et al., 2013). One of the limitations of career guidance for women was that the research had not considered the environment in which a persons career occured (Bimrose et al., 2013). They felt previous research on career decisions was based in quantitative research and wanted to use a qualitative approach to understand the context and explore older women's career stories to understand how older women can be supported by career guidance theory and practice.

Cahill et al., (2006) looked at bridge employment which they described as 'one or more short-duration or part-time jobs…. these jobs bridge the gap between full-time career employment and complete labour-force withdrawal and are aptly called 'bridge jobs'' (p.515). They reviewed the literature on bridge employment and found that trends in the type of bridge work and gradual retirement had evolved to include job sharing, work schedule reductions and re-entry as temporary workers. Their lens was those who had taken a bridge job as a step between full time employment and complete labour force withdrawal and found that workers who took permanent retirement were in the minority compared to workers who re-entered the labour force in some way (Cahill et al., 2006).

Kautonen et al., (2017) research focused on people who switch from an organisational role to a later-career entrepreneurship. The theories they used as a basis for their research were employment choice theory (Levesque & Minniti, 2007) and self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Although these theories were not traditional career theories, they were used to inform their study. They found that there was limited research on older workers who leave their occupational job to set up their own business (Kautonen et al., 2017). They developed a theory based on time allocation which previously found older workers were less likely to start an entrepreneurial career (Lévesque & Minniti, 2006). This previous research focused on monetary utility and motivation to start the entrepreneurial career as opposed to the outcomes of the career decision. Kautonen et al., (2017) developed this theory to also look at non-monetary utility for an entrepreneurial career. They then developed self-determination theory from Deci and Ryan (2000) to research wellbeing and then quality of life. Their research hypothesis was then to look at later-career transition to entrepreneurship for monetary (income) and non-monetary (quality of life) outcomes.

Kim (2014) looked at postretirement career transition for middle-aged professionals who had retired voluntarily and were in a new postretirement employment. This research was carried out in Korea, and it is worth noting that retirement in Korea means ‘to retire from one’s primary work rather than retire entirely from work’ (Kim, 2014, p.4). People who had worked post-retirement in Korea had not been studied before as it was felt to be a new phenomenon. The study was to understand the experience of career transition in the post-retirement context, and this was felt to be under-researched especially in a qualitative way that would provide insights for a non-western context. The study explored contextual affordance (Patton & Macmahon, 2006) to support a development-contextual approach. They used four components to ‘understand and analyse Korean adults career transition approaches’ which were actors, activities, time and place.

Rice (2015) focused on recareering in older workers which is a decision made in later life to embark in a new career in a new industry, after leaving a long-term career (Johnson, Kawachi & Lewis, 2009). Rice (2015) stated that recareer in later life was a new area for study and that there had been little research on this in academic studies. They completed a review of the literature and did not find any other research that focused on recareering in later life.

Van Solinge (2014) focused on self-employment. Self-employment choices for older workers is an under-researched area (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007: Kautonen, 2013). Self-employment is looked at within this study as one of the choices an older worker can make as part of their transition to retirement and is seen as an alternative to full retirement or bridge employment. The research is a focus as an option for bridge employment and is part of the process for retirement. Although this research described some of the previous research regarding bridge employment, self-employment and retirement, their methods were not based on a particular theory, more to look at trends of self-employment for the demographic outlined.

Zissimopoulos et al., (2004) focused on determinants of self-employment as a basis for their study. They studied what was known about reasons for workers selecting self-employment as a career choice. Individual factors were considered in their research. Existing career theory was not used as part of their exploration. Their research did note that there has been little research focused on the move the self-employment in older workers (Zissimopoulos et al, 2004) demonstrating a gap in our knowledge for research and practice for this cohort.

3.11 Antecedents of career transitions

This review identified six broad factors influencing decision making: financial, health, intrinsic motivation, working conditions, social capital/networks, and formal/informal learning. Some of these themes show within the antecedents for career transitions and reflect in outcomes of a career transition. The antecedent themes shown in table 7 were financial factors, working conditions, informal/formal learning, and health. Outcome themes were intrinsic motives and social networks.

Table 7 shows the details of each of these factors that were found in the SLR research. The following section provides a narrative of the findings for each factor.

Antecedents	**Outcomes**
Financial factors	Intrinsic Motives
Working conditions	Social Networks
Informal/Formal Learning	
Health	

Table 7 - Antecedents and Outcomes from SLR synthesis

	Antecedents				Outcomes	
Study	Financial factors	Working conditions	Learning	Health	Intrinsic Motives	Social Capital/Network
Bimrose, Jenny (2013)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Cahill, Kevin E. Giandrea, Michael D. Quinn, Joseph F. (2006)	✓	✓		✓		
Dendinger, Veronica M. Adams, Gary A. Jacobson, Jamie D. (2005)	✓					✓
Kautonen, Teemu Kibler, Ewald Minniti, Maria (2017)	✓				✓	
Kim, Seon-Joo (2014)		✓	✓			✓
Rice, Candy K. (2015)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
van Solinge, Hanna (2014)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Zissimopoulos, Julie M. Karoly, Lynn A. (2005)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Table 8 - summary of antecedents and outcomes within themes from SLR papers

3.11.1 Financial factors

Seven studies reported on financial factors as an antecedent (Bimrose et al., 2013, Cahill et al., 2006, Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007, Dendinger et al., 2005; Kautonen et al., 2017; Rice, 2015; van Solinge, 2014).

Financial reasons for career transition in older workers found that older workers selecting self-employment were more 'financially privileged' (van Solinge, 2014) and higher wage rate links to a significant increase in the likelihood of becoming self-employed following a transition from a paid job role (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Economic necessity was not found to be a reason for a decision to recareer in older workers (Rice, 2015) or for bridge employment (Dendinger et al., 2005), although it was noted that the sample used were from a higher income and maybe therefore more secure in financial assets (Dendinger et al., 2005). Another study on recareering to bridge employment found that low-wage and high-wage individuals were more likely to take bridge employment than mid-wage individuals (Cahill et al., 2006). This research found that the motivation for bridge employment for low-wage workers was necessity and that it was quality of life for high-wage individuals.

Older workers transitioning were less likely to have a Defined Benefit pension scheme (Cahill et al., 2006), although a study found that men were less likely to transition to self-employment if they expected a pension from their current organisational job (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Health cover can been seen as a 'job lock' as those occupational jobs with health coverage lead to less numbers of people recareering in later life (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007).

Later life career management and early retirement planning has had a focus on financial elements. Traditional retirement planning is usually a two-day training programme preparing people for the change in economic circumstances (Marcus, 2011). Previous research already highlighted that this training should also address the psychological needs for individuals, and tackle the career needs to manage needs for later life employability (Marcus 2011). This study has helped understand antecedents of career change for older workers which can support career coaching for this cohort and organisational challenges for retention and recruitment of older workers. While financial reasons were not found to have an influence on decisions to recareer (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2005; Rice, 2015), Dendinger et al., (2005) note that majority of the research on older workers suggests a link between financial satisfaction and job satisfaction so those more satisfied in occupational role, may not be looking for alternative roles prior to retirement. Kautonen et al. (2005) found a negative correlation with earnings and those who had recareered to entrepreneurship, but also commented that older entrepreneurs chose self-employed roles that had a low level of risk but a higher life satisfaction. Also 'less privileged’ older worker entrepreneurs may have been exposed to a push factor from occupational role (Van Solinge, 2013). The majority of the studies focused on ‘professional’ workers and in one study salary was shared and noted that they were from a higher income and maybe therefore more secure in financial assets (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005). Cahill et al., (2006) found that low-wage individuals chose bridge employment out of financial necessity rather than quality of life which was the main reason for high-wage individuals. This identifies a gap in research to understand the differences in the financial reasons for recareering between lower and higher ends of salary bands. Link to risk and monetary objectives would be an area to consider for non-professional workers to understand the financial influence on recareer decisions Those moving to self-employment may see an impact on their retirement benefits and financial assets (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007) so awareness of financial planning is an important focus for older workers career support and not just as part of their retirement planning.

3.11.2 Health

Three studies reported on health factors as antecedents (Cahill et al., 2006: van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007).

One study found that for males and females, a health condition that limited their ability to work increased the likelihood of recareering to self-employment (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Accommodations required for health reasons are found to be easier to support for self-employed people and can be a motivator to recareer (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Those who felt they would not be able to work past the age of 62 were more likely to recareer to self-employment after age 50 (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007).

Cahill et al., (2006) found that in their sample those who were in employment in 1992 and then in 2002 were in bridge employment, 54% of males reported as excellent or very good health, and 59% of females reported the same. Bridge job employment declined with deterioating health status (Cahill et al., 2006). Health reasons were not found to be a factor for transition to self-employment, bridge employment or another occupational role (van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Although their data collection from Cahill et al (2006) did not include individuals with serious health conditions and maybe had left the workforce because of health, other research found workers with disabilities were more likely to be self-employed (Lombard, 2001).

Although this review excluded studies where ill health was the primary reason for leaving work, this still emerged as a theme. Where participants felt that their health condition meant they couldn't work in their organisation. self-employment was chosen as they believed this was an easier way to support their career (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Research found workers with disabilities were more likely to be self-employed (Lombard, 2001) and those that felt they may not be able to continue in their workplace in their 60's were more likely to recareer in their 50's (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). This seems to indicate that the locus of control along with work flexibility is an important consideration. The area of health concerns is a specialised focus for older workers and deserves to be clearly understood to ensure that workplace measures and support is in place. This study did not focus on health and some of the studies also excluded serious health conditions (Cahill et al., 2006) so the researcher is aware that depth of awareness of existing research on this topic is limited and therefore this area does need further analysis.

3.11.3 Working Conditions

Six studies reported working conditions as an antecedent (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013; Cahill et al., 2006; Kim, 2014; Rice, 2015; van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007).

Some research examined what prompts people to start looking for an alternative career, and the push pull factors involved meaning do people decide to become self-employed because of push factors such as dissatisfied with current role, or pull factors such as financial opportunity (van Solinge, 2014). A link has been found between involuntary retirement and self-employment (van Solinge, 2014) which highlights that a change in working conditions including workplace discrimination may prompt the motivation to search for a different opportunity (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). An experience of disequilibrium such as unexpected events, challenges or feeling powerless prompted the transition process for participants in the study by Kim (2014). An occurrence of a lay off or redundancy may force a person to consider freelance opportunities and move from an organisational identity to a contingent identity to which they prefer (Ibarra & Obodaru, 2016) Changes within workplaces can highlight the feeling that their association with their organisation is temporary and therefore can lead people to consider their career outside the boundaries of their organisation (Petriglieri et al., 2018).

Cahill et al. (2006) found that those who did not have health insurance in their role were more likely to move to a bridge employment role (77% males, 73% female). They also found that those without any portable health insurance were more likely to leave the workforce totally. There was a reflection that health insurance or the lack of may also be a 'proxy' for other job characteristics. It is noted that this research is based on an US sample where health costs are a costly consideration and health care is deemed to be a workplace benefit. In UK research, health care may not be a consideration due to the NHS access.

Cahill et al. (2006) found that low earners and high earners were more likely to take a bridge employment role compared to middle earners. Their reflection was low earners may take a bridge role from necessity and high earners may take a role for quality-of-life reasons. Also, those with Defined Benefit (DB) pensions schemes were more likely to stay in occupation role compared to those with Defined Contribution (DC) pension scheme or no pension scheme. Zissimopoulos & Karoly (2007) collected data on previous occupation and found that there was a significant difference in males who were executives, sales and labourer positions and then would leave their occupational job to become self-employed, compared to males in administrative positions. For females it was found those in executive, management, or admin positions, along with those in farming, fisheries and forestry were more likely to be self-employed than those in other occupations.

The type of role that participants were engaged with prior to their career transition could be an influence in the transition process. Organisations that allow flexible working increased the likelihood that someone would recareer to self-employment, and may be linked to increase in a portfolio approach where individuals reduce hours in salaried job whilst starting another self-employed role (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Side-line businesses have been created by older workers as a way to build something to last into old age and past their traditional retirement age (Rice, 2015).

The study by Zissimopoulos and Karoly (2007) found differences in participants who left occupational jobs to move to self-employment (as opposed to another paid job or retirement). Those who were in jobs with autonomy and performance related pay were more likely to be self-employed. Their study found that measure of hours flexibility and the occupations were the two job characteristics that have the strongest relationship to those who then transition to self-employment. The occupations found most likely to transition to self-employment were sales jobs for males and executive, admin, or managerial jobs for females. Although one study found a link between those in labourer jobs being more likely to be self-employed (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2009). There was a significant finding for those in executive jobs for males and females to choose self-employment as a post-paid job role for this demographic (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2009).

People leave their job for many reasons and the quitting behaviour has been a focus for research especially in regards to their intention to leave as once a person has quit their job, there is limited opportunity to reflect on thinking and behaviour prior to this decision (Firth, Mellor, Moore & Loquet, 2004). Bimrose et al (2013) and Kim (2014) found that career transition occurred in response to unexpected circumstances however, it was not clear if the circumstances were in relation to work or life events. Only a couple of the studies involved interviews with workers and in the research from Bimrose et al. (2013), many workers did mention workplace discrimination as an influence. Although, in the interviews carried out by Rice (2015) participants stated that they experienced a lack of ageism. Ageism is a growing area of discrimination that is more visible in the workplace due to the ageing population and generational diversity in the workplace (Snape & Redman, 2003). Experiencing ageism can lead to dissatisfaction and a wish to leave the organisation (Snape & Redman, 2003). Those who leave because of ageism may feel that other opportunities in the external workforce are not available to them. In the discussion, it was suggested that self-employment could be chosen by those who felt that there was a lack of opportunities available for them and therefor was because of necessity (Van Solinge, 2004) so career choices in organisations may feel limited to older workers. Most of the studies were not able to include the prompts that caused the decision to leave an organisation and then the reason why they did not select another occupational role, so this is a gap in our understanding as to why older workers will recareer to a contemporary career.

3.11.4 Formal and Informal learning

Five studies reported on undertaking continued learning through formal and informal studies as an antecedent (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013; Kim, 2014; Rice, 2015; van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007).

Studies found that those who had transitioned to later life self-employment had undertaken formal studies within their career (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013) and tended to be better educated (van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007) or realised career opportunities through education institutions (Kim, 2014). Zissimopoulos et al., (2007) found that a college education increased the likelihood of a transition to self-employment rather than paid employment to be significant by 32% of the baseline. They found that the probability of transitioning to self-employment is positively correlated with level of education, especially for males.

Van Solinge (2014) reported participants education ‘attainment’ in to three descriptive; Low (18%), Medium (49%) and High (33%). For the group who had moved to self-employment the split was Low (4%), medium (38%) and High (58%). The choice of self-employment was found to be significant against full retirement ($p<0.001$) and versus wage employment ($p<0.015$).

Sampling for one study did have inclusion criteria of further education, so those without this level of education were excluded from research (Rice, 2015). However, all participants in this research shared their view of being eager to keep learning. Those who recareered stated there was an interest in continuous learning and development (Rice, 2015).

The study by Bimrose et al (2013) found that all 36 participants had engaged with a level of formal learning and that they had used this learning to "provide access to an occupational area, to redirect their lives or to provide an important space to reflect and re-evaluate life direction" (Bimrose et al., 2013a, p.592). Kim (2014) found that learning helped individuals explore new role identities and therefore promoted career transitions.

3.12 Outcomes of career transition

3.12.1 Social Capital/network

Four studies reported on social capital and networks as outcomes (Bimrose et al., 2013; Dendinger et al., 2005; Kim, 2014; Rice, 2015).

Older workers found that withdrawing from the workplace did lead to withdrawing from a key source of social interactions (Dendinger et al., 2005), however this research did not find a connection with social reasons for working and job satisfaction. Older workers who have recareered were found to use existing networks to help find options and openings for new career options (Rice, 2015). Those who have recareered found support exclusively via informal networks such as family and friends (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). As people change to a contemporary career, they have been found to develop connections with others engaged in a similar career as them and to other membership bodies such as university alumni to boost connections (Petriglieri et al., 2018) or use their professional connections to source new opportunities (Kim, 2014). Connections to others in similar working patterns can be seen as a way of developing self-reliance and support for career adaptation (Petriglieri et al., 2018). Some organisations who engage with 'gig-workers' or temporary workers try to forge these connections to help with networking but also with creating an identity link to the 'temporary' membership of the organisation (Petriglieri et al., 2018).

3.12.2 Intrinsic Motives

Five studies reported on intrinsic motivation as outcomes (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005; Kautonen et al., 2017; van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Decisions for older workers to engage in self-employment was found to be 'predominately driven' by intrinsic motives so they could do work that they loved (van Solinge, 2014). One of the outcomes for contemporary careers is the increase in individual agency (Arthur, 2008). Those who have recareered to self-employment are more likely to work part time than for those in occupational jobs, showing higher levels of flexibility to reduce hours and create a stronger work life balance (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Quality of life was measured by psychological needs of control, autonomy, self-realisation and pleasure, was seen to be improved with later life transition to entrepreneurship compared with those who move to another occupational role (Kautonen, Kibler & Minniti, 2017). Self-realisation was found to be a primary result of moving from an occupational role to self-employment (Kautonen et al., 2017). Generative reasons for working were found in older workers with a concern for passing on skills and abilities (Dendinger et al., 2005) and to have a life view of wanting to give back (Rice, 2015).

Decisions to recareer to self-employment were found to be 'predominately driven' by intrinsic motives so individuals could do work that they loved (van Solinge, 2014) and have a better work life balance (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007) and to be able to 'give back' (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005; Rice, 2015). This outcome of intrinsic motives linked to the research that demonstrated that workers did not plan their career change, so seems to suggest that recareering is values led. As discussed only 2 of the studies interviewed participants so intrinsic motivation and values have not been explored in depth within this study.

3.13 Discussion

This review presents a first to synthesise current research on older worker recareerists and 6 themes emerged from the analysis, which provides a basis for further discussion, reflection, and research.

The primary research question of this Systematic Literature Review was to explore known experiences of why workers aged 50 and over, leave an organisational role for a contemporary career. The literature on older workers career transition was felt to be scattered (Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2010) and this review presents the first to bring together available research on new contemporary careers. A number of considerations for older workers career transition were identified. The transition choices workers made within the studies are mixed yet they all involved a recareer from an occupational role so these themes can assist with understanding the reasons for leaving an occupational role. There were 6 factors identified as influences on decision making for recareering. The 6 factors were financial, health, intrinsic motivation, working conditions, social capital/networks, and formal/informal learning.

A second aim to be explored was to understand the contextual influences on the recareer decisions. A positive output from the Systematic Literature Review was that there was a clear awareness of the changing macro trends and demographic shifts, which confirmed this is an opportune time to study this demographic of older workers and the impact of their career trends. Trends such as Globalisation, technology, the knowledge worker and recession are all affecting the working environment and employer/employee relationships (Truxillo & Fraccaroli, 2013). Individuals are living longer, starting their families later and have experienced dual incomes for most of adult life (Cascio, 2007). The financial impacts of recessions and pension fund shortages has highlighted the need for a different focus in developing older workers in lengthening their career (Stern, 2010). These macro and individual changes are impacting the view of the traditional plan for future retirement. The numbers of older workers who are creating contemporary careers is agreed to be growing (Andrews & Gratton, 2018), which provides support that this area of research is supporting emerging career trends. Cahill et al (2006) found US workers who leave the workforce and recareer via bridge employment were higher than those workers who take a permanent retirement from the workforce.

The third aim was to develop an understanding of the career theory applied in research with older worker populations. The question was explored as to what career theory supported the research for this demographic of workers aged over 50 to assess. The enquiry was whether modern career theories such as boundaryless careers and protean careers provided some depth and strength for understanding more about why older workers may transition to a contemporary career. In terms of finding clarity of career theory that supports recareering to a contemporary career, the review is disappointing. There was limited application of theory, and the application of career theory was absent. The 8 papers identified by the Systematic Literature Review selection and extraction demonstrated a lack of depth or consistency in the career theory used. Previously researched career theories were used to provide a lens for the studies such as, determinants of self-employment (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007), Atchley's (1989) continuity theory of ageing (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005), Mor-Boraks (1995) meaning of work (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005), career guidance (Rice, 2015), adult development theory (Rice, 2015), employment choice theory (Kautonen et al., 2017), self-determination theory (Kautonen et al., 2017), and Super's maturity theory (Rice, 2015). Although theories were explored, most studies were part of a literature review into a particular type of career transition rather than used to inform the methodology of the study so there was not a true assessment of theory.

This study further considered why some workers may select a contemporary career to include self-employment so, although there were some insights, it was not a clear focus from the studies. This review placed a focus on older workers, yet the mixed samples in the studies revealed a leaning from the research to consider the viewpoint of workers who leave their occupational job with a lens of early retirement (Cahill et al., 2006a; Dendinger et al., 2005), or as recareering to another occupational role (Rice, 2015). Although studies did not meet the exact requirement for recareering to a contemporary career, they still provided insights into why people leave an established occupational role and contribute to our understanding. Recareering to self-employment is understood in younger workers, but less understood in workers aged over 50 (Rice, 2015). Self-employment rates in the US were found to increase with age (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Even though the numbers of self-employed individuals in this demographic is rising, little research has been completed to understand their reasons for factors associated with the transition (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007; Rice, 2015). One study discussed that the choice for self-employed was led from by those who were 'pushed' from occupational role, and the reflection that there was a lack of opportunities them (Van Solinge, 2014). Several studies included a career change from occupational role to self-employment, so this was a positive result to obtain these insights. Self-employment in general has been researched but a focus on self-employment in older workers in an area that is felt to be understudied (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). This demonstrates a gap in understanding why workers may select a contemporary career as a career stage and not just as a bridge role between their occupational role and retirement from the workforce. The type of career transition varied within the studies included in this review. However, a common thread was a view of people when leaving their occupational role was not an assumption that they were retiring from work, rather they were exploring other working arrangements. This is a move the view of traditional retirement as a one-off occurrence when one leaves their occupational role, and it is contributing to the dilution of the traditional view of retirement. Challenging the traditional view of retirement is positive as it will open up more creativity in thinking about later life career stages. This again supports the need for more research in this field to help support ideas for new and innovative thinking regarding later life career options.

A further insight from the research was that most of the studies focused on professional workers, there is a bias for the research to show results for those who are educated to degree level. Research from Zissimopoulos and Karoly (2005) found that there was a statistical difference in education levels for those who did transition as an older worker to self-employment. Those with high school education only or those who had dropped out of school had the lowest probability of becoming self-employed in later life. This gap was also demonstrated in research by Kim (2005) & Rice (2015), as in each study all the sample had a master's or PhD level of education. There is a gap in terms of looking at those older workers who recareer without formal education and exploring how they approach their learning. Bimrose et al., (2012) found that there was a theme of learning in their results and that all 36 participants had engaged to varying degrees in formal learning, with many using this to provide access to occupational areas to redirect their lives or to provide an important space to reflect and re-evaluate life direction" (p.592). Career theory has included a focus on formal learning, but there was a trend for engagement with informal learning that emerged in the findings. Informal learning was found to assist with creating opportunities to identify new transferable skills that then can aid a person's career transition (Bimrose et al., (2012). Career development often focuses on formal learning, but there is room to look at informal learning (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). Those who work within the gig-economy tend to have received little or no formal learning (Broughton, Gloster, Marvell et al., 2018). This provides an area to understand further as older workers engage with informal learning as part of the career identity transition.

A further outcome of the research was that older workers received most support from informal networks after their transition. There was no evidence that recareerists felt that planning was futile as they made the decision to recareer as a reaction changes in their life or work (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). Most career coaching or support is future focused, so it is surprising to see little evidence of career coaching. As participants are leaving an occupational role, they may feel that there is little support for their career development. Levels of coaching ability in HR professionals have also been found to affect the level of support for later life career support (Leisink & Knies, 2011) and this research highlighted a possible gap for organisational support in awareness training and policies to enhance their management of older workers. Although some workers were able to use their network they had developed through their primary career to identify new opportunities (Rice, 2015), research found membership bodies such as university alumni were used to boost connections (Petriglieri et al., 2018). This finding highlights a possible gap in research that would be interesting to find out how those who have followed a non-professional career use other networks to create roles when moving from their existing career without a network from a professional body available to them.

3.14 Strengths and Limitations

This review followed best practice principles as outlined by Briner and Denyer (2012). A strength of this review is that it is the first to synthesise the research on career transitions of older workers and in doing so offers a challenge to some of the traditional assumptions of retirement and early retirement. Bridge employment as a career choice has been assumed historically as a transition to another part time paid job as part of the process of gradual retirement. These findings of this review challenge this assumption in recognising that bridge employment does not have to be just a move to part time work as part of slowing down work but also could include self-employment roles too, and as a conscious decision for prolonging a career with more autonomy of the worker. This helps open up the career options for coaching and supporting older workers idea generation.

There are a few notable limitations. First this review aimed to identify what is known about career transitions in older workers and was purposely narrow in scope. Grey material was not included, and this inclusion may have enabled other research from practice that could have provided more insights to this topic. The sift of articles included a search for career theories of protean and boundaryless careers which was lacking in the studies. A wider search may have evolved if these career theories were not included.

Second, the papers within the SLR used mixed methods of both qualitative and quantitative research which made the comparison more difficult, and some of the methodology of the papers was limited which may impact the strength of the findings. The overall quality of the papers was mixed with only 3 of high quality, and then 4 or moderate quality and 1 of low quality. The conceptual quality dimension was found to be generally lower than methodological or reporting. Conceptual is the “extent to which a concept is clearly articulated to facilitate theoretical insight” (Hong et al., 2018, p.9). This lack of strength in conceptual theory leads to lesser insightfulness from the research. The studies included in this review were conducted in numerous countries, the differing legislation in each country is not fully examined or controlled for so has an impact on the contextual factors. For example, health insurance is seen as a ‘lock’ for workers in USA, but this would not be the same in UK due to the existence of NHS and free healthcare. Pension legislation differs in terms of DB/DC arrangements, and DB schemes create more of a commitment to an organisation. Developing a deeper understanding of the impact of the national policy context will advance our understanding of the factors that influence the career decisions of older workers.

Whilst this Systematic Literature Review set out to examine career theory, findings revealed limited application of theory in the body of research. The career theories that the papers used were varied and on whole, theory was not utilised. Another limitation was that papers used large data sets, reliant on survey responses and therefore were not able to ask key questions to individuals to understand motivations and reasons for career transitions. There was a lack of context for the research so the previous career and environment drivers for career change were not clearly defined. One of the aims of this research was to understand why people may leave their occupational role, and clearer insights into the individual decision-making process still needs to be researched.

3.15 Directions for future research

Five priority areas have been identified following this review:

First, there were gaps in our understanding of older workers who leave for a contemporary career rather than a bridge role or further occupational role. The SLR did not provide insight into the career theory that can inform career transition, and therefore it demonstrates that there is still a lacking understanding into workers recareer decisions. Focusing on cohorts within the older worker demographic may allow for deeper exploration and a possible clearer perception of the differences in decisions for the career path options available. The antecedents and outcomes from this SLR do provide a basis on which individual questions can be created to delve further into the decision-making process for contemporary recareerists. To provide support for organisational talent management, then it is important to understand why people leave their occupational job, in terms of their triggers or expectations for their career.

Second, this study does not provide insights into the context for the personal decision-making process individuals engage with as part of their recareer decisions. The research by Kim (2014) discussed that there are four components to understanding the adult career transition which are actors, activities, time, and place. This study took place in Korea but shows some support for understanding career transitions within the perception of and reactions to a worker's context. More in depth exploration of the contextual factors that have influenced individual decision making from individuals recareer story would provide a stronger depth of awareness. The macro environment has been highlighted within this research, but also understanding the organisational push/pull factors will allow more understanding and support for older worker career paths. Within the SLR, only one study was from the UK so therefore there is a need for more research with a UK lens.

Third, although the research on recareering is limited (Rice, 2015), the research that has been identified focuses on participants who have professional identities and are able to use their professional network to support and to inspire their career transition (Kim, 2014; Van Solinge, 2103: Cahill et al., 2006). One study in the SLR used a large database to explore later life transition to entrepreneurship (Kautonen et al., 2017). The lack of detail regarding the previous role was considered a limitation in their research, with a recommendation to explore characteristics of individuals job or industry before a career transition. For someone who may be moving from a role as a surgeon in a hospital to becoming a partner in a private practice may be able to perceive what their career transition may look like (Kautonen et al., 2017). There is a gap to explore for those who maybe do not have that professional identity and understand how they explore their identity transition. The research included managers and professionals such as lawyers and consultants who have followed an independent project based career (Greenstone & Miller, 2012), or on sales and executives or those whose previous jobs had higher levels of autonomy or pay was linked to performance. Kautonen et al., (2005) noted a gap in research that focused on the roles before recareering, and the type of business older workers selected for their recareer choice. Understanding the influence of the type of organisational role on the recareer choice is an area for further research.

Fourth, a gap in the study was felt to be about the identity transition process. As people are moving more towards contemporary careers that will have a more mobile fluid career, how people craft themselves is important to understand, along with how organisations can create and identity connections (Petriglieri et al., 2018). Self-identity and career projects are more interlinked within contemporary careers and this management of identity setting for this type of work is less studied compared with professional role settings and with transitions to new organisational roles (Petriglieri et al., 2018). Career identity could be a factor in the career transition decision making process for older workers. When recareering to a contemporary career, research suggests that individuals do not follow a single industry or organisational permanent identity transition (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010) and less is understood about the process and factors influencing identity transition for those transitioning into contemporary careers (Arthur, 2008; Petriglieri et al., 2018). There is therefore a need to understand the role of self and role identify for those who transition to a new career.

Finally, this research is being carried out during a global pandemic due to Covid-19 and the UK is facing its greatest unemployment figures for 5 years (ONS, 2021). We are living in a period of change and uncertainty which can lead to people reconsidering their career options so understanding the push/pull reasons for why people may leave their occupational role will be essential for workforce planning tasks for organisations and industries. The research found that transitions to self-employment are likely to be affected by the state of the economy, market forces and public policies (Zissimopoulos et al., 2007) and broader societal changes (Kim, 2014) so further research appreciative of the macro influences can be very relevant in this current time.

3.16 Implications for practice

There were three implications for practice

Firstly, the study highlighted that there has been a rise in the numbers of older workers selecting self-employment (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007; Rice, 2015), however, it was felt that self-employment in older workers was under studied (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). One of the reasons suggested as to why older workers are selecting self-employment, was due to the lack of opportunities (Van Solinge, 2014). Recent headlines are reporting on the ‘great resignation’ following the Covid-19 pandemic with numbers of people rising to highest levels seen during 2021 in the US (BBC Worklife, 2020). Exploring reasons for leaving and next career choice would be very interesting in current times when job markets and talent pools are subject to variability and unpredictability (Signoretti, Pederiva, & Zaninotto, 2022), HR practitioners could record this data during exit interviews. Exit interviews have some negative press in terms of how effective they can be for employee voice (Pace & Kisamore, 2017), but they can be very useful for understanding the reasons for employee turnover (Johns & Gorrick, 2016). The benefit for HR is if they then use this a resource to understand their workforce and link it to other HR initiatives such as recruitment (Johns & Gorrick, 2016), they may be able to start to engage with this demographic of self-employed workers for freelance or consulting opportunities. This may also mitigate the risk of knowledge drain as this cohort will have the knowledge of jobs, processes and specific customer insights (Signoretti, Pederiva, & Zaninotto (2022).

The second implication for practice is that there was a limited review of the engagement with formal and informal learning. The difference between formal and informal learning is that formal learning is structured whereas informal learning is unstructured and unplanned (Uhunoma et al., 2020). “informal learning arises spontaneously as a result of challenges within a work context, or an unanticipated need or chance occurrence at work“ (Uhunoma et al., 2020, p.202). There was a theme of older workers engaging with informal learning on one study (Bimrose et al., 2012). Those who work within the gig-economy tend to have received little or no formal learning (Broughton, Gloster, Marvell et al., 2018). A report from ‘the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed’ (IPSE) also found that there was a lack of support for upskilling the self-employed (IPSEb, 2018). In their report IPSE suggested ways of improving support included, making training more affordable, ensure training can fit around unpredictable schedules and to provide mentoring for self-employed people. There is a need for those communities or practitioners who work with self-employed people to ensure they are informed about training opportunities and are raising awareness about training and learning opportunities.

The third implication for practice is that there seems to be a lack of career support or understanding of career goals from organisations. The research found that support was gained from informal networks rather than their organisation (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). Although there is research needed to understand the coaching model and support needed for those who have recareered, there is a practical area in which organisations can start to think about the holistic career needs of their older workers as a retention and motivation initiative. Coaching training for HR and business leaders will impact the career coaching support within the workplace for older workers (Leisink & Knies, 2011), however, there is a need for more age inclusive awareness for career management in organisational thinking (Greller & Stroh, 2003). Organisations have been slow in seeing the benefit of having a positive approach to managing older workers due to the perceived challenge of return on investment (Midtsundstad, 2011), however, understanding the impact of talent pool shrinking and knowledge loss from this ‘silver tsunami’ may help create the case for a more age inclusive career approach from organisations. Organisations should consider their older worker talent pool with a more strategic approach by understanding their organisational age profile, possible time to retirement, and the impact of the lost knowledge which will inform their vulnerability due to possible key worker loss from their older workers (Paullin, 2014). This strategic approach will provide evidence and momentum for change to consider HR practices to retain and recruit older workers. Organisations find that it is currently an ‘unmentionable’ to discuss later life career options (Greller & Stroh, 2003). Understanding the needs and values of older workers career needs will help inform organisations and work past the ‘discomfort’ and ageism currently in place in terms of managing older workers. Organisations that wish to retain older workers do need to support career exploration to improve engagement at this time of their career (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes and Hughes, 2012).

3.17 Conclusion

The global population is ageing and along with key trends in economic support for ageing populations, it is generally agreed that people will continue to work for longer. Despite this, there is limited research to support career management for older workers in thinking about a contemporary career. Those who have recareered to self-employment have been found to retire later than those in traditional occupational roles (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007) and this is important in the wider macro context of creating career options for longer lives, prolonged workforce participation and financial independence.

This review identified six themes that influence career transitions in older workers: four antecedents - financial factors, health, working conditions and formal and informal learning, and two outcomes, social capital/network and intrinsic motives. This study extends our understanding and highlights the need to move beyond the bias that transitions are driven by financial motives and expand this research and examine the context, decision making factors and motivation for why people create a second career for themselves. This review shines a light on the dearth of research in this area and highlights key gaps in our knowledge about older workers career transitions. Developing a better understanding and opening up opportunities for more awareness and knowledge seeking within this demographic, will likely lead to significant social, economic and health gains through enhancing the longevity of workforce participation.

Chapter 4 Empirical Research Chapter

Career transition for older workers: exploration of contextual influences on decisions for recareering from occupation role to contemporary career

4.1 Abstract

People are staying in the workforce for longer due to a combination of longer life expectancy and financial necessity. This means people are working past traditional retirement age and many more workers change career late in life to support career longevity. This study explores why older workers recareer to help understand reasons for career change for possible career longevity decisions.

15 participants aged over 50 who have recareered from an occupational role to a contemporary career were interviewed to explore the reasons for their recareer decision. Participants were recruited using a random sampling method. Semi-structured interviews were used to allow exploration of shared patterns in the meanings of the experience of the recareerists (Moustakas, 1994). Questions were designed to be an open format to allow participants to use their own words and let their story emerge. Reflexive Thematic Analysis was used to explore findings and core themes. To examine the individual and contextual factors that influenced the exit from an organisational role to a contemporary career for this group of recareerists have been assessed, the IGLOO framework (Nielsen et al., 2018) provided a guiding heuristic, examining the individual, group, line manager and organisational antecedents driving recareer decisions and outcomes.

Individual antecedents included financial awareness, non-work hobbies, leap into decision and search for meaning. Group antecedents included peer support and influence. Leader relationship and organisational choices were further antecedents and Covid-19 was an outside antecedent. Outcomes showed that there was a mix of worry about future work and satisfaction with work life balance.

Although elements of a protean career mindset and boundaryless orientation can be seen within the findings, there was little support or awareness with the participants of how they used insights or knowledge to support career decisions. One key outcome was that most had created a portfolio career for themselves without the knowledge of this career option. Most participants felt that their contemporary career choice gave them more freedom to choose how to work and to manage a better work life balance to support choice for future work plans instead of a traditional retirement career end.

Although there is modern career theory to support this cohort of workers, it is not being used in an effective way for older workers who recareer from an organisational role. This is a growing demographic of workers and there is room in HRM and Organisational Psychology to provide a stronger support. As this group is difficult to reach due to their independent work status and lack of professional network, new and novel ways will need to be created to reach this group and provide the support needed.

Further ideas for practice were identified within the IGLOO framework including a career model development for recareerists.

4.2 Introduction

Evidence suggests that older workers who are well educated are engaging in activities known as ‘recareering’ (Rice, 2015), meaning transitioning to a new career in a new industry following exit from long term occupational role (Johnson et al., 2009). With high numbers of the baby boomer generation already recareering, we are seeing a ‘Silver Tsunami’ of career transition with little research available to manage or understand this change (Rice, 2015). Much of the research on older workers career transitions has been objectively viewing the types of transition, with limited research on subjective view of individuals (Biemann et al., 2012). Further understanding will help design support for older workers and for organisations to create more effective development initiatives for those who are beginning to consider their career options for later life (Rice, 2015).

People leave their occupational job for many reasons and quitting behaviour has been a focus for research especially in regards to their intention to leave as once a person has quit their job there is limited opportunity to reflect on thinking and behaviour prior to this decision (Firth et al., 2004). The reasons why people leave their job are many: research suggests that transitions are driven by personal reasons (Firth et al., 2004), a lack of job satisfaction (Markey, Ravenswood & Webber, 2015), a negative organisational environment (Markey et al., 2015), or environmental factors (Firth et al., 2004) which, in current times, could include the Covid-19 pandemic. The interplay of the different contextual factors and impact on career choices are felt to have an urgency in career research (Mayrhofer et al., 2007), yet despite this call for urgency very little research examining the career transitions of older workers has emerged. The focus for this career research is the cohort of older workers who ‘recareer’ by leaving an occupational role to create a new contemporary career. Thinking about the influences on career decisions is important to reflect how the world of work is changing “At the intersection of societal history and individual biography is the career” (Grandjean, 1981, p.1058), and this quote has informed this research to reflect on current times whilst allowing the individual reflection from recareerists to be explored. Literature on older workers career transition has largely been felt to be scattered (Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2010) with different bodies of literature examining different outcomes such as reasons for leaving, work motivations, generativity, early retirement etc.

A systematic literature review was carried out as a background for this empirical study and to synthesize research (Mulligan-Foster et. al, 2021 - in draft). A background review is often used to inform decisions for further research by identifying a gap in the theoretical knowledge. The Systematic Literature Review identified the research on over 50’s who are recareering to assess career theories informing research and to understand more the known reasons for workers leaving an occupational role for a contemporary career. The available studies were limited, and 8 studies were collected and synthesised. 6 themes were discussed in terms older workers recareering. 4 antecedents of health, finance, formal/informal learning, and workplace influences and 2 outcomes of social network and intrinsic motives were developed from the analysis. Priority areas for further research were identified as more understanding of personal reasons for those older workers who are recareering specifically to a contemporary career. Further research was identified as studying specific cohorts within the demographic of older workers who are recareering such as those transitioning for roles that may include a change in their professional identity and the impact. Finally, what is the influence of different contextual factors such as the macro context of Covid 19 and its impact on numbers who are recareering and organisational push/pull factors, that in turn will influence individual decision making.

Few studies considered the individual reasons for the career transition. Understanding the individual reasons (Mulligan-Foster et al., 2021 - in prep) and stories for later life career transition was identified as an interesting area for further research (Kautonen, Kibler & Minniti, 2017), as little is known on how individuals experience their career transition (Kim, 2014). There is felt to be a lack of awareness of the activities involved with recareering for older workers (Rice, 2015). Mulligan-Foster et al. (2021) also noted that the research lacked theoretical grounding with no consideration of career theories such as protean (Hall, 1996) and boundaryless careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), nor what career transitions mean in terms of psychological boundaries (Arthur et al., 2005), defined as "the capacity to move as seen through the mind of the career actor" (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006: 21). Where qualitative research has been conducted to develop deeper insights (e.g. Rice, 2015), it has been noted that these have been conducted in 'isolation from their environments' (Bimrose et al., 2013). This finding was a key influence in the aim to explore the individual stories from recareerists and their perception of the contextual influences.

Many models of career development are based on a linear model in which the assumption is that people will move though certain age-related career stages (Sterns & Miklos, 1995) or the traditional view that career contracts were based on vertical progression in an organisational context (Hall, 1996) or to increase salary (Johnson et al., 2009). However, research suggests increasing numbers of older workers are 'recareering' (Rice, 2015) and are departing from this linear model. This study aims to explore individual stories about career transitions.

4.3 Literature Review

4.3.1 Contemporary career

The focus of this research is on older workers who leave an organisational role to create a contemporary career. The term 'career' is a socially constructed term and conceptually Is used to describe the working like of an individual (Coupland, 2002). The term career and the concept of career can be interpreted and renegotiated in terms of the changing world. In terms of this research the focus is on Contemporary career choice and understand the changing perception of 'career' for some workers. There has been an increasing trend in people selecting a contemporary career (CIPD, 2017). Contemporary careers are "an individual's work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside organisation, which form a unique pattern over individual's life span" (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009, p.1543). Contemporary careers are reflective of the career for modern times and are described as

"a) shifting boundaries in occupational, organisational, national and global work arrangements.

b) higher uncertainty given the rapid generation of knowledge and the unpredictability of its effects; and

c) greater individual agency, not only as a response to shifting boundaries and uncertainty, but also because of the wider combinations of job experiences that can be incorporated into one career" (Arthur, 2008. p.168)

This research aims to develop a greater awareness of why people decide to leave an organisational career to move to a contemporary career. Arthur, Svetlana & Khapova (2017) believe an 'intelligent career' is about taking ownership of your own career and understanding of yourself, how you can make money and improving the social world. The longer-term aim of understanding this area is to allow organisations to identify career transition readiness and capability amongst older employees. Many organisations are already relying on independent workers to add to their talent pool (MBO Partners, 2020). This research will provide a basis for interventions to retain older workers or to support their career needs. The research is needed as companies do not have a model for dealing with their growing number of ageing workers (Leisink & Knies, 2011).

4.3.2 Contextual influences

Career choices have traditionally been considered in terms of organisational hierarchies and the context of the individual and the organisation have been considered in this regard. Career is felt to be about developing an 'intelligent career' in terms of being ready to adapt and see opportunities available in a wider context that the traditional employer (Arthur, Khapova &

Richardson (2017). Traditionally career paths have been set by the organisation a person has worked for (Wong et al. 2003). There has been a change in career models led by issues such as ageing population, longer life expectancy and globalisation (Kim, 2014). This period of career management is felt to be a 'third stage' and a period of reflection, and an opportunity 'review and renew' your career (Hall & Stokes, 2021) These changes have led to a more individual holistic approach to a person's career plans and the creation of theories such as Boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) and the Protean Career (Grimland, Gadot & Baruch, 2012). Modern, contemporary career choices are felt to be more individual driven but still responding to layers of contextual influences. Career decisions are no longer made without a wider context being considered (Mayrhofer et al., 2007). There is felt to many triggers for a career shift, including changes in the workplace or home life, or a need to create a career with better balance or more meaning (Hall & Stokes, 2021) The individual view and the organisational culture have been a focus of career theory (Mayrhofer et al., 2007), other areas such as macro influences, group/peer influences, career options should also be considered. A contextual model from Mayrhofer et al., (2007) outlines layers of contextual factors in career research. This model includes 'individual career patterns', 'context of work', 'context of origin', 'context of society and culture' and 'global context' with provides a wider lens on how we can view research for career management. A further contextual model focusing on career transition was discussed in the research by Kim (2014) which highlighted that both contextual factors and personal factors would influence a person to 'experience disequilibrium on previous career' which then leads to a stage of exploration, reflection, and new connections before committing to new role.The 'Systems Theory Framework' which is a framework that considers different systems that can impact an individual's career in their past, present and future (Patton & McMahon 2006). The contextual models provide groundwork for building new ways of researching careers especially with the gap for established career theory to understanding older workers career choices and career transitions.

While career frameworks offer some insights into the factors influencing career decisions, a broader contextual framework was used for the analysis of older workers recareering in this study: the IGLOO framework (Nielsen, Nielsen, Ogbonnaya et al., 2017) . This framework, grounded in organisational research and used to inform practice, was identified as appropriate due to its utility in allowing for a systematic analysis of themes at different levels within the organisation as well as lending itself to practical application. The IGLOO framework was initially developed as IGLO (Individual, Group, Leader and Organisation) to support practical interventions for health and well-being by assessing the resources required at each level (Nielsen, et al., 2017). It was enhanced to include 'Overarching/social context' to consider resources from outside of work (Nielsen et al., 2018). Each level of the IGLOO framework provides insight to the contextual influences on decision making for a career transition. For this study, a further level of analysis is added to include ‘outcomes’ to provide information of the outcomes of a career transition, specifically with a view to exploring anticipated and achieved outcomes beyond financial motives.

Career transitions especially for older workers need to be understood ‘interwoven with changing contexts’ (Kim, 2014). This study examines the contextual factors with a specific focus on the influences for the career transitions of older workers. Here, the existing research pertaining to each of the contextual factors are discussed– the individual, group, line manager, organisation and overarching levels - to provide an insight to what is known about older workers and recareerists.

Individual factors

A systematic literature review of the factors influencing career decisions of older workers new contemporary career (Mulligan-Foster et al., 2021 – in draft) revealed limited insights into the decisions that lead to workers leaving an organisational role for a different way of working. Studies included in this review indicates that there has been a limited focus on individual reasons (Cahill et al., 2006 & Quinn, 2006b; Dendinger et al., 2005; van Solinge, 2014; Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007).

Specific outcomes of career transitions have received more attention: Quality of life, as measured by psychological needs of control, autonomy, self-realization and pleasure, was found to be improved with later life transition to entrepreneurship compared with those who move to another occupational role (Kautonen et al., 2017). Workers who recareer have been found to enjoy their work more despite a reduction in social standing of a new career (Johnson et al., 2009). Generative reasons for working were also found in older workers with a concerns for passing on skills and abilities (Dendinger et al., 2005). Those who have recareered to self-employment are more likely to work part time than those in occupational jobs, showing higher levels of flexibility to reduce hours and create a stronger work life balance (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007).

To ensure that all workers develop skills that remain viable, and they remain employable, then they need to ensure they keep up with their learning and development for skills relevant to their role and to skills outside their ‘domain-specific expertise’ (Peters, et al., 2019). New learning helps form career identities to support career transition (Kim, 2014). This is similar to the “meta-competencies” Hall (2004), in his Protean Career theory, refers to support continuous learning and ensuring people can remain employable (Peters et al., 2019). Those who are recareering and made a transition to later life self-employment had undertaken formal studies within their career (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). Older workers who transition in their career were also found to engage with continuous learning (Rice, 2015: Bimrose, 2013). It was highlighted that there was a need to look at informal learning (Bimrose, 2013) which are learning activities that workers themselves initiate rather than learning activities sponsored by the organisation (van Rijn, Yang & Sanders, 2013). Informal learning is felt to develop knowledge, skills and abilities that assist with employability and changes both in and outside the organisation (van Rijn, Yang & Sanders, 2013). Focus of learning engagement has been on individual differences including self-efficacy and individual motivation (Runhaar, Sanders & Yang, 2010), however, workers can also differ not just in terms of individual differences but in terms of their self-constructed identity (Runhaar et al., 2010), so how workers who identify as a 'non occupational worker' will view attitudes to learning is to be explored within this research. Recareerists appear to engage with formal and informal learning (Mulligan-Foster et al., 2021 – in draft), and therefore attitude to learning is an area for exploration within individual experiences within the interviews for this study. Those who worked within the gig-economy tend to receive little or no formal learning (Broughton et al., 2018) so exploring some of the contemporary career choices may limit some of the learning choices for older workers in their new career choices. One of the key functions of a professional association is to provide opportunities for learning and training (Runhaar et al., 2010). Those without support from professional bodies may face a further challenge in being aware of specific training opportunities which will be explored with the research sample for this study. The SLR highlighted a gap in understanding what type of roles workers are recareering from and that there had been a focus on what is considered a 'professional career'. Due to the lack of knowledge that is available for understanding workers who are recareering, it was felt important to focus on a subsection to build up awareness of the different cohorts within this demographic.

Work identity is made up of many aspects of life both tangible and intangible. Individual identities can be made up from social identities which are our social groups (including professional identity), relational identities which the meanings links to role relationships, and personal identities which are meanings associated through personal characteristics and meanings (Petriglieri et al., 2018). Career changes therefore require an aspect of change to us and who we are (Ibarra, 2004). The process of changing work identity is not a simple change from one identity to another other but a process of transition in which a range of possible options must be considered (Ibarra, 2004). This process requires an activity of reflection which costs time and energy to consider career options, rather than the traditional view of planning forwards as career changes is contemplated.

Traditional career models propose that to make a successful career change then we must contemplate and decide what we want to do next and then make decisions to move forward based on that knowledge (Ibarra, 2004). Our working identity reflects how we perceive ourselves in the professional role we hold, therefore, to change a professional role a worker will need to deal with how to change their working identity (Ibarra, 2004). A person's working identity is tied to how a person converses and reacts to others about their work and then also impacts on how they live and act within their daily working life (Ibarra, 2004). To change a working identity, the action and activity of exploring different identities needs to come first so the doing comes first and the knowing and decision making comes second (Ibarra, 2004). There has been a lack of research into how people will craft their identities whilst moving to a contemporary career (Petriglieri et al., 2018) so clarity of 'professional roles' was considered as part of the sample definition.

Group Influences

Networking is the creating and building of support relationships, and in terms of career, networks can provide opportunities (Mayrhofer et al., 2007). Older workers did find that withdrawing from the workplace leads to withdrawing from a key source of social interactions (Dendinger et al., 2005). As people change to a contemporary career, they have been found to develop connections with others engaged in similar career as them and to other membership bodies such as university alumni to boost connections (Petriglieri et al., 2018) or use their professional connections to source new opportunities (Kim, 2014). Connections to others in similar working patterns can be seen as a way of developing self-reliance and support for career adaptation (Petriglieri et al., 2018). Effective networks are found to improve learning and personal growth and a strong network can enhance your career (Cross & Thomas, 2011).

A challenge of boundaryless career thinking is that if one is unbounded from the view of a career from their organisation, then the resulting independent view of one's career may mean that a worker considering their career away from organisational bounds means the worker may not access career support for their own value driven career goals (Wang et al., 2013). This is an important consideration for older workers considering a transition, as it may mean that workers do not have access to career development resources and support. Many may obtain this support from professional networks, peers or other bodies but less is known regarding this access or uptake.

Leader influences

Leadership support can reduce burnout and intention to quit (Kalliath and Beck, 2001) so supporting leaders in understanding the impact of behaviour on older workers could assist with more inclusive workplaces and retention. Research did find that line managers with coaching abilities are willing to help their older workers however it was identified that there is a lack of knowledge and instruction in how to best develop this demographic (Leisink & Knies, 2011). Leisink and Knies (2011) suggested that if senior management supported the creation of opportunities and training for their line managers to work with older workers, then this will support the sustained employability for older workers.

Considering the demographic shifts and career needs it has led to an importance for HR professionals to examine existing stereotypes and bias that influence the perception of employees over 50 (Greller & Stroh, 2003). Some HR professionals find the topic of later life career options a difficult topic to discuss due to age sensitivity (Greller & Stroh, 2003). These issues of bias and uncertainty of what to say has been found to affect HR professionals' ability to explore career options with their employees (Snape & Redman, 2003). Education and awareness of possible solutions have been identified as one possible route to reduce stereotype and bias (Duval, 2003) as this would provide some guidance of career conversations for older workers. Levels of coaching ability for older workers in HR professionals have also been found to affect the level of support for later life career support (Leisink & Knies, 2011) and this research highlighted the need for line manager support in awareness training and policies to enhance career management for older workers.

Organisational influences

Organisational influence is one of the key social contexts as for most older workers, their work experience is likely to be linked to a small number of organisations (Wang et al., 2012). Changing organisational work practices can have an impact for mid and later career workers who joined work under one arrangement of a hierarchical career but are now facing a transition to think about career from an independent point of view (Wang et al., 2012). Career choice and decisions are impacted by opportunities and constraints in a workers organisation or work environment (Biemann et al., 2012). Career change research has a view that workers will change roles for higher salaries but older workers may actually recareer to downgrade for reasons such as less stress, more flexibility, more interesting work and work that is more fulfilling (Johnson et al., 2009). A worker who was pushed to make a decision due to redundancy was found to be more likely to change their career to a contemporary career, compared to a person who voluntarily retires (Johnson et al., 2009). Access to capital (such as a redundancy payment) has been found to be a factor that can influence the decision to become self-employed (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). In the research by Kim (2014), it was found that a feeling of powerlessness, a change in workplace or unexpected situations in the workplace could lead to an individual to reflect on their role, and when the seed for transition would be planted.

The impact for organisations is that, by understanding the push and pull factors for career transitions in older workers it will allow for more strategic workforce planning. It will also support a corporate social responsibility to ensure organisations are supporting and training their employees to be equipped for future career longevity by training in entrepreneur skills, how to create opportunities (van Solinge, 2014), and to support a more holistic view of career for older workers (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). It also will allow organisations to avail of this talent pool as potential routes for talent gaps.

The reflection on who is classed as an older worker reflects possible age discrimination in the workplace (Mccarthy et al., 2014). This age discrimination may be a significant `push factor' for those workers who seek to leave an organisation earlier than their retirement age (Snape & Redman, 2003). Organisations do not tend to have age friendly employment options or even have strategies in place to attract older workers (Rice, 2015). Generational inclusive workplaces that allow older workers to explore generative needs can improve the aims of older workers career goals (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005). Those who recareer find the stressful work conditions are reduced (Johnson et al., 2009). By understanding the needs of this demographic, they can better prepare to support longevity of career and stop the knowledge drain as older workers leave the workplace. This drain of resources has been termed “Silver Tsunami” and organisations are not felt to prepared for this loss of talent and knowledge (Rice, 2015).

The need for support for older workers is demonstrated in practices that tend to work to promote motivation and satisfaction in younger workers, and are less effective for older workers (Marcus, 2011). There are some innovative practices in human resources such as Encore careers (Freedman, 2007), bridge employment (Muller, Lange, Weigi, Oxfart & Heijden, 2013) and flexible arrangements (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes & Hughes, 2012), however, it is identified that research and practices need to move on further to increase employability for older workers (Marcus, 2011).

Managing career for their workers is a core part of Human Resource Management (Baruch, 2014), and an awareness of how to manage career for the changing landscape and demographics in this volatile labour market create need for a more flexible approach to career management (Ebner, 2021). One of the main areas where a gap in research is found concerns how HR managers should deal with career planning for their ageing workforce (Snape & Redman, 2003). For this area to become part of HR management, then the way in which older workers policies will support HR goals in managing talent in line with strategic goals, keeping costs down, succession planning and responding to macro environments, will need to be identified (Wong & Schultz, 2009). There have been calls for organisations to recognise that retirees can be recruited to access available sets of flexible and experienced workers to meet talent gaps (Greller & Stroh, 2003). Workers can be found to be moving towards an independent career orientation in which workers see their career separate from the organisation (Rodrigues et al., 2015). Therefore to work on retention of essential talent then employers will need to think about how to retain older workers with independent career orientations for knowledge retention and talent management purposes (Collings & Mellahi, 2009).

Older workers are often excluded from organisational training and development (Canduela, Dutton, Johnson et al., 2012). Reasons for fewer training opportunities can be due to the perceived limited return on investment as older workers are facing retirement and will not be able to utilise new skills and learning (Findsen, 2015; *Promoting Adult Learning*, 2005). Some research found that employers believed older workers would be resistant to training and development (Weyman, Wainwright, O' Hara et al., 2012). Older workers who were recommended for training and learning opportunities were found to be more likely for those who had a higher level of skills and education (Lazazzara, Karpinska & Henkens, 2013) and lower skills workers are found to be more likely to be excluded from training opportunities (Canduela et al., 2012). It has been found that 'age positive' initiatives from UK government do encourage workplaces to work related training as a step to retain older workers (HM Government, 2010), demonstrating the need for more understanding of the barriers for workers engaging in workplace learning.

The lack of engagement with older workers learning agenda can lead to older workers feeling threatened with learning as they have reached a point in their career without extra skills or having reached their perceived right level of learning required for their role (Canduela et al., 2012). Older workers may see less opportunities for their advancement in their career and therefore may be less motivated to invest in opportunities or continuous learning (Wang et al., 2012). Research using socio-emotional selectivity theory (SST) which is a theory that has a focus on workers perception of time and their future work opportunities, suggests that older workers may have a limited view of their future work opportunities (Peters, Van der Heijden, Spurk, De Vos & Klaassen, 2019).

Outside - Macro influences

Macro factors such as pension provision, shifting demographics and working patterns influence career transitions and decision making in older adults, as identified in the recent systematic review (Mulligan et al, in draft). New ways of working including virtual working, gig working, contract arrangements and multiple jobs are all evolving in relation to influences such as globalisation, technology and labour markets (Mayrhofer et al., 2007) provide new thinking about career choices (Wang et al., 2013) and present widening opportunities for older workers.

Recent data suggests that the pandemic and the resultant impact will further influence decision making and career transitions. In the US there were 6 million fewer resignations in 2020 compared to 2019 (Klotz, 2021). However, this has been counterbalanced with an increase in the numbers of people resigning in 2021 with a 20 year high at the end of 2021 (ONS, 2021). Other research by Microsoft for a global workforce found 41% are planning on leaving their employer in 2021 (*Microsoft,* 2021). In the UK and Ireland 38% of employees are reported to be planning on resigning in 2021/22 (Personio and Opinium , 2021). Reasons for those resigning in the UK are felt to be a change in their priorities and a want to pursue a job that is more suited to their 'dream job' or for a reflection on the way they have been treated by their employer during the pandemic (BBC Worklife, 2020).

4.3.3 Professional roles and professional identity

Research in regards to recareering has focused on professionals with third level education (Rice, 2015; Petriglieri et al., 2018) and there is a gap in research those recareering from roles that would not be classed as professional. Terms such as profession, professional, professional identity, and professionalism are often used interchangeably (Lane, 2018). It is a challenge to measure professional identity and certain occupations are recognised as a profession such as law, theology and medicine being traditionally seen as 'true' professions (Rutter & Duncan, 2010). Professional identity refers to "the constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role" (Ibarra, 1999, pp. 764-5). How people identify themselves and their professional identity is important to understanding career change as a professional identity can be detached from the identity to the employers' organisation (Eby, Butts & Lockwood, 2003). Workers often describe their identity as their profession as opposed to the organisation they were employed by (DeFillippi and Arthur, 1996). Professional identity therefore can be a mediator within career change as it can impact the workers perception of control, social pressure and career change attitudes (Rutter & Duncan, 2010). For example, having a strong sense of professional identity may positively influence the relationships between perceived behavioural control, attitude toward career change and a career change intention (Rutter & Duncan, 2010).

Clarification of the difference between professional identity and career identity is therefore important. Carless and Bernath (2007, p. 186) define career identity as “the extent to which the self is defined by work” which is how we expect people to describe their career. Career identity will be that workers identify with their work in line with their current employer and does not require accountability with professional peers (Rutter & Duncan, 2010). Professional identity assumes a level of growth and development in one’s profession via their network and engaging in learning through conferences (Rutter & Duncan, 2010). Many people develop multiple identities and interests during their career (Ibarra, 2003). The move from traditional roles with one employer to a more transient workforce has opened up a wider view of working options and interests in regard to understanding career progression. Traditional career research has focused on the organisational career model where the support and guidance was on how to progress up the career ladder (Petriglieri et al., 2018). When moving career to enter a new organisation, people will adapt their work identities (Beyer & Hannah, 2002), and can adjust identities for moving to new professions (Pratt, Rockmann & Kaufmann, 2006). When recareering to a contemporary career, research suggests that individuals do not follow a single industry or organisational permanent identity transition (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010) and less is understood about the process and factors influencing identity transition for those transitioning into a contemporary career (Arthur, 2008; Petriglieri et al., 2018).

How do we define a professional identity? Early research provides criteria for what can be seen as a professional identity which is 1. ‘A prolonged, specialized, intellectual training, 2. ‘a technique, either scientific of institutional’, 3. ‘Remuneration for professional service’, 4. ‘A sense of responsibility to the client’, and 5. ‘Formation of associations’ (Ahern, 1971). In this era of knowledge worker, the distinction between professional and non-professional work is blurred making the focus of studying professional vs non-professional workers more challenging. A key characteristic to identify non-professional workers is the absence of professional associations in which they are a member of (Moliner, Martínez-Tur, Peiró, Ramos & Cropanzano, 2011). For the context for this study the use of a characteristic to identify non-professional workers is the absence of professional associations in which they are a member of (Moliner et al., 2011). This will be considered as part of the sampling so there is a focus on career transition for those who need to consider their career identity as part of their transition. This lack of membership limits the availability of training, networking, and career identity that professional workers can avail of, all of which have been found to influence career transitions (Mulligan-Foster et al., 2021 - in draft). Research has found that workers with a contemporary career crafted a new identity via their external self-definition of their role and internal source of defining themself, both away from an organisational identity (Petriglieri et al., 2018). Learning opportunities helped create new role identities therefore supporting career transitions

(Kim, 2014). The view of trusted support to help develop the definition of self was found to be essential (Petriglieri et al., 2018). Exploring how workers, particularly those with less established networks, who transition navigate their social and peer support will hopefully provide further insights for older worker recareering needs.

4.3.4 Recareer choice of Self-employment

The number of self-employed workers increased from 3.3 million people (12.0% of the labour force) in 2001 to 4.8 million (15.1% of the labour force) in 2017 (Yuen, Sidhu, Vassilev et al., 2018). As workers are found to be creating longevity of career, would their motivation for the next career be different as opposed to viewing it as a shorter-term bridge role? Self-employment as a contemporary career choice is a growing option due to the increase in gig working opportunities. Gig working has also emerged as a term in recent years as part of options available for contemporary careers. "The gig economy can be defined as a way of working that is based on people having temporary jobs or doing separately, rather than working for an employer" (CIPD, 2017, p4). However, it is a term that that only a fifth of UK adults are aware (CIPD, 2017), demonstrating that workers may not be fully aware of career options available to them. Independent career choices are becoming widespread (Rodrigues et al., 2015) and since 2000's there has been an increase in professionals recareering along with rising numbers of gig workers (FT, 2020). Independent workers often referred to as gig workers are gaining interest from organisations, with lots of organisations relying on independent workers to add to their talent pool (MBO Partners, 2020). In the UK, the prediction is that 20% of organisations will outsource to self-employed workers. Even organisations such a PwC advertise and chase this talent pool "How we approach our work life is changing with the rise of a contingent workforce, and at PwC we're adapting to that change. We have recognised that the traditional ways of working may not be right for everyone and want to continue to secure the best talent while offering the variety, experience and flexibility that suits you. Which is why we're launching our contractor network." (PwC, n.d.). Gig working can be seen as a positive alternative for those wanting a more flexible working arrangement including older workers (Broughton et al., 2018). This may increase the opportunities for older workers to participate in the market (Richter, 2020). The need for support for older workers is highlighted in recent research that notes organisational practices tend to work to promote motivation and satisfaction in younger workers, and are less effective for older workers (Marcus, 2011).

Zissimopoulos et al., (2004) found that older workers, men, married and those more educated would have a higher propensity for self-employment. They found research that 'more advantaged groups would be more likely to pulled into self-employment (Fairlee and Meyer, 1996). People would be more likely to be 'pushed' into self-employment if their phase on non-employment was longer (Moore & Mueller, 2002) and that 'misfits' – those with a history of job instability, low wage workers and unemployed - would be more likely to be pushed into self-employment (Evans & Leighton, 1989). Financial stability or access to capital can increase the pull factor to be self-employed, although this research was completed on younger workers (Evans & Jovanovic, 1989). There has been little research focused on the move to self-employment in older workers (Zissimopoulos et al, 2004).

Free agents are the term given to workers who have left organisational roles (Pink, 2001). The 'free-agent' includes freelancers, e-lancers, self-employed professionals, and proprietors of small businesses. These are not necessarily entrepreneurs … they are not necessarily start-ups that aspire to go big. They're people who have either been cast aside by larger organisations or have broken away from large organisations to make their own way." (Greengard, 2012). Daniel Pink wrote in 1997 that there were 25 million free agents in the US (Greengard, 2012) and the people he interviewed felt that working as a 'free agent' created "a beautiful synchronicity between who you are and what you do." and in regards to organisational roles "being a lifer is no longer an option" (Pink, 2001). The number of self-employed people in the US in 2020 was found to be 44 million (Transamerica, 2020) showing that this workforce is increasing. The research from Gallup (2019) noted that technology has been a huge influence in creating opportunities for self-employed workers. The research noted that only 39.4% were happy with their benefits highlighting that there are concerns about health and pension coverage. However, 79% of this workforce prefer their way of working in comparison to an occupational 'traditional' job (Gallup, 2019).

The application of career theory in research, whilst being more open to alternatives to organisational career success, has not placed a focus on the different options and types of career paths that workers are selecting including self-employment (Biemann et al., 2012). Self-employment in older workers is also an important area to understand as a later life career choice as it is a growing option for older workers, but, there are gaps in knowledge as to whether a move to self-employment was due to the lack of paid work opportunities (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Younger workers are found to recareer to another role or to a part time tole, whereas older workers were more likely to recareer to self-employment (Biemann et al., 2012). Already we see that of those who are working past state pension age, 36% are self-employed (Statistics, 2019) so self-employment as a contemporary career option should be considered as part of the exploration on this study.

4.4 Present study

The study has explored the context for recareering in terms of macro, organisational and individual levels. There is a lack of career theory supporting research on recareerists to inform focused research on use of career theory. This study will explore the different contextual influences of recareerists for a group of workers over 50 who have recently experienced a career transition. The aim is to build on knowledge of the influences in the decision for recareerists to understand more about which contextual factors do inform their decision.

The question to be explored withing this research are as follows:

- What are the contextual influences on the decision to recareer from an occupational role to a contemporary career for workers aged over 50, in terms of individual, group, leadership, organisational, outside (macro) levels?

4.5 Methods

4.5.1 Sample

Sampling followed a four-point approach (Robinson, 2014) 1. Definition of the sample universe, which is described in table 7 in terms of inclusion criteria, 2. Decision of sample size which based on research described below was 15, 3. Devise a sample strategy which was a random sampling method described below, and 4. Source the sample.

Inclusion criteria
Aged over 50
Held a previous occupational role or lengthy primary career
Recareered within previous 24 months - This time limit was set to ensure that memories are fresh in people's mind.
Does not have a work identity linked to a 'professional role' (such as accountant, lawyer, finance professional, psychologist, medical consultant etc) A characteristic to identify non-professional workers is the absence of professional associations in which they are a member of (Moliner et al., 2011).
As this research was carried out during Covid-19 pandemic, we did not include any people who are shielding, isolating, or suffering any major health threat caused directly or indirectly by Covid-19

Table 9 – Inclusion criteria for empirical study

In terms of sample size, "qualitative sample sizes are large enough to allow the unfolding of a 'new and richly textured understanding' of the phenomenon under study, but small enough so that the ''deep, case-oriented analysis of qualitative data is not precluded'" (Vasileiou et al., 2018, p.2). Considering saturation of themes was considered important to ensure adequate data is collected. Consideration of the 'information power' that the sample holds is also important (Malterud, Siersm, & Guassora, 2016) so being specific about sample inclusion criteria to ensure they have adequate knowledge and experience will help with deciding on numbers for your sample. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) analysed 60 interviews and found that after 12 interviews, saturation would be reached. Green and Thorogood (2004) suggested that for interview-based studies in which the research question is fairly specific, no further information would be gathered in participant levels over 20. Research on saturation influenced the decision for sample numbers and the advice was understood to be acceptable number of interviews of 15.

Participants were recruited using a random sampling method and was deliberately broad in nature to enable the exploration of experiences from diverse participants. An advertisement was placed on the researchers LinkedIn profile and shared by several within this network and placed on a small number of freelancers Facebook pages. Further advertisements were placed with a local business network the researcher was engaged in that was predominantly made up of self-employed people. A further recruitment request was made via the Open University to a group of tutors within a business module.

The sample that was sourced were asked to complete a short online questionnaire to assess the inclusion criteria. There were 35 respondents via the survey and via direct mail. The number was reduced to 17 who met the inclusion criteria, and these were invited for an interview. There were some issues with the recording and transcribing for two participants, so the final number included in the research was 15. The age range of participants was from 50 to 63. The average age was 54.8.

Locations of participants included 2 from Canada, 1 from New Zealand, 1 from Australia, 1 from Finland, 1 from Malta, 1 from Ireland and 8 from UK. The inclusion requirements of the sample were that they were over 50 and completed a career transition. Data in terms of location was not specified and as an international database on LinkedIn was used for sampling this attracted participants outside the UK. Demographic homogeneity in terms of age was the aim for this sample rather than geographical homogeneity (Robinson, 2014). The geographical spread was not predictable within the sampling design as the recruitment was organic (Robinson, 2014), but the geographical variety matched the geographical sampling found within the previous SLR research. All countries were western countries and UK speakers. Two of the sample from non-English speaking countries (Finland and Malta) were expatriates from the UK. Although this was qualitative research and their conceptual ethnocentrism (Robinson, 2014) could not be measured, there was a conscious awareness of possible bias or bounded awareness in any possible cultural differences in the transcription of the interviews. It was not felt that the geographical spread led to any cultural differences in the study of the career transition experience. Representation in terms of gender or ethnicity were not part of the search criteria as these were not factors that influenced findings the prior SLR research. The gender split was recorded as female = 10, male = 5.

4.5.2 Participant table

The following table provides an overview of roles of the participants. The more personal details that are shared, then the greater risk there is of a person being identified (Morse et al., 2015), therefore specific location, company names and age of the participants were not included in this table. It is important to keep demographic data aggregated to protect the anonymity of participants (Morse et al., 2009). Pseudonyms were used instead of participant real names. The use of pseudonyms rather than number identifiers gives a personal approach and a reality to the transcribing (Braun & Clarke, 2013), and also aids with ethical consideration of protecting individuals identity (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Pseudonym	**Location**	**Previous Role**	**Current Role(s)**
Beth	UK	Communications and Marketing. Manager for charitable organisation, HE Teacher in college	Tutor, trainer, business administration and marketing
Catherine	UK	Coommunications business partner for pharmaceutical company	Coach
Sue	Canada	Service Delivery Manager for technology company	Coach, sales admin, podcaster, artist, and author
Paula	New Zealand	HR Manager, Ambulance service	Entrepreneur, culture development contractor
Peter	Finland	Onboard coordinator, Postal service	Life coach, Songwriter
Charles	Malta	Transformation team manager, Audit, tax and	Small business owner - tourism

		consulting service organisation.	
John	UK	Officer in Armed Forces	Tutor, musician, teaching, consulting
Mary	UK	Head of Business Change, Online Department Store	Coach and Trainer
Emma	UK	Social worker, Local Government	Coffee business
Tracy	Australia	Leadership development manager, Global Mining Company	Training and consultancy
Anne marie	UK	Director of People and Engagement. SME	Consultant
Kevin	UK	Management Consultant, Asset Management Consultancy	Management Consultant
Sandr a	Ireland	Director of Communications, National Charity	Public Affairs and communications consultant/trainer
Paul	UK	Head of consulting, Learning and Development Consultancy	Coach, trainer, consultant
Nicola	Canada	Director of Employee Wellness, Regional Health Authority	Conflict management practitioner

Table 10 – Overview of participants

4.5.3 Interview Protocol

Interviews were used as the primary method of data collection. They were used to produce the data through the interaction between the participant and the researcher (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). The interviews were semi-structured, to allow for a more informal process and to support people to be able to share their insights. The semi-structured interview process allowed exploration of shared patterns in the meanings of the experience of the recareerists (Moustakas, 1994). Questions were designed to be an open format to allow participants to use their own words and let their story emerge. The questions were supported with probing and clarification questions to gain deeper understanding and provide any required steering to ensure the conversation stayed on track. A copy of the interview proforma is included in appendix 2.

Participants were asked to participate in an interview for up to 60 minutes using MS Teams. Online interviews were used as this research was carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic and face to face interviews were not an option during the UK lockdown. Each participant was provided with an individual link for their MS Team interview. This ensured that any risk to other people gaining access details for the interviews was mitigated further. Each participant was asked to complete a consent form and asked if they are happy for the interview to be recorded. MS Teams prompted that the meeting was being recorded and shared a message with participants to inform that the meeting was being recorded so this gave a further confirmation.

4.5.4 Design

The participants were studied through semi-structured interviews and observation to identify shared patterns in the meanings of the experience of their recareering journey. There is limited research using a phenomenological research approach to study later life career decisions (Rice, 2015). This approach allowed an exploration of the individuals experience of recareering and allow us to understand reasons for recareering for older workers. There is a gap in interview-based research that will allow exploration into older workers who have recareered. There was not an established methodology to follow for this research.

Although the SLR has created some themes in research it is focused on participants who were identified as ‘professionals’. The previous roles were not clearly explored so it is hard to confirm the identification process. Focus on those who do not have a professional body association allowed focus on a sample who may work as professionals but do not have a professional identity as part of their career identification. The aim was to allow an open-minded and iterative approach (Frith and Gleeson, 2004). Thematic Analysis allows a hands-on approach with a clear process (Braun & Clarke, 2006) whilst also allowing a chance for the researcher to be hands on with the data and contribute to a domain of knowledge by locating existing knowledge within the study and challenging it too (Sage, 2019). The process and description of Thematic Analysis resonated most clearly for this study and was selected as current preferred methodology.

There are no pre-existing themes for older workers who recareer, so this methodology was all exploratory research (Tuckett, 2005). Other research on older workers has often used interviews to explore and inform research (Rice, 2005, Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). However, previous research has focused on older workers who have career transitions but not on older workers who recareer to a contemporary career, so the researched wanted to use established research methods, applying this approach within a different cohort that has not been studied.

4.5.5 Ethics

Ethical approval was granted for this research.

The researcher is a chartered psychologist and abides to the ethical guidelines from the British Psychological Society. The overarching ethical guidelines for psychologists are 'Respect', 'Competence', 'Responsibility', and 'Integrity'. The BPS provides further ethical guidelines for both practice and research. The BPS guidelines for research include 4 principles which are 1. 'Respect for the autonomy, privacy and dignity of individuals, groups and communities. 2. Scientific Integrity, 3. Social Responsibility, 4. Maximising benefit and minimising harm. Each of the ethical guidelines was studied and steps were taken throughout the research to ensure ethical obligations. Ethical approval was sought and approved by Birkbeck.

4.6 Analysis

A combination of deductive and inductive Thematic Analysis was used. Thematic Analysis supports explorational studies like this study and allows research to "understanding people's experience of reality, in great detail, in order to gain an understanding of the phenomenon in question" (McLeod, 2001). Reflexive Thematic Analysis was the methodology approach. Reflexive Thematic Analysis involves the awareness of the researcher's role in production of knowledge that informs the analysis (Braun and Clarke 2019). Codes will represent the patterns of meaning represented from the researcher's analysis (Braun and Clarke 2019).

6 steps of Thematic Analysis will be used to guide research planning for this project (Braun & Clark, 2006). These steps will help provide clarity and rigour to this research.

Phase	**Description of the process**
Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.

Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic map of the analysis.
Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Table 11 - Thematic Analysis stages (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

To analyse the data, the first step is to transcribe the interview. The transcription process is an important part of the research and the process of transcription should be considered (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). Engaging with the transcribing process allows time to absorb and reflect with the data collected and is an opportunity to begin the analysis. First stage transcription was completed by listening to the interviews and taking notes via a word document. This first stage was to start to get ideas and a feeling for the content away from the active stage of interviews. Transcription was then completed using NVivo software. Each interview was transcribed via the software and listened to carefully to ensure all information had been captured to the highest quality possible. Each interview was then double checked to ensure that translation errors were minimised. During each review notes were kept by the researcher for initial insights for analysis. During each review, the order of interviews was mixed so that the order that they were listened to did not affect the interpretation of saturation of themes (Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe & Young, 2018). Stages of reading the transcriptions and note taking will help with really getting to know the data. This is ‘a key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology’ (Bird, 2005: 227).

A transcription table was created to support consistency in the transcription process. The norms used for this table were adapted from research by (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019).

Occurrence	Description	Sign
Pause	Pauses in interviewees communication	((pause))

Laughs	Laughing by interviewee	((laugh))
Ineligible word	If a particular word or phrase is not clearly understood for transcribing	(?)

Table 12 - Transcription norms

All personal data was removed to protect confidentiality of participants. It is important that the researcher ensures that any steps to protect confidentiality has been maintained (Morse & Coulehan, 2015). Steps to protect identity are, limiting use of individual tags such as, not including location, not including job title or organisation, not using names of associates. Demographic data shared was limited to that felt to be relevant to the study and it was presented in group format to further protect identification of participants (Morse et al., 2009). Names of participants were anonymised using pseudonyms to provide a personal approach and a reality to the transcribing and to protect individuals identity (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Transcription was completed as 'denaturalised transcription' meaning that the text was as similar to the spoken word as possible (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). The challenge of 'denaturalised transcription is that the can be challenging to read as it is not presented with the formal language conventions of 'natural transcription' (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). In the sharing of quotes in the findings, there was some move towards 'naturalized transcription' to ensure the text was understandable for other readers.

For the initial coding stage, each interview transcription was reviewed and listened to again. Notes were taken as part of the first stage of analysis for coding. Coding was then completed using NVivo software. Each step of the coding process allowed the researcher to develop awareness of the data organically and fully understand the 'shape and texture' of the data collected (Braun & Clark, 2013). The stages did support that there were meanings and interpretations to be understood and captured as transcription was from spoken word to written word (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). In the research of methodology, there was a warning for novice researchers that the coding can become overwhelming and is subject to methodological errors (Hussein, Hirst & Osuji, 2014), so project management of the process was engaged to ensure all steps were consciously followed. Initial coding was completed and checked with the research supervisor for clarity and to mitigate risk of error in the process. Coding was completed on the full data set for each transcript.

Initial themes were generated from a first search of the data. As discussed within this research, a career should be studied within the context they exist such as context of individual, context of work, context of origin (work history, social relationships, education, current life context), context of society and global context (Mayrhofer et al., 2007). These contexts have been discussed and explored within this research and felt that whilst the individual story was being explored, the context informed the reasons and design of this study. The IGLOO framework was applied to support the systematic analysis and build on the use of an established framework to further inform practice (Nielsen et al. 2018). Key themes were selected based on research perception and interpretation within each level of the IGLOO framework.

Transcripts were read several times following the initial theming stage, to ensure evidence for themes were collated, to ensure support for themes was evident and to provide any challenges to the theme development (Willig, 2008). The time spent on re reading was felt to assist with being able to read words ‘actively, analytically and critically’ (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p.205). This process allowed further interpretation and a move against what could be a surface read.

Themes were named to provide explanation. Naming codes does reflect the researchers perception and impacts decisions about inclusion (Bazeley, 2021). The reflexive position of the researcher was considered as part of this process as interpretation is through the lens of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Clarity of code description was sought through review with supervisors. A codebook was created on NVivo and used as a reference list to support reading of transcripts, and it was updated to reflect changes (Bazeley, 2021). Versions of each codebook was stored for reference.

For the final stages, examples from the interview’s transcripts were selected to represent the key themes. Overarching themes were the IGLOO framework of Individual, Group, Leader, Organisation, Outside and Outcomes (Nielsen et al., 2018). Themes within each hierarchy of the framework were named and sub themes that represented ideas within the main themes are presented if applicable (Bazeley, 2021). Final themes are presented in table 13. For the discussion, the most relevant themes were discussed within the research context.

4.7 Findings and discussion

Core themes and subthemes have been identified in relation to the personal experiences of older workers who have recareered to a contemporary career. These themes provide insights into the decision-making process of the 15 recareerists who were interviewed for this study. Within the IGLOO framework of Individual, Group, Leader, Organisation and Outside, and additional framework of ‘outcomes, themes and sub themes were identified and are displayed in the full theme list in table 20 in appendix 4. From the findings key themes that are felt to be most relevant for discussion are displayed in the following IGLOO framework displayed in table 13. Insights from the interviews are shared on each theme and sub theme, along with a narrative and commentary on the themes and sub themes as presented in (Cipolletta, Entilli, Bettio & De Leo, 2021) and (Tambling, Tomkunas, Russell, Horton & Hutchinson, 2021).

IGLOO	Theme	Sub Theme	Description
Individual	Financial awareness		Individual awareness of financial risks and financial planning
	Future work plan or retirement		Longer term career plans through to retirement
	Leap into career transition		Planning for career transition as a leap into new role
	Happiness and meaning		Wanting meaning from career
	Skills and knowledge	Lifelong learning	Engagement with learning and development
		Transferable skills	Skills from occupational role that were transferrable to a contemporary career
Group	Peer Support or influence		Support from network or influence on career change from others in network
Leader	Leader Relationship		Relationship with leader within occupational role
Organisation	Career choice		Opportunities for career with an occupational setting Options/decisions/reflections during period of resigning/redundancy till actual leave date
	Not happy in job		Aspects of previous occupation role individuals were not happy with
Outside	COVID		Impact of COVID pandemic
Outcomes of career transition	Worry		Worries and concerns about new career
	Portfolio Career		Engagement with a portfolio career for new career
	Work life balance and time management	Freedom	Freedom for choices about work and life
		Time Management	Managing time within new career
		Work life balance	Work life balance of new career and life

Table 13 - core themes within IGLOO framework

4.7.1 Individual

Assessing the individual reasons for recareering found that financial awareness, future work plan, leap into career transition, skills and knowledge and happiness and meaning were all factors involved in the decision.

Five themes were identified: ‘financial awareness’, ‘future work plan or retirement’, ‘leap into career transition’, ‘happiness and meaning’, and ‘skills and knowledge’.

Financial awareness

Interviewees had considered their financial risk as part of their decision; *“There's always concerns, but we made sure that we were financially secure.” (John)*, but as Mary stated, the financial risk can be a barrier for many *“And I was stuck in the place of I’m never going to make the money that I need to make to do it, and that holds a lot of people back right from a career change, because let's face it, we all get really, really comfortable with what we're earning” (Mary).*

Workers aged over 50 are found to be more likely to leave an occupational role if they have been with one organisation for a long period of time to ensure they have built up savings and pensions, and possibly have paid their mortgage (“Employment Transitions of Older Workers,” 2003) *“I saved up a bit of money to do this” (Mary).*. Findings did show that there was a good level of financial awareness within the interviewees, and some did mention that they were in a good place financially, so they were no longer dependent on the previous salary “*I did make some pretty clever financial decisions” (Sue*). Previous research found that individuals who were at the lower end or higher end of wage distribution were more likely to engage in bridge employment (which can include self-employment) (Cahill, Giandrea & Quinn, 2006a).

For some it was that they were at a point of their life where they realised their outgoings were more manageable and for some, they had taken time to take account of the pension and income. *“And now kids are grown up, you know, we reasonably well off not well off but we're comfortable” (Kevin)*. Balancing the financial risk allowed participants to reduce worry and give them some time to build their new career. All participants were within 2 years of their career transition so were in a stage of building up their income revenues. Most interviewees recognised that their biggest risk within their new career was financial. For some it was worrying that the work would continue to arrive. For others, it was adapting to getting paid via an invoice rather than the regular paycheck on the same day each month. Freelance workers can find it difficult to discuss fees or negotiate for what fee they felt their expectation (Platman, 2003) and support for financial skills relevant to independent working would be beneficial for this type of workers.

Future work plan

Older workers who apply a portfolio career can work outside the boundaries of an organisation and not be stuck to the 'normal' retirement age of their employer (Handy, 2002). For a lot of interviewees, they felt that they would not return to an organisational role "*And I've made a success of dragging myself out for a paycheck every month. But I you know; I was dreaming of retirement and dreading retirement at the same time because of things that happened at home. And now I never want to retire" (Mary*) or *"I turned 60, and I think maybe that was part of it as well, because I couldn't see myself then going into another role. I just couldn't face the idea of starting again in a company and getting to know it all and sitting on a management team" (Sandra)*. Portfolio workers can elect to do as much or as little work as they wish (Platman, 2003) and it was found with many interviewees that they had a mix of types of roles/work they wanted to explore *"My plan is to build both of the businesses and try and swing the balance between the photography and the and the consulting" (Kevin).* Older workers who work as self-employed have been found to retire later than those in an occupational role (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007), or have no intention to retire (Rice, 2015). In this study the interviewees had a view of retirement as being a wind down of work, they wanted to keep busy and working as long as they could*. "I've never really seen it as just work and retirement. I intend to keep doing what I like doing for as long as I can" (John)*. Participants in this study felt that it was important to allow time for own interests and possibly some volunteer work or an element of 'giving back'. Generative reasons for working was found in older workers with a concern for passing on skills and abilities (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005) or sharing their knowledge (Rice, 2015).

Leap into career transition

It was very interesting to learn that most interviewees felt that there was a lack of planning for their decision to leave the organisation. Nearly all interviewees discussed that the move to a contemporary career was limited in terms of planning: "*so it's almost like I make it up as I go along" (Beth)* and that they didn't do as much planning for their new career as they would have done in previous projects whilst in an occupational career: *"I think I'm like the mechanic that never fixes its own car. I didn't do as much due diligence as I would have done for client" (Charles).*

Most felt like they took a jump because they felt it was the right time whether it was due to age, workplace changes or a feeling of wanting to do something more meaningful *"I literally jumped because I thought if I think about this any longer, I'm going to have a thousand reasons not to do it" (Mary).* Some linked the lack of planning to their own risk tolerance: "*I don't care* *like I'm a risk taker" (Paula)* or to their age: *"I think you get to a certain age whereby you kind of think, well, hang on, I think I can do this independently by this stage and stand alone" (Peter).*

As this study focused on those who did not have professional identity that linked them to a peer professional network, leaving their career identity could feel like a leap into the unknown. Workers with higher levels of Protean Career Attitude will have a higher level of intention linked to lower levels of both organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Supeli & Creed, 2016), and intention to quit was strong in this group. Sullivan and Arthur (2006) proposed within the boundaryless career models that career competencies would have to be developed to then enhance psychological mobility which in turn would then support physical mobility. The participants did possibly reach the point of having confidence in the career competencies; however, the psychological mobility was not of clear awareness to them in how they communicated this leap, and then the following feeling of worry and fear. Previous research into individual career transitions found that change in the workplace, unexpected events or a feeling of powerfulness could start the process for considering a need to have a career transition (Kim, 2014). Future planning was not a key outcome for a group of recareerists as they felt their response for a career transition was immediate in reaction to unexpected circumstances (McMahon, Watson & Bimrose, 2012). Understanding impact of change on older workers and intention to leave could be part of organisational assessment in older workers to provide holistic career support.

Happiness and Meaning

A big driver for all the interviewees was a reflection that they felt their work should have more meaning and to find a work life that had some meaning. This reflection was felt to be the main motivator to make a change. It was the belief that there was another way of working that would bring happiness. For some the move to another organisation would bring the same level of dissatisfaction so that created the need to do something different. Catherine did consider looking for a new job as part of her career change but realised that another occupation job was not going to meet her needs; "*just because you can do something doesn't mean it gives you joy".* Charles had a similar view and believed another organisation would be similar to his dissatisfaction currently "*opposed to going into another corporate position and again, you know, from getting culture, it may be the same thing*" and he followed up with what he wanted was: *"I don't know, but the word meaningful springs to mind".*

The search for meaning balanced out against the need to earn a higher salary. When Hall (1996) introduced Protean Career as a new career contract, he said that the core was psychological success which was achieved by meeting personal goals. Traditional career success was reached by climbing a vertical ladder, whereas psychological success could be achieved many ways and would be as unique as each human (Hall, 1996). Kevin like other interviewees asked himself "*What do I really want to do?".* Others had started to answer this question: "*realise how it felt to do something that you really passionately care about, as opposed to dragging yourself out for a pay check every month" (Mary*) and Mary then also commented on the difference in earnings not being as important as she thought it might be "*I'm earning half of what I used to earn, doing something I love, as opposed to doing something that, you know, just left me cold".*

Protean career attitude (PCA) is characterised as "involving greater mobility, a more whole life perspective, and a developmental progression" (Briscoe & Hall, 2006, p.31). Workers with a PCA create a career that follows career goals that are defined by themselves and their career is shaped by personal values rather than organisational values (Sultana & Malik, 2019). Meaningful was a word shared by many in their discussion and it was not about changing the world, it was more about feeling they were doing something that has more value and for some it was time to give back and for those it was to allow time for 'pro bono' or voluntary work to use their skills to help others.

Also, age was a nudge as for some it was the realisation that they did not want to do this for the remainder of their career. For some it was also the realisation that they were at a point in their career "*Is there is there something better? Is this what I'm going to be doing for the rest of my days?" (Peter)* and it was time to start to give back: "*Stand back and give back" (Sandra).* Those workers who do get let go from a job in their fifties and sixties find it difficult to present themselves in another career ("Employment Transitions of Older Workers," 2003).

Skills and knowledge

Two sub themes were identified 'lifelong learning' and 'transferable skills'

Lifelong learning

Every interviewee mentioned their learning or development. For some they shared a love of learning: "*And I keep learning. I love learning. I've never stopped since I was, you know, at secondary school. never, ever stopped every year since then." (Beth).*

Every interviewee mentioned that they engaged in some learning and development but for most the learning was informal *"I signed up for a lot of the free intro things for to try and flog you stuff. But I just try to suck up stuff like that. But nothing, nothing formal" (Mary).* Workers who have a protean attitude to their career are found to be inclined to actively look for opportunities for further learning (Sultana & Malik, 2019). Formal learning was felt to be less relevant for a protean career as they would be expensive, time consuming and disconnected from business needs (Hall, 1996). Some had engaged in formal learning as an opportunity to prepare for their recareering opportunities" *I saw the MBA as musician, the MBA was a way of just spreading out a little bit and not having to rely on just one thing." (John).*

Research on older portfolio workers in the media industry found that only 11% of freelancers had engaged with any training, in comparison to over 20% of freelancers in their twenties (*Freelance Employment and Training Needs*, 1998). Those freelancers who consider themselves experts may not feel training is a priority (IPSEa, 2018). This view may be harmful to their career progression in a work environment that is changing so quickly and may mean they do not stay up to date. Due to the cost and time involved with training, freelancers may not prioritise their own training due to a concern about costs (Platman, 2003). A few of the interviewees mentioned that the training they had engaged with was what was free and available via online sources. A few interviewees mentioned that they accessed free learning resources available, and they have been able to access the increased online availability *"I signed up for a lot of the free intro things for to try and flog you stuff. But I just try to suck up stuff like that. But nothing, nothing formal"*. The current context of the pandemic has opened up opportunities to access training for many interviewees *"while covid has been on, it's been a lot easier to do that because everything's online" (Catherine).*

Although the decision to move had been shared as a 'leap' by many, there had been a lot of development on themselves in their previous career: "*I'd also done a qualification in management on the basis that that might be a way of progression." (Emma)* and "*when I was in my last job, I sort of put myself through the ILM Level seven executive coaching qualification, which at the time I sort of thought, I don't know if I'm ever going to use this, but now I'm really glad I've got it because I wouldn't have got the outplacement coaching without it" (Annemarie).*

Older workers may feel that they have less time for training and this puts their human capital at risk (Johnson et al., 2009). Most of the interviewees did have a good attitude to learning but there was not a strategic plan for their development or a reflection on what they may need to do to keep themselves up to date. There was a love of learning in their new career: *"I'm learning, I'm doing a lot of learning, which I love working in a subject that I want to learn about" (Mary)* and that they were using their learning to develop within new career: "*I'm noticing that I'm learning every day and there's things I'm constantly reflecting on what I'm doing and if something goes wrong and I you know am trying it again but a different way"(Emma).*

Protean career models provide guidance for thinking about considering learning and development needs on a short term/long term and task/self-quadrant (Hall, 1996). Boundaryless careers highlight the need for career competencies being developed before a move (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Whilst most of the interviewees has a fair level of short-term self-knowledge and short-term task knowledge, there would be a need for developing longer term task knowledge to ensure they stay relevant and agile to keep pace with the world of work. There was also a lack of strategic thinking about their current career competencies.

Transferable skills

All participants were aware of the skills and knowledge they had that would enable them to use in their new contemporary career. Kim (2014) when interviewing participants found several did find that their ideal career transition work would be where they could use existing skills and knowledge. Some interviewees reflected that they may not want to do what they were doing for their future career full time, but it was where they felt comfortable in using the skills they had. This was where a portfolio career seemed to evolve for so many, as they could use the established skills but also allow time to develop new areas of interest. For some their established skill set also gave confidence for a plan B so if their current way of working did not pan out then they could always go back to what they had done previously. Attitudes to learning are thought to be linked to strong personal identity (Eby et al., 2003), which indicates that personal learning guidance would be required for recareerists following an independent career path.

In the interviews, over half of the participants talked about having time for their hobbies being a key part of their life: *"Well and I'm massive into wildlife. Massive into ethical behaviour and sort of living a nice life" (Sue*) and most were dedicated to their hobbies and described time they spent on them: "*I tend to do an hour's French horn practice in the morning" (John).*

For some their hobbies were part of the plans for their future career such as Charles who wanted to allow his photography hobby to develop into a business alongside his consultancy work: "*'ll take a picture of anything I will but for business what I'm trying to focus on is events and branding and then personally, animals, wildlife, big cats, landscape"* and Sue who stated: *"I like to actually cut wood and paint wood and I like to do art"* and she was able to incorporate her art into her books and podcasts.

Most interviewees discussed that they had used skills from their previous career to create their new career: *"that's what I thought, that, you know, something meaningful, taking the skills that I had and the ability that I have to make things happen and using that in a, you know, full purpose role" (Tracy).* This use of transferable skills helped with the confidence for working for themselves: "*then you go emmm am I up to it and you go yeah of course you are don't be stupid? You've been doing this for the last 20 years and you know, you can do it" (Kevin).*

For some the use of previous skills was a default option for them: "*But there's not something else that's there that I've always wanted to get into that would be able to provide me with an income. So, it just seemed like the most appropriate thing to do" (Annemarie).*

Emma, who had a complete change in career also recognised her previous skills were still available to her as a plan B; *"I've always got my other experience, my other experiences and qualifications to go back into".*

4.7.2 Group

At group level, 'peer support or influence' was found to be an influence in the decision to recareer. The support they received was informal and mostly from friends and family and for most it was someone to provide an outside confirmation to their idea to move. Support from family and friends to validate their ideas seemed to be important. A lot used their family to complete skill gaps for their new career such as social media or marketing skills. There was some but minimal formal support from coaches or mentors and for some their personal need for change was enough and they did not seek further validation.

A danger for independent workers is that their network of professional contacts can reduce when they are away from an organisational role (Platman, 2003), and this can be a risk to creating ongoing streams of work. Those who no longer have the workplace social network may have a need for social interactions as this has been found to be a reason for working (Dendinger et al., 2005; Mor Barak, 1995). For many interviewees where future work would come from or what future work would be was a concern.

Peer support or influence

One reason for working is the social interaction and friendships with workers that can influence a person's overall job satisfaction, especially for older workers (Markiewicz, Devine & Kausilas, 2000). Interviewees did recognise the benefit of their network for developing opportunities. As one participant mentioned "*you know, the great thing is we as one's career progresses, the network does broaden and the amount of experience that other people around you've got extends" (Paul).* Work colleague relationships were felt to be strong by most interviewees however the peer support following their career transition came from networks of family and friends rather than other professionals or work-related peers. Most participants noted the importance of networks to support their career. The impact of family and friends in listening to the interviewees and providing a sound board appeared to offer external validation supporting their decision: "*And so I don't think it was really I didn't need people to suggest it to me. Yes, I think it was more the sort of kind of conversations were more around helping me* *to decide whether to do it or not" (Annemarie).* When asked about support, many of interviewees referred to getting support from their family or partner: "*And certainly only my wife. So, and I spoke to her and, you know, kind of bounced it off. And she thought it was a great idea" (Charles)*; "*Family and friends were a massive support. I talk things through with close friends and family and I found that really helpful" (Emma).*

Interviewees could recall exact words from people as they recalled their decision-making process, and it was the confirmation of others that did seem to cement their idea for the transition, however, interviewees mainly reported that any peer support was informal *"it was really just talking to a few people in the network to say this is what I'm thinking of doing, and most people say, well, if that's what you want to do, why don't you do it?" (Paul).*

Many participants received support for skill and knowledge development from their family and friend network. One participant commented on how supportive his wife was with the decision but then also with sharing her skillset to help with the development of his new career. Getting missing skills for their new career can be obtained from their network "*My wife's been really good. She's a global marketing director, so she's done all my branding, marketing, and stuff like that. And so, it makes it easier because I'm not marketeer" (Kevin)* and another commented on their partners skills too "*You know, I mean, my partner is it has an accountancy qualification, which is very useful because, so he set up the company" (Sandra).* Another participant found support from family members for new skill development too; "*I reached out. I've got a 21-year-old daughter. So, I reached out to her and a couple of her friends for help with social" (Mary). O*ne participant who was setting up a new coffee business practised her new business with neighbours; "*I also practiced with neighbours. I had started opening the van on a Sunday before I out trading and practiced on neighbours" (Emma).*

The importance of networks was very relevant for helping people to gain confidence for a new career from their network. Some referred to the inspiration to transition which came from their wider network too; "*you really good at this, why don't you why did you run this workshop or why don't you run a webinar on this that and the other, and I kind of got kind of undercover support, and promotion through that, and it gave me...., made me think, you know, somebody says you're good at something it makes you think about it" (Catherine).* One participant felt the idea for her next carer came through her mentor; *"I got a mentor, and she was amazing, and through her I discovered positive psychology and positive leadership" (Paula).*

Some did engage with formal coaching which provided some inspiration or confidence in their decision both before the transition and after; *So, I had a coach a year and a bit before then. I wasn't talking to her for the lead up to the jump. And then when I started my training, after I jumped, I went back to her because I needed a mentor coach" (Mary).* What was interesting from the two interviewees who discussed coaching support, was that the support was for the idea generation and new career and not the actual transition through the journey to a new career.

There was a notable number of Interviewees who stated that they didn't seek any peer support either deliberately; *"I didn't get any support. You know, so, no, I didn't need any support, I just make it up as I go along" (Sandra) or* didn't consider looking for support*; "but I did it all myself, actually, come to think of it, that's really interesting, I didn't look for support anywhere now. It never occurred to me" (Mary).* There was a feeling of knowing themselves well that always didn't need support, as one participant stated "*But I've done a lot of personal development. I think that's probably why I didn't reach out" (Sandra).*

Interviewees noted that the pandemic and associated restrictions limited the opportunity for networking and social meet ups may have impacted the opportunity for support. As Emma commented "*I had every intention of doing more. But because of the pandemic you know I would have liked to have met up with people and had conversations".*

4.7.3 Leader

At leader level, 'leader relationship' was found to be an influence in the decision to recareer. Although some participants did have a good relationship with their leader, there was a few of the interviewees who did not have a strong relationship. For some it was a negative view of their competencies and for some it was a lack of support from leaders. Some interviewees felt that they were burnt out or approaching that stage and did not get support for this. Leadership support can reduce burnout and intention to quit (Kalliath and Beck, 2001). Lack of leadership support can lead to job dissatisfaction and intention to leave (Munn et al., 1996; Hatton and Emerson, 1998).

Some Interviewees shared that they had a good relationship with their senior leaders or managers *"I could speak to my supervisor openly and had great supervision" (Emma) and "I had had a good working relationship with the CEO" (Nicola).*

But a few shared a more negative view of the competencies of their leaders which impacted their relationship*. "I found that the emotional intelligence of the leaders that I almost, well the partner that I was reporting into was somewhat lacking" (Charles) "The two people in charge of it, both had sort of control freakiness around them, whereas, you know, they wanted to make every decision" (Kevin).*

The breakdown in relationships with leader was found to impact the Interviewees view of working in their organisation "*I didn't enjoy my relationship with my manager who didn't care about the team." (Paula)* and for one it was the 'last straw' "*That was the proverbial straw that* *broke the camel's back, was being treated so disrespectfully by someone who I had previously held in in quite high esteem" (Nicola).*

One interviewee felt let down after a busy role left her experiencing burnout "*she didn't do anything to help me like she just talked about, but she didn't do it*" (*Paula*) This interviewee felt that after how she was treated stopped her being able to return to this role.

Relationships with leaders can be positive, but their departure can unsettle as a participant shared "*the CEO told me she was leaving, and I knew when she left it wasn't going to be the same for me" (Sandra*).

4.7.4 Organisation

At organisation level, 'career choice' was found to be an influence in the decision to recareer. One of the areas this research aimed to discover, was whether there was push or pull factors that influenced a decision to leave an occupational role. Push factors can be age discrimination in the workplace, or pull factors such as limited flexible working options (Platman, 2004). Some interviewees found that their decision to leave was a result of redundancy, but for most it was a decision they made to leave their organisation. In terms of not looking for another organisational role the reasons were varied, some were feeling they were too old or that they would not get another job.

People leave their job for many reasons and the quitting behaviour has been a focus for research especially in regards to their intention to leave as once a person has quit their job, there is limited opportunity to reflect on thinking and behaviour prior to this decision (Firth et al., 2004). It was interesting that so many shared the difference in their feeling between handing their notice in and then leaving. The first date of handing in their notice had some element of stress but then the day of leaving was relief. For some they extended their leave date which demonstrates that once someone hands in their notice, there is space for negotiation if the worker is leaving for a contemporary career rather than another organisational role.

Most interviewees (13) discussed some aspect of their previous role in which they were not happy with. The level of unhappiness did vary from a general dissatisfaction: "*I did genuinely enjoy the job most of the time but there were just times when I thought I need to do something else" (Annemarie)* or to realising something was missing: "*You know, there was no real fulfilment. If I'm honest, I never got the kind of the arm punch in feeling of having done something really important"* (Mary), right though to feeling burnt-out: "*And so the coaching* *helped me to see that actually I was fed up, burnt out, not recognised, blah, blah, blah, blah, so what was I going to do about it" (Catherine).*

Some recognised that change was really the next stage: "*And I think from then I was looking out the door"* (Sandra) or as Paul shared it was a more gradual feeling of impending change: *"I don't think there was particularly a catalyst or a tipping point. I think it was more a sort of growing recognition that I didn't want to turn up to work every day".*

When exploring what choices were available to them within their organisation, some Interviewees shared that the choice for their career was decided via a redundancy which was either offered or forced. Some took up the opportunity for redundancy as Annemarie shared; "*I identified an opportunity for me to go with a bit of a financial sort of, you know safety net behind me and I thought if I didn't take it, then it probably wouldn't happen again, so I took the leap*.". This view of taking a leap was shared by many interviewees as part of their individual reflection on their career transition. The confidence to leap was supported with some easing of financial risk. As Annemarie further shared, the workplace had also become challenging because of COVID *"And people were really stressed because they were worried about how they were going to find another job. So, it was pretty horrible and intense, and I was really quite relieved to go"*. Some had explored redundancy options and even if turned down, had still decided to go "*So I spent a bit of time trying to see if I could swing that, and in the end, no, because they needed me, they wouldn't let me go. So, I decided, well, I'm going to go anyway. So that's what I did." (Catherine).*

A small number of interviewees referred to the feeling of being too old and feeling career options within their organisation were limited due to age: "*getting too old to be promoted*" (Catherine) and Kevin shared a perception that his company were only recruiting people in their 20's "*And it's like, is this the point where I reach where actually, you know, I am no longer in the age group of being able to do this"* Kevin did search for jobs but didn't get through even though he was qualified for the role and those rejections led to his thought of ; "*And then I thought, why am I bothering why don't I just set it up?".*

A lot of interviewees shared reflections on the time between handing their notice in and actually leaving the organisation; "*the way I can explain it is as soon as I make that decision that I was going to leave and even before I handed my notice in as soon as I made that decision, I was leaving. I felt like I had cut a rope that was tied to my back" (Emma).* A number of interviewees shared that there was an openness to stay longer or extend their leave notice; "*And I said, do you want me to stay on for a bit? And he said, Yeah, I do, even though I didn't really want to stay" (Sandra*). As Mary shared, this request to stay was linked a bit to fear of leaving; *"Part of me was like, oh, please ask me to stay, please ask me to stay. You know,* *give me a reason that I can walk away from this. And then the other part of me was just counting the hours until I could leave".*

There was a lot of interviewees who shared that the actual leave date was not a stressful event; "*And you think, you know, like you should be like a big dramatic film where you walk out of the door for the last time and, you know, the music plays and all the rest of it. Well, in my experience, it isn't like that. All that drama happens before you actually hand your notice in." (Catherine).* But there was a consensus of the freedom felt; "*The day I left driving away, I just felt free. I felt a real lightness that that day I'll never forget it was driving back down the motorway feeling literally like I was floating above the car" (Mary).*

Some Interviewees did consider staying on a reduced work arrangement "*And I probably I probably could have stayed on in some sort of reduced capacity. I could have. I know they were keen for me to perhaps go down to three or four days a week, and I thought about that"* (Paul). For some their organisations were set up to support a more portfolio way of working such as Open University *"love the open university for as you can fit it in around all the things so easily" (John),* and the army; *"I stayed in the Army Reserve and, you know, actually it was just like stepping away a little bit rather than completely leaving" (John).*

4.7.5 Outside

At outside level 'Covid' was found to be an influence in the decision to recareer. As this research was carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic, it could be expected to see that the pandemic would have an influence. For some the work environment was impacted or the choice of options felt limited. For others it was seen as a time to reflect and consider how they wanted to manage their career going forward. The interviews were carried out during the COVID pandemic and Interviewees found that the pandemic impacted on their career decision. Sandra stated as one reason for wanting to leave an occupational role was "*I didn't want to go back, and they wouldn't let me just carry on being an avatar".*

For another person COVID impacted their decision as the company had to let people go; "*Obviously, everybody says, because of COVID being a big reason for a decrease in business that's going on at the moment. So, there were 17 supervisors, five supervisors were made redundant." (Peter*).

For others they had to contemplate creating their own career as COVID impacted job opportunities; *"I was about to get a job offer with another consultancy company that they put on hold because recruitment stopped, and Boris shut everybody down. So, I was actively looking anyway, but it was a case of what do I do now?" (Kevin).*

Research found that 41% are planning on leaving their employer in 2021 (*Microsoft*, 2021), so there is a push for people making a career change in current times. Although this research does not represent all the reasons why people might be currently leaving, we can take an insight for this context within the demographic focused for this research. One of the reasons for those resigning in the UK are felt to be a change in their priorities and a want to pursue a job that is more suited to their 'dream job' or for a reflection on the way they have been treated by their employer during the pandemic (BBC Worklife, 2020), which was certainly a reflection felt within this group of interviewees. What we can take from this, is that outside macro influences will provide a context for change and impact for career reflection. Although this pandemic will hopefully change, we can see that huge events will impact how people may react to their career planning and so context always should be part of the analysis. For some the time working at home gave them chance to have time to think about their career; *"And yeah, just give me the opportunity to sit back and think about my career really and what I wanted out of it, what I've achieved and whether I wanted to continue with that" (Emma).*

4.7.6 Outcomes

At outcomes level, 'worry', portfolio career' and 'work life balance' were found to be outcomes of the decision to recareer.

Worry

All participants shared that they worried about their career in terms of income, workflows and being responsible for their own destiny. There was a sharing of roller coaster of feelings from worry to elation.

There are risks to a career that includes self-employment, freelancing or consultancy as it can include sudden contract ends, unfair treatment, delays to invoices being settled (Platman, 2003). Nearly all (14) interviewees expressed worries about their new career "*But every now and then, I kind of feel like, oh my God, have I made a big mistake?" (Sandra).*

As the interviewees had only made their career transition within the previous 24 months there were concerns about money "*Money! So, we've gone from earning a lot of money to wondering when you know you know what this is going to look like" (Paula*), and about the workload being unpredictable *"So you've got to keep finding new clients. Corporate stuff is very unpredictable*" (Mary): *I'm probably having a little bit of a slump because I am quite concerned about what happens next. (Annemarie),* but as Annemarie did then say, "I worry about everything". Others recognised that worrying about money was part of the process "*The usual, I guess, with any sort of business owner or person that's running their own show" (Charles)* or that they were still in a transition period: *"But once that sort of all settled down a bit, then I think, yeah, that's OK. So, the transition is always going to be stress in the transition" (John).*

Even though there were worries they were expected "*And I knew I knew that the days would turn up when I doubted myself. I knew there'd be an initial burst of like rocket fuel, energy. and I knew that that would settle down and I'd start doubting myself" (Sandra)*. There was also a view of never returning to an occupational role*: "I get that pit in the in the in like that feeling in the pit of my stomach that says, no, don't go back and do that again" (Sue).*

Portfolio career

Nearly all (13) interviewees mentioned that their new career was made up of a portfolio of roles. Some were deliberately selecting a range of roles as they were aware of a portfolio approach, and it suited them *"I do love variety, and that's one of the reasons why I want to work in a sort of more portfolio way*" (Annemarie). *"It's a real mix of things that I do, but all completely different to what I used to do" (Mary).*

For some they had a few core roles that gave them financial stability whilst still allowing some flexibility *"I want to have a few what I'm going to call rock solid jobs that are part time and then a few contract jobs I can pick up and put down" (Beth) and "I think having a few cash cows helps" (John*).

There was a feeling of being able to use their 'occupational career' skills whilst allowing freedom to follow other career paths "*So I decided to set up my own consultancy company, doing what I've done before, but also a photography business as well, which was something I've been dabbling with." (Kevin*). Like Kevin, several interviewees mixed their career to include hobbies "*Do a bit of freelance music work" (John).*

There was an openness to change their portfolio make up or to add other options "*So it's I think it's probably going to change from what it is now. Who knows what it might look" (Annemarie),* or to work towards creating the career and life balance that they wanted "*I really don't ever want to work like a nine to five kind of job again? I want to continue to do some things that are flexible" (Sue).*

The creation of a portfolio career was the outcome from nearly all interviewees. The creation of a portfolio career had mostly been done without conscious awareness of this career option. It was mainly evolved from using skills they already had and then allowing time to follow other avenues of interest. The advantage that a portfolio career gives later life careerists is that they have choice, control and flexibility whilst being away from the rules of contracts or retirement that occupational workers face (Platman, 2003). Portfolio careers are felt to be a type of career that older workers can take advantage of as they can use skills to take up consultancy, freelance and outsourced roles (Platman, 2003). Portfolio careers also match the want for freedom that participants discussed as they can tailor their own working arrangements and contracts (Platman, 2003). Charles Handy coined the phrase ‘portfolio career’ and described it as a collection “bits and pieces of work”, supported with seeing life as a collection of groups and activities (Handy, 2002, p.71). This was the view of the participants, as they talked about their other interests, voluntary work, and social life alongside their work goals. The benefit of a portfolio career is that workers do not need to retire as they can adjust their workload and responsibilities in line with life demands (Platman, 2003). Most of the participants did not have a determined plan for their retirement and shows that their choice of portfolio career suits this freedom to control their work and life demands. More awareness of portfolio careers may open the door to educating current older workers about career management whilst still in an organisation or whilst engaged on a freelance basis. The single job for life with one employer is becoming more rare, with people now having multiple careers with different organisations and also in different areas (Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2010). This finding was a reflection for this demographic who were participants in this study.

Satisfaction

Most interviewees felt satisfaction regarding their new career. For some it came from a feeling of excitement: “*But the excitement about doing something new, and learning something new, and practicing something new, and taking myself out of my comfort zone a little bit was quite exhilarating” (Catherine): “I'm probably that's probably where I'm getting all of my energy and my interest and my, you know, filling myself up with things that are new and exciting” (Tracy).*

For some it was realising that the stress the had in their last role had gone: “*I just feel stress free” (Emma): “but I never get frustrated, and I used to get frustrated a lot and that's a really negative emotion” (Mary).*

There was a feeling of following what felt right “*I'm just I feel like I'm just following my gut and following my heart and going for it (Mary): “I'm enjoying it that much that I would hope to think that I want this feeling to last to then and id be quite happy doing this for you know until retirement. (Emma).*

Sandra describes that she had feeling of pride in their work now: “*And I'm kind of every now and then I said, wow, wow, look at you've done look what you've achieved” (Sandra).*

By using their time differently and allowing time for hobbies or volunteering added to the satisfaction, as Paul stated about his work with the Samaritans: “*So that's a big difference to what I was doing and also very fulfilling in many ways” (Paul).*

Managing time and work

Four sub themes were identified ‘control’, ‘Freedom’, ‘work life balance’ and ‘time management’

Freedom

The majority of interviewees (ten) mentioned freedom in their new career: "*I wanted the freedom to do what I wanted to do and exactly my way"* (Mary). There was a note that this freedom could not be found in an occupational role: "*I looked at various full-time jobs that they were going to be limiting to allow that freedom" (John*) or from not having a boss anymore: "*I do like not having a boss" (Annemarie).*

Psychological success within a protean career is felt to reflect "an agreement with one's self and one's work" (Hall, 1996, p.9). A protean career with the view of independence and psychological success requires personal responsibility and self-awareness (Hall, 1996). Although this autonomy is welcome, the freedom can bring anxiety as workers realise they have to create their career success with limited external support (Hall, 1996). This was certainly a reflection by the interviewees, as most of them appreciated the freedom of their career but also reflected on the stress and anxiety they were facing. As Hall reflected on his work on protean careers 25 years in "to empower individuals to be able to act on their values, we need people to have the resources and capability for taking charge of their career, when the employer doesn't help" (Hall, 2004, p.3).

There was a freedom to work the way they wanted: "*the freedom, the way I can work intensively and then back off if. I can reach out and be connected to others when I need to be and pull back from that and concentrate when I need to" (Paula): "so it's that freedom of being able to run things how I want to do" (Kevin).*

Work life balance

Protean careers is developed through personal values and is about "serving the whole person, family and life purpose" (Hall, 2004, p.2). Employee intention to leave an organisation can be linked to their satisfaction with their work life balance or the conflict of their work life balance (Markey et al., 2015). All participants shared satisfaction in their way of working in terms of freedom to manage their time and to balance their diaries. Fitting in time for personal hobbies was appreciated as many shared the peace in just being able to go for a walk each day or meet a friend or walk their dog. This satisfaction found in being able to balance their time and not be a mercy to an organisational diary seemed to be such a strong motivation that balanced out a lot of the other worries a contemporary career may bring to an ex corporate worker. March and Simon (1993) discuss that workers will leave if they perceive that leaving is desirable when they consider alternate options.

The part of work life balance that was a challenge was realising that they were responsible for the discipline of their work schedule. Some were still adapting to this new freedom and were in the transition of working out what suited them. Research has found that those who transition to self-employment find satisfaction whether their hours of work increase or decrease, this is due to the satisfaction in work and the self-realisation being the key motive for transition (Kautonen et al., 2017). Freelance workers have found freedom and independence within their career choice (Platman, 2003). There was also a choice in whether they wanted to work and how much work they wanted to do regardless of their age (Platman, 2003). This choice has to be balanced with the fear of lack of work which is found in research with older freelancers (Platman, 2003).

All interviewees mentioned that work life balance was an outcome of their career change: "*It gives me time to manage my own diary and be where I want to do the stuff that I want to do and stuff that I enjoy" (Kevin).* Interviewees commented on being able to take time for hobbies: "*I'll take my phone with me and any emails or anything I'll answer as I'm walking around the wildlife park or whatever"* (Beth).

People felt that they were not working less but were able to use down time for their own interests: "*I don't necessarily think I'm working less, but I'm just it just feels different because I can get up and go and do something else if I've got nothing on for an hour or something like that" (Annemarie*).

There was a lot of interviews who reflected on their satisfaction with having to take time to walk their dog: "*I can actually walk my dog on the beach now" (Paula)* or to be there for family and friends "*So he's given me more time with the family and other members of the family as well" (Emma).*

For most of the interviews the work life balance was a positive outcome that balanced against the financial risks: *"life work balance improves as a result of taking a lesser salary" (Peter).*

Time Management

For most interviewees who discussed their time management it was seen as a positive: "I *structure my day according to how I want to be, which is a huge advantage" (Paula)*, a few noticed that the new freedom could also need some discipline "*as you know, probably requires a lot a lot more discipline, but I'm not dictated to from kind of anyone else" (Charles)* and the adjustment from the routine was missed by a couple: "*I do miss having a kind of pattern to it" (Catherine),* whilst some were keeping to their previous routine for now: "*I'm still up at seven or before every morning. There is a routine at the moment" (Peter).* The intrinsic reactions to the outcomes of a career transitions included 'worry about their future career' and 'satisfaction'. The satisfaction will evolve from people following meaning and the flexibility and freedom they reported to have found in their new career. As many of the participants mentioned how the decision felt like a leap, the lack of future planning will lead to worry. The process of changing work identity is not a simple change from one identity to another other but a process of transition in which a range of possible options must be considered (Ibarra, 2004). This process requires an activity of reflection which costs time and energy to consider career options, rather than the traditional view of planning forwards as career changes are contemplated. This reflection period was not engaged with, and the lack of this stage may lead to further stresses or a dip in satisfaction for recareerists. To change a working identity, the action and activity of exploring different identities needs to come first so the doing comes first and the knowing and decision making comes second (Ibarra, 2004). Support of identity transition and knowledge of the outcomes from this study will inform the career coaching required for this group of older worker recareerists. The positive outcome was the freedom in managing their time and work-life balance and this should be highlighted as part of career support so participants can recognise the wins of their new career. Part of the career success is meeting personal values and freedom to select what time they should spend on work and their own hobbies is a clear success for participants in this study. Reflective practice tools for recareerists will assist them with the 'rollercoaster' of emotions that participants reflected on.

4.7.7 Summary of findings

The question explored in this study was 'What are the contextual influences in the decision-making process for recareering to a contemporary career in terms of individual, group, leadership, organisational, outside (macro) levels?'. This question was answered through the application of the IGLOO framework. Core themes and subthemes within each level of the framework was identified through the sharing of the personal experiences from participants who have recareered from an occupational role to a contemporary career. It was important to look at the different levels that can influence a career change (Mayrhofer et al., 2007), but also to explore if a contextual framework would provide useful insights. So much of the previous career research is focused on an organisational or individual perspective only, so the wider view allows the understanding of different factors. The framework did provide an insight into contextual influences of which the themes and sub themes are identified in table 20 in appendix 4. As this research is exploratory, the framework, provides a snapshot in parts of the different influences, such as outside as this was completed during Covid-19 pandemic so a future application of the framework may have differing outside influences. However, other levels such as individual influences such as 'finance' 'happiness and meaning' and 'skills and knowledge', and the group level of 'peer support' provide an insight to the needs of recareerists. The organisational level of ‘leader relationship’ will help with the organisational change required to support older workers and to build on retention strategies.

There is gap in individual reasons such as the type of job they are engaged in, or what the organisation inclusive practices are. Many people reported the feeling of ‘taking a leap’ when they decided to leave. To fully understand this individual decision, there would need to be further research at that time possibly through an exit interview to get closer to the time of the decision (Pace & Kisamore, 2017).

Outcomes of recareering provided clear themes such as freedom and satisfaction, interestingly merged with feelings of worry and stress showing that the outcomes are a recareer are a bit of a rollercoaster. All participants were engaged in a portfolio career at this part of their new career with many having links back to their previous area of work, whilst exploring new industries or ideas as part of their career planning.

The individual view and the organisational culture have been a focus of career theory, other areas such as macro influences, group/peer influences, career options should also be considered, and framework provides a wider lens for assessing older workers career decisions.

4.8 Limitations

As with all research there are limitations that should be reflected on to provide a context for the study. The first limitation was that this research was done during the COVID pandemic and as has been discussed this has led to higher amounts of people reflecting on their career and higher numbers of resignations (BBC Worklife, 2020). It is also a time when economic factors mean that businesses are facing financial challenges leading to redundancies and lower numbers of new hires. Some of the reasons for career transition in this group were due to companies downsizing and individual reluctance to go back to previous ways of working. The Covid pandemic and associated lockdown has provided some reflection time for workers, and it is key to note the context for the research. This is a period for the Organisational Psychology industry to learn about how people are responding to this context and this study therefore does give some insight to how workers are feeling who have left their organisational role. This allows more insights to how career views are shifting.

The group was 15 interviewees exceeds the participant numbers recommended by Braun and Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2013) and it was felt that data saturation was reached. However, it is limited in terms of representation. This small number had to be understood in how much it can relate to a wider population. Previous research on later life career transitions had not found any significance for age, race, or marital status (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007), so demographic data was not felt to be a critical component. The geographical representation of the sample meant that seven out of the 15 were from other countries, and eight were from UK. Demographic homogeneity in terms of age was the aim for this sample rather than geographical homogeneity (Robinson, 2014). On reflection, if diversity of participants, geographical location or demographic differences were explored at recruitment and if the sampling had been more specific maybe it would have provided an easier comparison with other demographic groups for future studies, or for a more focused analysis for UK participants only. The recruitment process used global platforms such as LinkedIn and so the reach was global and applicants for the study met the inclusion criteria. However, later life recareerists has been found to be under researched so this research allowed time to understand the journey and reasons from this group and can help inform future studies.

Some interviewees were engaged with organisations that supported flexibility for career choice of a portfolio career such as the British Army or Open University.. This demonstrates that individual organisations can engage with age friendly policies that could impact on the decision their workers will make. Future research on specific organisations or industries may be able to investigate best practices from case studies that can support evidence to influence other organisations on supporting older worker career paths. Specificity of what roles the interviewees did before and what level they were at might have provided an easier study for replication or comparison. A study on portfolio careers on freelancers in the media industry is an example of specific support for industry segments within this demographic (Platman, 2003). It is an example of how further research into specific career fields may allow a homogenous group to reflect on whether their transition journey had similarities.

In terms of age, the focus was on older workers as this was felt where there was a gap in research. On reflection, there may be a difference in career views in terms of the lens of this study for those who are in their 50’s and those who are in their 60’s. Further research on each group would provide clarity on any difference.

4.9 Directions for future research

There are four areas identified for further research.

Firstly, as a cross sectional study, this research captured experience at one point of time which was within 24 months of the career transition for this sample. This time scale was used to ensure that the transition experience was fresh in the participants memory and that they would still be on their identity transition journey. A longitudinal study which follows up with this group at different points in their further career would provide much more insight into longer term career decisions. This would inform what support is needed at different career points and what organisations can do to attract portfolio career workers at different stages.

Secondly, portfolio careers are another area for focused research. Contemporary careerists who select a portfolio career search for a different type of employment that includes autonomy, choice and control (Platman, 2003). There has been a lack of research into portfolio careers for older workers (Platman, 2003). This sample all had created a portfolio career and shows there is a need for further research into this way of working for older workers. Many people explore portfolio options without a clear awareness of a portfolio career. More awareness of this career for older workers should be researched to raise awareness and inform practice for support portfolio workers.

Thirdly, to date, there has been little consistency in findings as to why people intend to quit which partly can relate to the heterogeneity of populations sampled (Firth et al., 2004). More research into the difference within the demographics for the over 50 worker such as age, gender, education level, career experience will allow for stronger insights into the differences within this group. Previous research had not shown real clarity for why people leave for a different way of working. Hall (2004) when discussing protean careers, mentioned that there was a question to research about the trigger events that lead to major career change from a 'comfortable routine'. From the findings in this research, we can see that the triggers can come from the individual, organisation or from macro events. There was some discussion from interviewees regarding their marital status or family life events. Research into whether life events have an impact of the decision for later life career choices would be interesting to explore in relation to intention to leave or search for meaningful work.

Finally, the lack of awareness of career models to guide thinking and decision making was evident for the participants of this study. Even those who had moved to a portfolio career had done so out of an evolving response to work as opposed to an awareness of it as a career plan. More knowledge of career tools to guide thinking is necessary. The protean career model feels like it could provide more insights for this group of recareerists. There is a challenge for research as to whether protean careers can be a state or trait, (Ibarra & Obodaru, 2016). There is a question of whether people are protean minded throughout their life or if they develop protean mindset as a result of their life experiences (Hall, 2004). This limitation in studying protean careers also created an opportunity to study this demographic with a protean career awareness from the researcher. As can be seen from the research, all participants had a previous established career and had only considered their contemporary career at a later point in their career. Each had differing reasons as to why they made the transition, but each of them developed this mindset during their career. This demonstrates that this is space for career coaching for mid and later careerists to have coaching support to explore protean career mindset.

4.10 Implications for practice

One of the longer term aims of this study was to understand how Organisational Psychology could support older workers career transition. There is a wide range of ideas for practice following this research. As this study identified there is limited research into this demographic, it does provide some new insights into how practice can provide some early interventions. The application of a contextual framework provides a basis for layers of practice insights. Different contextual factors and impact on a persons' career are felt to have an urgency in career research (Mayrhofer et al., 2007), but there is limited research for recareering older workers. Contextual factors are part of the influence on career decisions (Kim, 2014), and the current macro climate of pandemic, economic and demographic changes required a need to look at the career choice within a wider context. Even this approach provides a new way of how career coaches and HR can consider career options in their work, and look wider than just the individual and organisational view theory (Mayrhofer et al., 2007). The following (table 14) implications for practice are explored within the IGLOO framework to consider the contextual implications for recareerists and to provide further directions for practice. One of the key implications for practice is the lack of career coaching theory and practice for older workers. Following the discussion of each area for practice, the IGLOO framework is also applied to a theoretical career coaching model (table 15).

Theme	Challenge for practice	Suggested practice implementation
Individual	Leap into career change	Career coaching support.
	Financial confidence	Create financial advice relevant for older workers considering a transition.
	Skills and Knowledge	Skill audit tools to take account of full skill set of career competencies and reflect on interests to support new career.
	Learning and development	Strategic identification of training needs.
Group	Social network	Networks of contemporary careerists. Identification of skills within social network.
Leader	Leader relationship	Holistic career coaching. Older worker career management training – challenge age biases.
Organisation	Career choice	HR and leadership training for managing older workers. Engage with contemporary careerists. Strategic workforce plan to consider impact of age and to inform age friendly HR practices.
Outside	Covid	Impact of Covid pandemic on career trends.
Outcome	Portfolio career	Education about portfolio career options and tools to help explore portfolio career creation.
	Worry	Reflective practice.
	Satisfaction	Reflective practice.
	Managing time	Time management tools.

Table 14 - IGLOO framework summary of implications for practice

4.10.1 Individual

It was felt that some of the participants were glad to just talk about their career and were interested in the research because of that. It was felt that they wanted more of a coaching call to talk through their concerns. This reflection on the study and the interviews, demonstrates the need for coaching support. Most participants reported that their decision to leave the occupational job was quick and they took a leap into their new career and there was a default to using their existing skills for a freelance/consultancy role. There was an obvious tie to their former work identity by holding on to what they knew. For some that will make sense, but to achieve career satisfaction workers would benefit from career support to explore an authentic career transition that will allow them to explore a career choice that matches their values and goals. The research on identity transition supports the need to explore options and consider new identities (Ibarra, 2004) and to work beyond the perceived barriers (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes & Hughes, 2012). Career coaching for older workers should include exploration of career options to equip them with the skills to consider different options. Older workers in career transition may feel like they have less psychological resources than their younger counterparts and feel like there are more barriers to their career transition goals (Heppner, Multon and Johnston, 1994), and therefore may need support for their redefinition of their career identity and to explore options available to them. Later life career transitions often include more reflection on past career and life identities or returning to a career previously missed out on due to family or life issues (Plimmer & Schmidt, 2007). If career coaching was only available to those who had already recareered, then the identity exploration process could be too late to help support authentic career choices, so the intervention is needed for people at an earlier stage. This indicates that organisations providing career coaching or performance development could allow for a more holistic career coaching conversation to support this cohort of workers.

Financial awareness had been a consideration for majority of participants, and they had mostly taken time to understand their financial position to balance any perceived financial risk of a career transition. Planning for later life financial needs is essential. A lack of planning for retirement may lead to older workers realising that their income may not be sufficient to fund their later life (Dendinger, Adams & Jacobson, 2005). Traditional retirement training does focus on financial needs, but it would be recommended that financial awareness training should be a requirement for adults to ensure they can make the correct career decisions.

Another key area that evolved was the engagement with learning and development. Every participant did engage with some form of learning and development. However, their engagement was reactive or to what was available. Most mentioned that they accessed free training and it has been found that freelancers do have a concern about costs and do not prioritise training (Platman, 2003). This is evidence that older freelancers do not engage with as much as training as younger freelancers (*Freelance Employment and Training Needs*, 1998) possibly as they consider themselves an expert at this stage of their career (IPSEa, 2018). It is essential for those who are considering a contemporary career to keep up to date with work trends and best practice. Support for a more strategic approach to considering skill sets in line with a macro context should be developed.

Most participants build at least part of their career on past work experience. Some also developed part of their career on other skills and hobbies. Reflecting on the work on boundaryless careers by Sullivan and Arthur (2006) in which they felt those who have physical mobility would have first needed to develop career competencies and psychological mobility. Workers maybe do reflect on their skills. Older workers would have gained more experience but more reflection on their skills and building the awareness would hopefully improve confidence in psychological and physical mobility. A skill audit should be encouraged as a critical career tool for adults in the workplace. Skill frameworks are available for US (O*Net) and European Commission (ENSCO) so there are reference tools to help create ideas and thinking. A personal skill framework will support those who are considered career transitions to identify skills that match and skills gaps.

4.10.2 Group

The view of trusted support to help develop the definition of self was found to be essential (Petriglieri et al., 2018). This participant group were 'non-professional' workers identified as such as not being part of a professional network (Moliner et al., 2013) so did not have access to a peer group of professionals with the same professional identity. In this study most participants accessed support through informal networks such as family and friends. Support access was for confidence and moral support, but also for technical and specific support such as IT, social media, marketing, and accounting. Freelancers have been found to rely on informal networks as predominant source for support and for finding work (Platman, 2003). There are a couple of ideas for practice that can be interpreted from this theme of social networks. Firstly, that support for older workers who recareer to a contemporary career may need business skills to help them with the self-employed aspect. Secondly there is a space for this group to have a collective space to meet and support each other, maybe via online or network groups.

If organisations can support this, then they can also create space to retain their talent but by being more agile with options for career relationships. Support for their own development as their identity continues to transition and their view of self develops would be an area where individuals could benefit from support. This is a challenge as a lot of interviewees did not reflect on having a strong network to discuss their career post their occupational role. Organisations who engage with freelancers or contract workers could be advised to extend mentoring or coaching programmes outside of employees only.

4.10.3 Leader

The deterioration of leader relationships was found to be an influence on the prompt to consider leaving the organisation. Organisations that wish to retain older workers do need to support career exploration to improve engagement at this time of their career (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes and Hughes, 2012). Leadership support can reduce burnout and intention to quit (Kalliath & Beck, 2001) so supporting leaders in understanding the impact of behaviour on older workers could assist with more inclusive workplaces and retention. There has not been much interest or research into HR or line manager support for their older workers and their career development, leading to development programmes for older workers being given a low priority in organisations (Leisink & Knies, 2011). There is a lack of knowledge in line managers for coaching older workers in the workplace (Leisink & Knies, 2011), so more training in age aware career support could help with holistic career support and hopefully retention of knowledge for their organisation.

4.10.4 Organisation

Although protean careers are seen as an individual focus on career, organisations can embrace benefit from workers with a protean career attitude. When organisations can support workers to review their career competencies of ‘why, whom and how’ then they can benefit mutually from the worker career motivations (Sultana & Malik, 2019). This can tie into organisational inclusive objectives as emphasis becomes on the task rather than social identity or traits of individual people (Hall, 1996). Organisations can develop cultures that support and provide rewards for protean workers to build new employee/employer relationships (Sultana & Malik, 2019). If an organisation is facing talent shortages then being more open to recruiting older workers should be part of the HR workforce plan (Midtsundstad, 2011). Due the current UK pandemic and Brexit challenges, a lot of organisations are facing talent shortages so this may be a key reflection for many organisations in current times.

Organisations can work to create confidence in learning for all ages to work past some of the barriers identified for both individuals and organisations participating in learning. Informal learning can include “self-directed learning, networking, coaching, mentorship programs and performance planning” (Uhunoma, Lim & Kim, 2020, p.202), or can be “gaining new knowledge, skills and abilities by reading a book or article, asking each other for help and feedback, and sharing knowledge with each other" (van Rijn et al., 2013, p.611). By getting workers used to informal learning, they can then engage with opportunities for development both inside and outside the organisation. Whilst challenging the organisational bias towards training for older workers, organisations can benefit from improved culture {Formatting Citation}, improved competitiveness (Lee & Bruvold, 2003), engagement and commitment (van Rijn et al., 2013).

Workers who have recareered can be a hard group to reach as they are independent workers and also have concerns about investing in themselves financially so may not respond to advertisement for learning opportunities. If organisations could offer coaching support as part of their resource to their growing contingent workforce, then this would be a development for organisations to embrace this demographic and build stronger relationships with their freelance workers.

A further step an organisation can take in designing more age friendly career supports is to consider including financial well-being initiatives. Research from the CIPD found that 49% of employers do not have a financial wellbeing policy, but that due to the COVID 19 pandemic more employers are considering financial wellbeing a priority with 24% currently investigating the impact of the pandemic on workers financial health ("Reward Manag.," 2021). Organisations who provide support for financial wellbeing have found it can build trust with workers and improve retention (*Financial Well-Being in the Workplace,* 2017). Financial awareness is critical knowledge for older workers to reduce the worry of managing their career. As discussed, this worry will grow for all generations as the awareness of state pension support becomes more apparent. Organisations will require to take on responsibility for financial well-being for their workers.

There is little research focused on HRM practices that are designed to manage the particular needs of the older worker (Wang et al., 2012), suggesting that the HRM support for older workers requires a more open mind to explore more inclusive options.

4.10.5 Outside

New influences will lead to new ways of working (Mayrhofer, Meyer & Steyrer, 2007). This study was carried out during the Covid pandemic. There has been reports of increased numbers of people leaving or planning to leave their role (*Work Trend Index,* 2021). One report felt that people have reflected during lockdown and are looking to their career to reflect their values and work life balance (BBC Worklife, 2020). This current time is 'unprecedented' and the full impact of Covid pandemic on career decisions and workplaces is a real time experiment. It would be recommended that for this study, the context is assessed in terms of numbers of older workers recareering and how organisations are managing their older worker relationships. Macro influences such as the pandemic increase the urgency of understanding the impact of career trends for all. Understanding the context and impact on career trends will allow practitioners to respond to the career needs of workers.

This study can inform other institutions and bodies. One discussion that did occur within the interviews was those who did reach out for help from relevant government departments or local councils, felt the help available was good but the bureaucracy and timescales involved put people off. This is a key reflection to ensure that those making career transitions are aware of support before the actual 'leap into the transition'.

In terms of the engagement with lifelong learning for older workers, there has not been a response from education institutes to respond to the growing need of education for an older demographic (Cruce & Hillman, 2012). Research has highlighted the need for more models to inform how education institutions can understand the needs of older students (Donaldson & Townsend, 2007). Lifetime learning is felt to be essential to support older workers and for older workers to reduce skill gaps for their career in changing workplaces (*Future of an Ageing Population*, 2018). Older people in general have been found to participate less in learning activities than younger people (*Promoting Adult Learning*, 2005). This potential bias for older students will have an impact on those who want to create new knowledge for their career extension.

4.10.6 Outcomes

Most of the participants engaged in a form of portfolio career. Majority of participants were not aware of this career choice, rather their portfolio career had evolved. Portfolio careers have been considered an attractive options for older workers as they have an advantage of being able to take up opportunities in consultancy, freelance and outsourced roles (Platman, 2003). One of the challenges to a contemporary career is workers may not be fairly treated without an employee contract (Platman, 2003). Some organisations who recognise that their talent pool are within this demographic are creating modern work contracts that aim to be attractive to freelance working conditions for example companies like PWC building a strong relationship and community with their freelance workers (PWC, n.d.). Organisations like Open University who use thousands of associate lecturers have recently moved to a guaranteed contract for their associates (James, 2021). Some of the participants were engaged by Open University as part of their portfolio and they noted that organisations like Open University were a great resource for providing a 'cash cow' of established income whilst allowing time for more uncertain income streams. It allowed risk management and flexibility to explore new options and avenues whilst still having a safety net of regular income. Organisations can explore new career options for older workers to help support portfolio career options. Furthermore, practitioners who work as career coaches can use portfolio career as a tool to support career choice exploration.

4.10.7 IGLOO framework coaching model

One of the main ways of supporting career options and helping explore career choice is career coaching (Ebner, 2021). The benefit of career coaching for supporting career decisions has been established in terms of most individuals requiring some support for their career management especially for handling any form of transition (Tobergte & Curtis, 2013). Career management can also be provided from organisations and more informed career coaching can help overcome the lack of knowledge that leaders have for this demographic (Leisink & Knies, 2011). Most career coaching is developed from traditional career theory (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013) and based on a job or role 'matching paradigm' (Savickas, Nota, Rossier, Dauwalder & Duarte, 2009). Traditionally, a career has been considered in terms of a period of education, an organisational role and then retirement (Cascio, 2002) and career choices have many more paths and options for all workers now reflecting that career management is a much more complex field (Savickas et al. 2009). As can be understood from this research, there is no established career theory informing later life career transitions. The key take-away for practice from the IGLOO framework is the creation of an informed career coaching support for working with older workers who are considering their career options. For older workers, this study as demonstrated that there is limited focused research on those who would like a contemporary career. Previous career coaching for older workers recareering can present an idealised view (Platman, 2003). Development and testing of a coaching model can contribute to empirical knowledge for career coaching interventions (Ebner, 2021). Developing a coaching model will require further exploration, however the coaching model is informed from empirical investigation with a cohort of recareerists and this outline is authentic to the needs of this demographic. The coaching model should understand the impact from the different contextual factors explored within the IGLOO framework (Nielsen et al., 2018). The model connects the themes within the IGLOO framework to show relationships between them (Morgan, 2018).

The following is conceptual components of a coaching model

Individual	• Learning and development plans. • Skill audit – self clarity of own skills. • Work identity – what is the work identity away from the organisation. How to explore and experiment.

Group	• Social capital development – network awareness and strategic use of networks.
Leader	• Leader (coach, peer, or organisational leader) understanding and support for older worker career options.
Organisation	• Portfolio career exploration – managing different identities within different roles. • Workplace financial well-being training - financial awareness and education – financial risk and awareness.
Outside	• Work trends and opportunities – impact on career choice and risk tolerance.
Outcome	• Reflective practice – recognising wins and challenges to manage the see-saw effect. • Time management – how time should be managed to achieve work life satisfaction. • Managing worry and concerns about future career – preparing for emotional challenges.

Table15 – Conceptual career coaching model for workers over 50 to explore career options

4.11 Conclusion

The research on later life career is scattered and mixed within research on early retirement, traditional retirement, and career management. This study has used a spotlight on older workers who recareer to a contemporary career and this lens provides some insights for this cohort within the demographic of older workers with specific factors that influence decisions at the individual, group, line manager, organisational and outside levels. The key output is the IGLOO framework for older worker career transitions which could provide a basis for developing bespoke career theory for older workers who may want to consider their career options. Career coaching especially for key moments such as transitions is lacking for older workers (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013) and this was also found with this study as not many participants had engaged in formal coaching or career support. It was also noted that many of them appreciated the opportunity to talk to someone about their career as part of this research. There is a lack of career theory to support a valid career coaching model for career transitions (Savickas et al., 2009), and especially for older workers (Mulligan-Foster et al., 2021 – in draft). Career paths to suit career demands have been changing, but most of the work is still centred on the early stages of a person's career, rather than to support career transition challenges for those people in mid or later life career transitions (Wong et al, 2003).

Although elements of a protean career mindset and boundaryless orientation can be seen within the findings, there was little support or awareness with the participants of how they used insights or knowledge to support career decisions. Most had created a portfolio career for themselves without the knowledge of this career option. This is an area that is under researched, and this research added new learning in terms of the factors influencing the decision for recareering and some of the outcomes. Factors influencing were discussed withing the IGLOO framework of individual, group, leader, organisation and outside. Outcomes showed that there was a mix of worry about future work and satisfaction with work life balance. The findings support the initial basis of design for a career support model for older workers who are recareering.

Participants reflected on their colleagues being surprised with their career change. Although it felt like an important change in terms of employee/employer relationships, a lot were not changing the boundaries of their industry or role. They did not have a history of multiple career changes which can be found as part of boundaryless career research where people who do change industry bounds do not necessarily have the highest number of job changes in their career history (Briscoe, Hall and Fraitschy De Muth, 2006). When recareering to a contemporary career, research suggests that individuals do not follow a single industry or organisational permanent identity transition (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010). In terms of knowledge retention, this also supports a benefit for organisations to engage, as although the worker may change their contract, they could be engaged on an ‘freelance’ basis. This finding acts as support for encouraging employers to allow their staff to develop career competencies without being concerned about retention issues.

This study also provides insights for organisations in challenging some of the known bias that exists in creating more age friendly workplaces and retention strategies for older workers. It creates justification for organisations to consider how they should be engaging with freelance and consultants to support portfolio career options. This is a growing demographic of workers and there is room in HR and Organisational Psychology to provide a stronger support. As this group is difficult to reach due to their independent work status and lack of professional network, new and novel ways will need to be created to reach this group and provide the support needed.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion and Discussion Chapter

5.1 Introduction

The research presented in this thesis aimed to provide a greater understanding of why workers aged over 50 leave an occupational role to set up a contemporary career, rather than move to another occupational role. The population is growing older, people are living longer and will need to work longer to fund longer lives. A large body of research has focused on the macro reasons driving decisions to work after retirement (Gratton & Scott, 2017; Truxilllo & Fraccaroli, 2013), while less is known as to why people transition to new occupations or 'recareer' in later life. As we see trends in older workers choosing to work for longer, it is likely that increasing numbers of this group may look for an alternate career later in life. This research aimed to examine the reasons for people choosing a different career path before retirement age in preparation for working longer. The longer-term ambition is to provide career management insights for organisations to help them retain talent and to attract older workers through understanding the unique career goals and priorities for this demographic; and by providing a framework to guide practice.

This thesis aimed to answer the following questions:

- What is known about the experiences and decision of workers aged over 50 may recareer from an occupational role prior to retirement age to explore a contemporary career rather than move to another organisational role?

- What are the contextual influences on the decision to recareer from an occupational role to a contemporary career for workers aged over 50. What are the contextual factors that influence in terms of individual, group, leadership, organisational, outside (macro) levels, based based on the sharing of a retrospective view of recareerists?

This chapter provides a synthesis of the findings from the Systematic Literature Review and Empirical Research. A snapshot view of the summary of the two studies are presented in table 16.

5.2 Synthesis of Systematic Literature Review and Empirical Research

	Systematic Literature Review	**Empirical Research**
Aim	The primary aim of this review was to specifically examine what is known about people who have left their organisational role prior to retirement age, to set up a contemporary career for themselves which will include self-employment, freelance or entrepreneurial work. The second aim was to understand the contextual influences on recareer decisions. The third aim was to understand how new contemporary careers are being studied with modern career theory.	This study explored the different contextual influences of recareerists for a group of workers over 50 who have recently experienced a career transition. The aim was to build on knowledge of the influences in the decision for recareerists to understand more about which contextual factors do inform their decision.
Objectives/Questions	What are the known reasons why workers aged 50 and over leave an organisational role for a contemporary career? What are the contextual influences on the recareer decisions? What career theory is used in research to support the analysis of recareerists?	What are the contextual influences in the decision-making process for recareering to a contemporary career in terms of individual, group, leadership, organisational, outside (macro) levels (IGLOO)?
	Systematic Literature Review	**Empirical Research**

Study design	Systematic Literature Review – Initial search, identified 2769 papers and through the screening process, this was reduced to 8 final papers 3 papers were qualitative studies, and 5 papers were quantitative papers	Qualitative research using semi structured interviews
Participant sample	Sample from all papers =27,058, included (m=14,693) (f=12,365) Age range of participants was between 45 – 77 4 studies were based in USA, 1 in UK. 1 In South Korea, 1 in Netherlands, and 1 was split between UK, South Africa and Australia	15 participants Age range 50 to 63 with an average age of 54.8 Locations of participants included 2 from Canada, 1 from New Zealand, 1 from Australia, 1 from Finland, 1 from Malta, 1 from Ireland and 8 from UK. The gender split was recorded as female =10, male = 5
Key Antecedents of career transition identified	Financial Factors Health Intrinsic Motivation Formal and Informal studies	**Individual** Financial awareness Future work plan Leap into career transition Happiness and Meaning Skills and Knowledge **Group** Peer Support and Influence **Leader** Leader Relationship **Organisation** Career Choice **Outside** Covid
Key outcomes of career transition identified	Financial Factors Health Social Capital Intrinsic Motivation	Worry Portfolio Career Work life balance and time management

Table 16 – Summary of SLR and Empirical Research

5.3 Summary of systematic Literature Review (SLR) findings

The aim of the systematic literature review was to explore what was known about why older workers may leave an organisational job prior to retirement age, to explore a contemporary career rather than move to another organisational role. The review objective was to explore what available research could show regarding the experiences of 'older worker' professionals who opted for a second career away from their traditional organisational career.

The review identified 2769 papers, of 8 met the inclusion criteria. Findings showed key themes that were discussed as antecedents and outcomes. Antecedents found were Financial Factors, Health, Working conditions and formal/informal learning.

Antecedents from SLR	Outcomes from SLR
Financial factors DB scheme in place Financial privilege	**Social Networks** Develop connections with other recareerists
Health Health condition reduces transition to self-employment Accommodation requirements can be a motivator	**Intrinsic Motivation** Individual agency Flexible working Work life balance Quality of life Psychological capital
Working Conditions Health insurance (lack of) Salary Professional workers Flexible working	
Formal and Informal Studies Higher education engagement Career opportunities presented via education Interest in continuous learning	

Table 17 – Summary of Antecedents and Outcomes of recareerists from SLR

The SLR was limited in the following ways:

First, in the application of theory. One of the review aims was to examine the use of career theory. However, there was limited application of career theory within the findings. Only one paper was found to have used career theory, of which was bridge employment (Cahill et al., 2006). Although other research did refer to theory such as Mor- Bank (1995) meaning of work for older adults (Dendinger, et al., 2005), or career guidance (Bimrose et al., 2013), or employment choice theory (Kautonen et al., 20170), there was no consistency of the application of career theory. Modern career theory such as protean careers and boundaryless careers, seen as the basis for Contemporary careers (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) were not considered in the literature.

Second, there was a lack of homogeneity in the participant samples, which means there is no clear picture of the different types of career people were moving from and to (Rice 2015, Bimrose et al., 2014). This was a limitation especially in the studies using existing large data sets (Zissimopoulos et al., 2004; Dendinger et al., 2015; Kautonen et al., 2017). Three papers did not clarify the new roles (Dendinger et al., 2015; Rice, 2015: Van Solinge et al., 2014; Kim, 2014). Another paper was not clear about whether the career transition role was as an independent worker (Bimrose et al.,2013).

A further limitation, again, especially with the studies from large data sets led to a lack of insight into the individual reasons why people moved and rather there was a focus on demographic details from the surveys used (Zissimopoulos et al., 2004; Dendinger et al., 2015; Kautonen et al., 2017).

Fourth, time since transition was only controlled for in one of the studies (Rice, 2015. In three studies, the time of the transition was not part of the reported data (Kim, 2014; Dendinger et al., 2005; Bimrose et al., 2013). The studies using large data sets were recorded in waves of 10 years (Cahill et al., 2006; Van Solinge,2014) or 18 years (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007; Kautonen et al., 2017) so again the timeframe of the transition was not taken into account.

5.4 Summary of Empirical Research Findings

The empirical research aimed to further our understanding on the contextual factors influencing recareering decisions by addressing the limitations in the existing literature. First, we adopted a narrow sampling approach, recruiting participants who had transitioned within the last 24 months and had moved to a contemporary career and second through using qualitative interviews to the reasons for recareering could be explored with older workers who had been through the experience of career transition.

The findings from the interviews were explored using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) and key themes were selected based on research perception and interpretation within each level of the IGLOO framework (Nielsen et al. 2018).

IGLOO	Theme
Individual	Financial awareness
	Future work plan or retirement
	Leap into career transition
	Happiness and meaning
	Skills and knowledge

Group	Peer Support or influence
Leader	Leader Relationship
Organisation	Career choice
	Not happy in job
Outside	COVID
Outcomes of career transition	Worry
	Portfolio Career
	Work life balance and time management

Table 18 – summary of core themes within IGLOO framework

This study advances our understanding in the following ways:

First, the importance of a contextual analysis of the influences on recareer decisions for older workers. The use of the IGLOO framework provided a systematic review of the influences and insights into an area of career management that has little established research. The framework provides a basis for understanding practical implications and ideas for further research. Each level of the IGLOO framework had influences on the decision of recareerists and allow a wider lens to be applied when working with or researching career transitions.

At individual level it can be seen that the gaps in a strategic plan for their own development, along with a need for a stronger skills audit do not demonstrate that there is a clear view from the individuals of their personal development. In terms of psychological success most participants in the empirical study did report on satisfaction and flexibility which is part of personal satisfaction, but this was weighed with a level of worry, so psychological success is not fully realised through their career transition. From the empirical research it can be seen that workers perceive their career change to a contemporary career as a mindset where career decisions come from their individual's value base (Briscoe et al., 2012) as most of them wanted to follow meaning and create a better work life balance.

At the group level the importance of understanding the support for difference demographics of older workers. This study had an inclusion criterion for those without a professional identity, which for this context meant an absence of professional associations to which they are a member of (Moliner, Martínez-Tur, Peiró, Ramos & Cropanzano, 2011). The focus of this subset within the older worker demographic was so we could understand the social network and group support of those who were transitioning from an occupational identity to a new self-employed identity without the support of a professional identity. Those workers who decide to work in a freelance arrangement without a 'professional identity' to label themselves with can find it difficult to describe their role (Platman, 2003). This was found in the interviews as some participants found it difficult to describe their way of working or how they would describe their role. Workers may change their way of working but have not changed their work identity (Hall, 2004). This was linked to the findings that people did not have a strong professional network in their contemporary career. There was a reliance on family and friends with the decision but not really with ongoing career development. One of the key initial questions was to understand what support organisations can give to older workers and this demonstrates that organisations can provide coaching and mentoring to their contingent freelance workers. This finding suggests that older employees may benefit from enhanced career support, but also with organisations reaching out to contingent workers to build support networks. We have seen some organisations start to do this and it is good practice (PWC, n.d.).

An organisational level insight was once a person made up their mind to leave, they described a period of disengagement. People leave their job for many reasons and the quitting behaviour has been a focus for research especially in regards to their intention to leave as once a person has quit their job, there is limited opportunity to reflect on thinking and behaviour prior to this decision (Firth et al., 2004). This period between giving notice on their job and leaving their role is critical for organisations. Notice period is usually 1 week per year of service up to a usual cap of 12 weeks (Acas, 2021), and for most of this sample, they had long work histories so did have to provide the 12 weeks' notice. This research suggests that employees may be working but disengaged during this period (Macey & Schneider, 2008), with significant implications for performance (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) and wider team morale (Herman, Olivo, & Gioia, 2003). Further, this could also provide an opportunity for organisations to renegotiate contracts and provide employees with alternative job opportunities or transitional opportunities such as a gradual retirement, thereby retaining valuable knowledge and skills for longer and enabling the employee to gradually develop new skills for their new career. Some participants did negotiate extended leave periods, and this demonstrates that there is scope for organisations to discuss opportunities for freelance, consultancy or part time work. This arrangement would suit this group as most of them were engaged with a portfolio career.

An important individual finding that has an impact for organisations, was similar to the SLR findings which was that there was an engagement with learning and development. In the SLR, there was an emphasis on workers who were classed as educated however, for this group most of the learning was informal and from available (free) sources. Some of this informal search may not always provide the strongest training so training groups or organisations could provide more support to older workers who have intent to leave as part of their support. Some participants did reach out to training schemes with local government bodies but felt the timing for engagement was too long so there is certainly scope for government to provide better resources for this demographic. This demonstrates a clear gap in the development support for this demographic. Centre for Ageing Better (2021) have launched ideas for improving work for older adults and they suggest ‘increasing equal access to training’, ‘focus on support centred on the person’, and ‘enabling people to identify and communicate their transferable skills’ which is in line with the findings of this research. Supporting older workers is felt to be a social issue (Martinez, Nelson & Craig, 2007), and United Nations (2019) stated education and employability for all ages should be a focus for all societies. This research supports the need for training and development to be addressed at an individual, organisational and societal level.

For the outside view it is important to note that that this research was carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic and some of the change was mediated by this environmental factor (Firth et al., 2004). There are increased numbers of people leaving or planning to leave their role during the pandemic (*Work Trend Index,* 2021), with a view that people are for increased work life balance (BBC Worklife, 2020). This current time is ‘unprecedented’ and the full impact of Covid pandemic on career and workplaces is a real time experiment. Whether the impact of Covid 19 pandemic has a longer-term impact could be explored specifically with recareerists. An outcome level was the engagement with ‘portfolio careers’ (Platman, 2003) as most of the interviewees had recareered to a portfolio career, showing this is a preferred choice for these contemporary workers. None of them were fully aware of portfolio career optionsand this choice had evolved for them as they liked to have a ‘cash cow’ or one reliable income and then freedom to explore other activities more in in line with their values or hobbies. For a lot of participants there reported freedom as an outcome of their recareer choice which is also seen as an advantage that a portfolio career gives (Platman, 2003). The engagement of a portfolio career is certainly an area for more study to support practice and research.

5.5 Overall findings

The benefit of both pieces of research was that there were key themes that were found. Both provide a basis for further research for this demographic.

Recalling the critical theory stance, the support for older workers has been reflected on. The constructivist paradigm ensured reflexivity and challenge of thinking to observe and understand each person's decision-making process in their career transition. The consideration of workers over 50 who have recareered have been viewed through a lens free from retirement planning or traditional career planning. Their unique needs have been viewed and new insights have been developed. The view of protean careers was thought that it would provide insights to this cohort, but instead identity transition theory and portfolio careers have evolved to be a stronger support for the SLR and empirical research findings.

The aim of the research was to specifically look at workers who have left their organisational role prior to retirement age, to set up a contemporary career for themselves which will include self-employment, freelance or entrepreneurial work. There was a research lens focused on what career theories such as protean careers or boundaryless careers might provide an insight to the career change. Protean career model is considered a 'valid approach' to provide a reflection on contemporary career options (Kim, 2014), as contemporary careers are self-directed by the individual and led by personal values and subjective perception of career success (Hall, 2002). There are challenges to how protean careers and boundaryless careers should be used (Rodrigues et al., 2015) and this research found the lack of career theory a gap that could be developed by further studies using career theory as a lens to inform support for older workers career management.

The traditional view of retirement being the hard end date to an occupational role has certainly been challenged by many (Platman, 2003). One SLR study stated that "one time permanent retirements are now the exception, not the rule" (Cahill et al., 2006b, p.523) Those who are self-employed tend to retire later than those workers in an occupational role (Kautonen et al.; Minniti, 2017; van Solinge, 2014) or have no intention of retiring (Rice, 2015). In the interviews, participants did not have a plan of retiring, they felt they would work on at a pace that suited them for however long suited them. This move to self-employment meets the macro need of people supporting themselves financially for a longer career as it puts less demand on the state pension. Awareness of this delay to retirement is especially important for government policy as they look at solutions for people supporting themselves to fund ageing demographics and the lack of pension funds to support this demographic. There is a societal benefit to extending working lives as it saves costs for public pensions and keeps knowledge in the economy (Kautonen et al., 2017).

5.6 Limitations

Limitations were identified for the SLR and empirical research.

For the SLR, limitations included that the numbers of studies were only 8 papers. The inclusion criteria included career theories and did not include grey material. Both of these may have limited the research. The SLR search followed guidance from Briner and Denyer (2012) so the search criteria was clear and biases were mitigated as much as possible through the process, however the resulting number of those papers selected was limited. The selected papers included research from a wide geographical basis which caused some challenges to the geographical homogeneity (Robinson, 2014) that could be applied. Although there was an aim to synthesis what career theory could inform about career transitions, the results did not provide insight into career models as there was limited use of career theory. There was a mix of both qualitative and quantitative research which made the comparison more difficult, and some of the methodology of the papers was limited which may impact the strength of the findings. Four of the papers included used large data sets for their analysis which led to limited insights into individual reasons for recareering.

Limitations of the empirical study included that it was completed during the Covid-19 pandemic which was resulting in higher numbers of resignations and as there was limited research to base findings on, this context needs to be appreciated in its mediation role. A few participants stated that they had been let go which may reflect the current economic climate. The number of people who were interviewed was in line with guidance for saturation (Malterud et al., 2016) but is also limited in terms of its application to a general population. This limited number led to a challenge in applying, demographic diversity in terms of age and gender for this demographic. Age homogeneity was a focus as the inclusion was over 50, but there was a realisation that the experience may differ for subsets of this demographic (Robinson, 2014).

Another limitation for both studies is that the previous role was not explored in enough detail to provide clearer basis for comparison. Some organisations were supportive in portfolio or freelance career, and it would have been interesting to explore more of the organisation support available to each person. More in depth knowledge or organisational impacts would have enhanced this contextual analysis.

The aim of the empirical research was to look at 'nonprofessional' workers and although the sampling process included a pre interview survey to filter out those with a professional identity, all participants were in a professional role meaning this aim and discussion was blurred in the communication and reflections. This blurred view and researcher bias impacted the sampling process. There was also a mix of the detail available in the SLR regarding previous roles, so the sample set for the overall research in terms of job role had limitations.

5.7 Implications for Research

The findings from both the SLR and empirical research highlight several implications for research. The study provides an initial model for studying career transitions for older workers. A model from qualitative research can demonstrate a visual representation of the patterns that were found in the research (Morgan, 2018). The following diagram highlights the key contexts and experiences that this research has found to provide a conceptual model for studying this demographic of recareerists. It is recommended that these elements are researched further to aid with development of a valid model to understand and study older workers recareer decisions and influences.

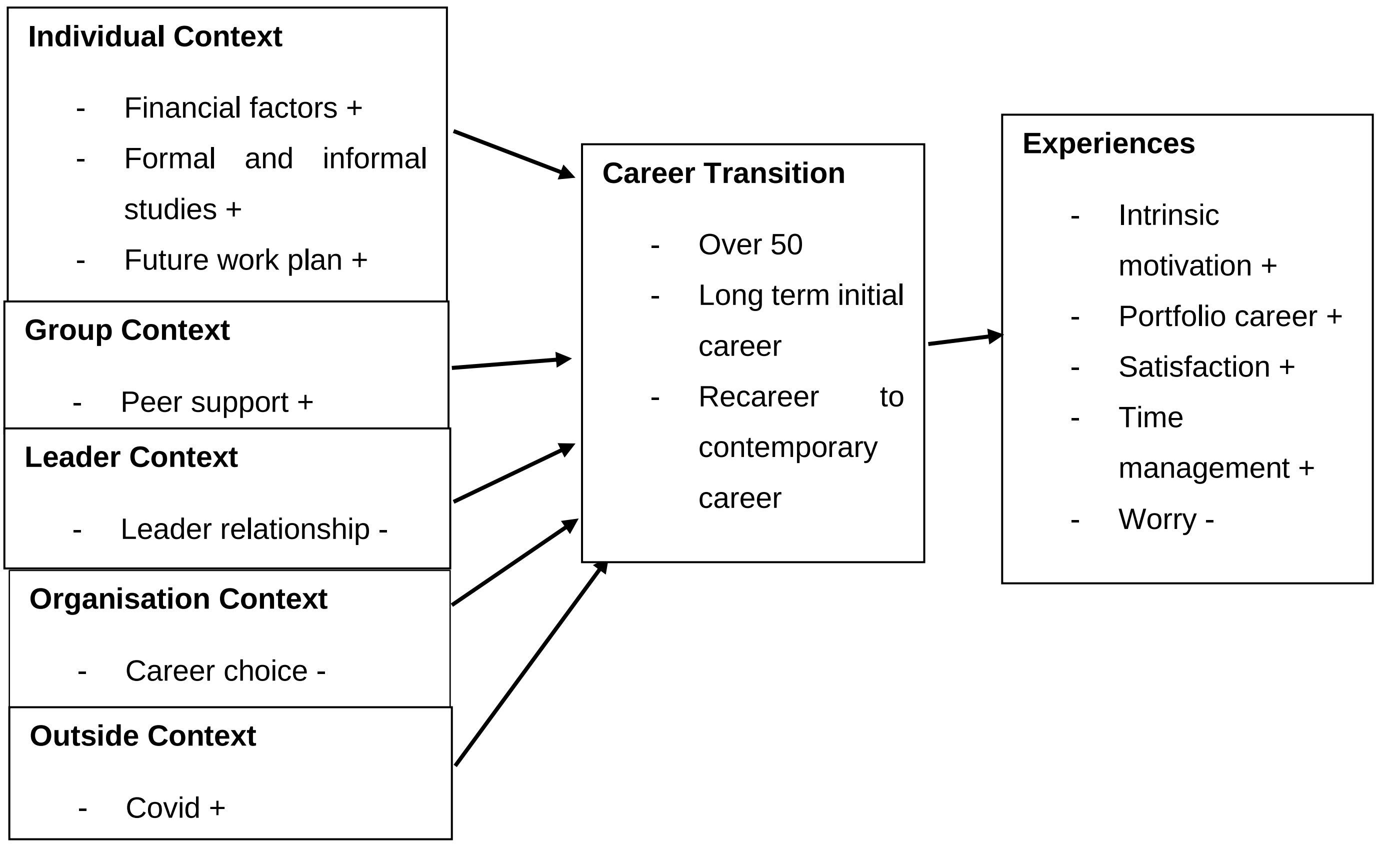

Figure 2 – Conceptual model of Contexts and Experiences of recareering workers aged over 50

5.7.1 Individual context

Both research projects found financial consideration as a theme, which is interesting and demonstrates the shift in people's awareness of the need for financial education. This links with the key introductory research into the shifting pensions environment and the need for people to take more responsibility for their own financial planning, as pensions moves from organisational responsibility to personal responsibility. Income generation pre and post ‘normal retirement age’ are now a consideration and those who are making the decision to move to a contemporary career are financially aware. They are also not focused on a retirement date and their career and personal lives are blurring in line with this. Those who have recareered to self-employment have been found to retire later than those in traditional occupational roles (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). This is positive for the macro challenges of retirement funding as this group represent those who are taking responsibility for their later life financial management instead of being at the receiving end of the decision of an occupational pension scheme.

Part of the macro analysis for this research project was understanding the shift in pension provision and in the UK, there is a move in the UK from DB to DC pension schemes which may mean organisation will lose this retention tool. One SLR study found that people are less likely to move to self-employment if they have a pension plan in place which is higher for those with a DB pension scheme compared with a DC scheme (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). This shows the importance of organisations realising the impact of decisions around compensation packages and the needs for their generationally diverse organisations. As people are taking individual responsibility for their own career, this will lead to more responsibility for personal finances, and society needs to ensure that this education matches the career shifts that this research is studying.

Learning opportunities helped create new role identities therefore supporting career transitions (Kim, 2014). Although recareerists are found to engage in learning, for non-professionals, this learning was informal and not strategically linked to their career transition or identity formation. Formal and informal learning engagement was found to be strong in the studies which interviewed participants. SLR research showed that the samples did have levels of education, Kautonen et al., (2005) noted a gap in research that focused on the roles before recareering, and the type of business older workers selected for their recareer choice. There is a gap in terms of looking at those older workers who recareer without formal education and exploring how they approach their learning (Bimrose et al., 2012).

5.7.2 Group Context

In the empirical study most participants accessed support through informal networks such as family and friends, which was similar to some of the findings in the SLR (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). Support access was for confidence and moral support, but also for technical and specific support such as IT, social media, marketing, and accounting. Research on freelance workers who ensure their social capital maintained were found to be ‘thriving’ in their career (Platman, 2003) so keeping your network active is important for a contemporary career, many of which do work as freelancers. Individuals can reach success in exploring possible selves through understanding similar career stories from others (Kemmelmeier & Oyserman, 2001) so networks where shared stories can be accessed will help. Networks can diminish with age (Platman, 2003), and withdrawing from the workforce was found to lead to less social interactions (Dendinger et al., 2005), therefore it would be a benefit for organisations who engage with freelancers or contract workers could be advised to extend mentoring or coaching programmes outside of employees only.

5.7.3 Leader context

Poor relationships with leaders can lead to higher staff turnover (Firth et al., 2004). Older workers are found to receive less support from leaders in terms of coaching support (Leisink & Knies, 2011). Part of this lack of support could be through ageism, or lack of knowledge of career support (Midtsundstad, 2011). Exploring the impact of leadership change on intention to leave for this demographic would help understand the impact and inform future leadership support and retention initiatives.

5.7.4 Organisation context

Research shows that individuals in the period of 5-10 years prior to retirement do not continue to up-train themselves or feel that they receive any support from their organisations in training (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes and Hughes, 2012). These older workers who have not continued to train and keep skills up to date face decay of their career progression making them vulnerable and unprepared for creating a longer working life (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes, Kirpal, Granning & Daehlan, 2010). Well-designed interventions which support later life career management, will enable organisations to develop more open, trusting conversations and foster the development of more meaningful psychological contracts (Bal, Jansend, Velde, Lange & Rosseau, 2010).

There are many initiatives, organisations can implement as part of a more age friendly culture. This research has highlighted such ideas as, career coaching for employees and contingent workforce, training for employees and contingent workforce, financial well-being, flexible career options, leadership engagement, HRM policies that are age aware. One of the key objectives of this research was to understand how organisation can support older workers and it is felt that this has been addressed, but also it has highlighted key areas to research to understand the impact of what organisational decisions are causing people to leave. Importantly, there is a gap in the research to understand what the negativity in the career choice for older workers is to disregard another organisation as a career option (Mallon, 1998). Knowing what is off putting about their organisation, will allow evidence-based information to inform positive change.

5.7.5 Outside context

The Covid-19 pandemic although is an antecedent in the above model, is also a possible mediator in the relationship between individual and organisational antecedents, and outcomes. A few participants reflected that the lockdown and different ways of working gave people space to consider new options. What was interesting was that nobody mentioned that they were concerned what people really thought about their move from an occupational position. They were not overly concerned about their job title or identity which is interesting as job titles can be found to be a source of pride or even identity of workers (Grant, Berg, & Cable, 2014). Freelance workers can find it difficult to describe their role (Platman, 2004) so this may be part of their barrier to being able to explain. Job titles for roles which could be classed a 'socially stigmatised jobs' people can be reluctant to share their title for dear of judgment or negativity (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). However, it may be that we are in a time where people are less judgemental about career progression. We hear many stories about people like pilots recareering to work as supermarket workers. Maybe this is an era of more tolerance and open minds about career change.

5.7.6 Experiences

Key themes in this regard were the search for more meaning, flexibility, and freedom. Changing working identity needs exploration of identities (Ibarra, 2004) so without this exploration, as they settle into their contemporary career, the worry may start to weigh heavier than the satisfaction. This research explored the reasons for transition but not the long-term success of a contemporary career. Activities required to help this working identity change include doing new things (crafting experiments), engaging with other people (shifting connections) and reinterpreting life stories through the new aspects of learning and reflection (making sense) (Ibarra, 2004). Social networks were not seen as a key factor in the research with the SLR and empirical study so without this support, the challenge to explore your identity is even more difficult. In the research findings, most people relied on a personal network, however personal networks may view a person with bias or in their existing identity, therefore making it harder for a recareerists to explore new paths. New connections are critical to helping a person see different options, hence, why social capital development needs to be an essential skill for workers of all ages.

One of the key outputs from the empirical research was that participants created a portfolio career. Some of the sample who worked with Open University who have a strong model for portfolio careers. Organisations who engage with and support a portfolio career can reserve a talent pool of available and knowledgeable workers (Platman, 2003). Working with organisations like them to understand how they operate, and support career options would provide excellent case studies for practice. Education and support regarding portfolio career should be given to organisations so they can be aware of the benefits especially from a retention point of view, but also then to allow them to consider more flexible options in regard to career management.

5.8 Implications for Practice

Both studies provide new learning on antecedents and outcomes of career transition that will inform career coaching and organisational support. This research provided more insight to the reasons why people look for a new contemporary career rather than an occupational role.

For individuals, coaching support is vital for this demographic. There are vulnerabilities for recareerists (Platman, 2003) that are not explored within traditional career coaching. Elements such as network strength diminishing, financial risks, worry about finance, social support, ageism, lack of health care, lack of employment contracts were all risks emerging from this research. These risks combined with the lack of planning that seemed to be part of the recareerists decision making highlight the need for more support for this group of workers. Understanding possible selves in response to feedback from another can help with success in an individual feeling they can successfully reach their ideal self (Kerpelman &. Pittman, 2001). Providing career coaching for over 50's to support career challenges is required. It can be seen though that those who have recareered are not investing money into their own development so this creates a barrier for support. Part of the challenge is the lack of planning found within the experiences of those who had recareered. In the interviews majority of participants discussed the 'leap' they took. This is in line with research from the SLR where participants in a study did not see the importance in planning as they reacted to unexpected change (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013). Links with groups or available bodies of support needs to be considered. Training in entrepreneurial skills may assist with the career needs for older workers who have career ambition to be self-employed (van Solinge, 2014). This sort of training would be beneficial to those who have recently transitioned too. As seen from the interviews a few participants looked to local council and government support but faced barriers in terms of time that courses were available. People need this training early in their transition to meet the needs of the speed of decisions that seem to involve with older workers career transition to a contemporary career. Support for career transitions in older workers has been found to come from informal sources (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2013) and this was also evident in the interviews with the 15 participants for this study. There is a lack of formal career guidance for this demographic (Bimrose et al., 2013), which was also demonstrated in this study. A suggested career coaching framework has evolved from this research which is also recommended to be researched within a coaching practice to assess its suitability. A possible trial run with an organisation would allow exploration of the strength of the conceptual career coaching model suggested previously in table 15.

For organisations the consideration of older workers is imperative as older workers will be an organisations largest talent pool within the next two decades (Paullin, 2014). The older demographic is the fastest growing demographic and it means that there will be a shortage of younger workers and a growing source of older workers who will have the skills and experiences organisations require (Paullin, 2014). Considering the new career options such as self-employment, contracting and portfolio career will mean organisations should be considering different ways of recruiting so they can continue to work with older workers in society.

Supporting new career options is a societal issue and new ways of thinking about job titles should be considered as we challenge the options of later life career management. Job titles can carry social and cultural meaning so more reflection for individuals to create their own title may support their identity transition (Grant et al, 2014). The explanation from Daniel Pink (2001) about workers who have left organisational roles defines them as “Free agents are people who are working untethered from a large organisation. This includes freelancers, e-lancers, self-employed professionals, and proprietors of small businesses. These are not necessarily entrepreneurs … they are not necessarily start-ups that aspire to go big. They’re people who have either been cast aside by larger organisations or have broken away from large organisations to make their own way.” (Greengard, 2012, p.1). This explanation was evident in the research from the SLR and especially from the empirical. There is a view to see career options as occupational, freelance, or self-employed but this is a range of people for whom their career can tick all of these boxes. Free agent feels like a relevant term that describes this group of recareerists. This term is practice lead and is not in support with academic research that other terms have, but it feels relevant and worthy of more consideration.

For organisation, this study has a wide-ranging impact on practice on how career practitioners and HR professionals can support career choices such as portfolio careers. There is little known about why people leave an organisation role for a portfolio career which was found by Mallon (1993) and without much further exploration of this career option since (Grant et al. 2014). Initially ideas for HRM management and how HR can be more age aware of career needs but also how workplaces can really understand the unique needs and skills of their older workers (Rice, 2015). Realising the need for training and development on a holistic basis may help with retention. Also redesigning some HR policy, especially around reward, benefits, and flexible working. Organisations that allow flexible working increased the likelihood that someone would recareer to self-employment, and may be linked increase in a portfolio approach where individuals reduce hours in salaried job whilst starting another self-employed role (Zissimopoulos & Karoly, 2007). Non-compete clause in contracts need to be considered as if removed would it help with portfolio career and retaining older workers. Side-line businesses have been created by older workers as a way to build something to last into old age and past their traditional retirement age (Rice, 2015).

A lens of financial implications of pension change was applied to this overall study. The need for financial support for older workers is ongoing and governments are trying to reform pensions. This reform needs to be done in line with career management so people can manager their career independently and confidently and do the same for their financial management, working towards work and financial freedom.

5.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, the research presented in this thesis extend our understanding of career transitions in older workers and identified a number of gaps in our knowledge for this population.

First, new knowledge has been generated through the application of the IGLOO framework: identifying the individual, group, line manage, organisational and outside factors that influence career decisions. In doing so, a conceptual theory for career transitions in older workers has been developed and provides a framework for future enquiry.

Second, the systematic review findings highlighted that research for older worker career transitions is largely atheoretical. While research drawing on protean careers and boundaryless careers is available, the awareness of this for practical application does not seem to be evident. Third, review also highlighted a lack of evidence based career theory to support this demographic of recareerists (Bimrose et al., 2013; Rice, 2015) and this is demonstrated in the lack of formal career support that recareerists have been able to access. There is need for a deepened understanding of contemporary, protean and boundaryless career theory, as well as the role of portfolio careers, as applied to the experiences of older workers to better understand the needs and experiences of this population.

Portfolio careers have appeared as a strong choice for a contemporary career and have evolved intuitively with people. This shows there is a need for this to be engaged with by organisations so they can work with portfolio careerists and hopefully retain some of their talented older workers for a longer time. There have been studies on portfolio careers for certain professions such as book profession (Granger, Stanworth, & Stanworth, 1995), creative roles (Ashton, 2014) and the medical profession (Pathiraja & Wilson, 2011). There are practitioner insights on managing a portfolio career (Greenspan, 2017), however, there is a gap in evidence-based research on transitioning to a portfolio career for older workers. The gap includes how organisations can most effectively manage portfolio workers and this gap would provide essential support for older work recareerists

Fourth, the impact of career transitions in non-professional workers warrants further attention. Identity transition for non-professional workers was not fully resolved within this research. There are questions as to whether there are career choice differences in culture (Grant et al. 2014) and class (Markus & Schwartz, 2010). Are there connections and job opportunities different depending on social class or the social interpretation of a job title? The reflexivity on the sample selection highlights an opportunity to focus on the differing needs of the demographics of each population that is studied and to reflect on the individual and societal barriers of socio-economic influences for career transitions.

Fifth, this research moves beyond the traditional understanding of the financial drivers for later life career management, to provide insight into the many influences and decision-making factors. The contextual view provides understanding of the antecedents and outcomes of older worker recareerists. Finally, this research develops a framework for practical application through the proposition of a coaching model to build more effective career support practices for this cohort of workers. The IGLOO framework and practitioner outcomes discussed in the empirical research chapter and this chapter provide areas that can be studied further to provide evidence-based practice to support older workers.

Choice and autonomy are fundamental to well-being (Markus & Schwartz, 2010). People should have choice in their career and the demographic shifts we see in society support the need for career choice. Supporting older workers with career choice to reach their optimal work life balance is a positive move that this research will hopefully help to open conversation and further research ideas.

Chapter 6 - Reflective Chapter

Stage	Questions	Reflections
Scoping out your research idea	What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?	I knew I wanted to focus on older workers career transition. I had this idea for a while, and I some of my ideas were from previous research. I also had an idea of what I wanted to do with my research in terms of practice and future application. I realise that these 'big picture' views were limiting me really engaging with the research. Talking through my ideas with my classmates and supervisors was effective. It allowed me to really reflect on what I thought I knew and realise that I needed to take a deeper dive into the research area. This removed some of my now obvious bounded awareness and I felt the research develop and ideas flow easier when reading around my topic.
	Did your initial idea change during this stage? If so, how, and why?	I had an interest in protean careers which I felt that would be my focus, however after initial research I realised that this would not be as clear to complete my SLR. I Felt a bit disappointed at first, but when I let this go, I was then able to find a much clearer path and my research seemed to make more sense.
	How did this process differ from your expectations?	I was a little unaware of the full doctorate programme and I thought we would spend more time on researching around our topic and completing more of the literature review. The SLR process was different to what I thought, and it made me worry if I had picked the right research topic as we were committed to this so early in the process.
	What were your key learnings from this stage?	To be confident in your decision but still to keep an open mind on what you might uncover.

	What would you do differently if you were to go through this process again?	I would start with my key ideas and allow the process to occur without being so focused on the end result. I would also enjoy the reading more and allow more time with the findings.

The systematic review: Developing a protocol	What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?	I think that it was too process driven which stopped me really understanding the full aim of a SLR. It felt like there was a lot to learn on the process without really understanding the overall aim of a SLR. To overcome this, I read a few other SLR's so I could get a sense of what the final stage would mean. I also read a little more on the purpose of an SLR and I found this useful as understanding more about the concept really helped. Understanding what the purpose of this type of research was so beneficial as I got the point of it and that really changed my motivation.
	How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?	I feel that the structured approach to the SLR was more disciplined than I imagined. I felt that usual literature reviews included lots of reading and following leads. The SLR focused you much more and by following the process you would ensure your reading was more structured.
	What were your key learnings from this stage?	I enjoy research and although I appreciated the process, I found the process a bit limiting in terms of what I felt I should be doing as a researcher. I did not feel I was progressing or developing myself and there was a frustration. I also felt like I was not reading wide enough, and this caused some concern. However, once I completed the SLR, I felt more confident in my subject area as I delved deeper in into my final articles, than I would probably do with my 'normal' research. I realised that this level of deep reading allowed for layers of learning and more connection with the research. I

		feel more confident in my area than I expected so that was a nice surprise. I have learnt to allow more time for deeper reading and ingestion of material.
	What would you do differently if you were to go about developing a protocol again?	I think I would have a completely different view in future SLR protocol as I feel I understand it much more so would get the reasons why behind a protocol now.

The systematic review: Conducting searches	How did you come to a decision on the keywords, databases, and inclusion/exclusion criteria to use?	I knew which demographic I wanted to study. The term older workers had to be researched to ensure I was including the correct age group and the research did lead me to settle on over 50's. I wanted to look at those who had recareered for personal choice to a new career, so it was clear to omit reasons due to ill health or early retirement.
	What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?	There is a lot of research on retirement and working past research, so it was a challenge to find the research that did specifically look at recareerists. I wanted to focus on protean careers and boundaryless careers but again there was limited research with these careers focusing on recareerists or application to career examples.
	How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?	There was less research than I anticipated, and this caused some anxiety in whether the papers found would be enough.
	What were your key learnings from this stage?	To follow the process! There is so many stages and it is important to complete each one and work through it, and to take time for learning and reflection at each stage. As this was the first time to complete a SLR process it did feel a little overwhelming in parts, but the process and discipline helped.
	What would you do differently if you were	I would look a grey literature as well as I feel like there may have been some insights from there

	to go about conducting systematic searches again?	I would also look further into some key literature and review key terms in more detail so that I would feel more confident about inclusion criteria.
The systematic review: Assimilation and write up	How did you come to a decision on the way to cluster the data and tell the story? How did you make the choice of target journal?	I reviewed some of the key researchers in the area I was looking at and noticed where they tended to publish. This also helped with thinking about the style and presentation of data.
	What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?	Challenges were to carefully consider what was an antecedent and what was an outcome. Each paper had been looked at individually, but it also then took a step back to look at the overall findings. I feel the individual approach occurred first and then the overall view came later in the plan.
	How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?	I thought the findings would present an easier global picture to the question, but it did not, and it took a few attempts to feel like there was a good output.
	What were your key learnings from this stage?	Again, to follow the process, take time and seek advice. Coming back to your findings and reviewing with hopefully a different lens helped. It was an important reflection to understand that the findings need time to evolve as you interacted with it.
	What would you do differently if you were to go about writing up again?	Take more notes and create a mind map of the findings to help understand the links more easily.

Research Study:	How did you come to a decision on the	Although I understood what type of study that I wanted to take, I realised that I did not understand the theory behind the methodology in enough

Design and Proposal	study/studies you were going to undertake?	detail to really explain this. I therefore I had to go back and look further at the methodology used in the SLR studies and really justify my decision. I knew I wanted to do a qualitative study as this suited my professional development as well as developing my research skills as past academic studies had been quantitative studies, so I did want something different for this course.
	Why did you decide to use the particular methodology/analytical process?	I felt that Thematic Analysis suited my research best as it allowed for some theme development but had more structure to it than other analysis tools. I enjoyed the learning and research on Thematic Analysis. There is lots of current discussion and debate on TA and I enjoyed following those conversations and allowing the debate to challenge my own learning.
	What challenges did you face in the design process and how did you overcome them?	Knowledge was the biggest barrier. When reading articles, I had not taken time to understand the methodology section in detail. To go back and review and then follow the research requirements took some time and energy. I grew to enjoy studying methodology and feel this is an area I have really engaged and developed in.
	How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?	I guess it was a case of the unknowns, I really did not appreciate the gap in my knowledge that needed and still needs some development. The unknown, developed a sense of curiosity in research practice though and as I worked through the challenges, I grew to really enjoy the learning.
	What were your key learnings from this stage?	So many learnings at this stage. I recognised a gap in knowledge in methodology. I found the new terminology challenging at first and realised it needs a deeper level of learning to gain more confidence. It is an area I have scheduled more allocation of time for the process and allowed

		myself space to really engage with the studies and those who shared information.
Research Study: Gathering data	How did you go about gathering data and accessing participants? Why did you choose this route?	I wanted to develop my qualitative research ability, so I knew I wanted to do interviews and Thematic Analysis. I had thought about the process and included a survey and inclusion questions which worked well. I advertised on LinkedIn and Facebook and via my own network which I felt would have a strong reach.
	What challenges did you face when gathering data/accessing participants and how did you overcome them?	I faced challenges in getting enough people from creative industries which I had hoped. I did not have to links to the network and did not allow enough time to really explore this. More screening is needed. I felt that a couple of earlier participants wanted or expected a coaching session – I learnt I need to be very clear about the boundaries in any communications before the study.
	How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?	I had thought that Facebook groups with freelance workers would be more positive in getting interest but there was not much interest from these groups. Networks I was already involved in provided the strongest response, but I was disappointed as I felt there was a fall back to workers with professional experience. I was hoping to gather more participants from creative industries or practical careers. I realise the need to spend more time on recruitment and sampling for future research.

	What were your key learnings from this stage?	To take time to search for the demographics of people that you wish to study. Check that there is access and present yourself to the influencers who can help engage people. I became conscious about keep the questions consistent with balancing space for people to tell a story. People seemed to like talking about themselves and in their storytelling, they can cover a lot of what I want to ask. At first, I was very conscious of ensuring that I kept to the questions to ensure consistency and I feel this got in the way a bit, so I allowed a bit more space for the storytelling, and this felt more authentic and meant I could be more present for the person. Listening to first two interviews I could already see some themes, but they were surprisingly what I did not expect. This was good though as it reminded me to be careful of my own confirmation bias. Also, it was a relief to hear some consistency in answers as this made me feel that my research has some value and gave me motivation to continue. I would implement this review of research as ongoing rather than wait until the end of the research stage. Doing the interviews was a little challenging as I felt I struggled to go between interview and coaching mode. I wanted to explore more of their story but also wanted to ensure everyone was asked the same questions and there was a consistency to the interviews. I felt a little unnatural and realised I need to think about what it feels like to wear my researcher hat as opposed to my hat as a practitioner and coach.

	What would you do differently if you were going to begin this stage again, and why?	I would have liked to have more of a similarity in the sample and I would focus on that. This was a key part of my reflexivity work and awareness of the demographics I have interest in. For example, I did recruit some people from the Open University and found that a lot of people here do follow a portfolio career. That would be an interesting demographic to focus on.

Research Study: Analysing data	How did you go about analysing your data? Why did you choose this route?	I selected to use NVivo for the transcribing and analysis. The process of this felt clear at first, but on further research I realised that there were many decisions to make. I found this part really interesting and felt I learnt a lot about the rigour of research. I selected reflexive Thematic Analysis for the method to analyse and found it very engaging. Braun and Clarke share a lot of good tips via social media, and I engaged in a community of learning through the process which will be a benefit for my future career also. I wanted to learn more about TA, and I am glad I chose this route as I feel I have developed confidence in this area of methodology.
	What challenges did you face when analysing your data and how did you overcome them?	Transcribing takes so much longer than I thought it would. NVivo transcription needs a lot of work. Talking 2 – 3 hours to tidy up the first draft. I recognise I had to listen to them again and again to really pick out themes. Would like to explore more about the person and their identity transition and realised that was missing from the interviews - maybe should have

		done some self-reflection exercise or asked more about that
	How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?	I really enjoyed learning about what is required for a research interview. I realised I had assumed I know how to do it based on my practice as a coach. Reading about it now, makes me realise that research interviews are different.
	What were your key learnings from this stage?	So many learnings, I realised I loved learning about methodology, and that there was space for this learning to impact on my role as a practitioner. The reflexivity of you as a researcher and what you bring to your research activities was so enlightening for me, for this research, and for my practice.
	What would you do differently if you were going to begin this stage again, and why?	Read more on methodology to get a stronger baseline level of knowledge. I would have engaged more then with the methodology sections of journal articles and absorbed more learning earlier in the process.
Research Study: Writing up	What challenges did you face when gathering writing up your study and how did you overcome them?	Surprising how long things can take. I spent a day researching TA and whether to include commas in the transcription! It was such a revelation to consider how many questions needed answering as a researcher. At first, I found so much of this overwhelming but then I recalled that I was learning to become a researcher and to try and enjoy the process. It was a surprise how much freedom you can give yourself when you approach the work as a chance to learn.
	How did this process differ from your expectations/plan?	The time pressure that evolved was very stressful. I thought I would complete within a time frame that I planned but the plans did not work out. Everything I read about research was that it would take longer than you think, and it did.

	What were your key learnings from this stage?	To make time and allow time. When trying to work under pressure you feel you cannot see the wood from the trees. You need space and time to reflect on your findings. I allocated blocks of time for my research activities and reduced my workload to accommodate that. I would ensure that I allow space and time to have the deep engagement with researching for future work.
	What would you do differently if you were going to begin this stage again, and why?	I would plan in reflection time, and to get more opinions from supervisors and fellow researchers. I would set milestones and review times with supervisors. I was a little too in my own bubble whilst working on this research and left the review time till a little late in the process. Although I benefited from the review, earlier interventions, would have helped my development more.

Overall Doctoral Process	Reflecting on your doctorate, how do you feel you have developed (e.g., technical expertise, theoretical knowledge)?	I feel I am so much more aware of the importance of methodology and the decisions we make regarding planning and analysing research. I thought I had strong evidence-based beliefs but realise there were so many questions I was not even asking. A key learning was the reflexive work on the researcher role in research. This has changed my research and practitioner work immediately. Acknowledging the role of the researcher and what you bring to your work, but also where it can bound your awareness has changed how I work.
	Can you see any changes in your practices and/or professional plan as a result of undertaking	Feel I am a better interviewer after this process– or I will be going forward. The listening to my own recordings has been insightful and a great learning experience. I need to be more confident in my

	this doctorate and associated learnings?	speech. I think I also need to be more confident as a psychologist!!
	What has been the most useful element of the process for you?	Doing the interviews was a little challenging as I felt I struggled to go between interview and coaching mode. I wanted to explore more of their story but also wanted to ensure everyone was asked the same questions and there was a consistency to the interviews. I felt a little unnatural and realised I need to think about what it feels like to wear my researcher hat as opposed to my hat as a practitioner and coach. This reflection has helped enormously with my research, coaching and supervision work.
	What has been the most rewarding element of the process for you?	The learning has been so rewarding. I felt initially that methodology was so confusing, but now it is probably my favourite area of study. To overcome a part that you felt daunted by but then enjoyed, has built my curiosity for learning and my confidence for learning. Also, the feeling that I can, and that I want to do more research
	What has been the most challenging element of the process for you?	Confidence. Coming at this work as a practitioner, the imposter syndrome of whether you are good enough raised its ugly head so many times. Thankfully after going the process, confidence has been increased from what I learnt, but also in just sticking with it and working through those demons.
	What has been the most frustrating element of the process for you?	Recognising that for this level of research, you must allocate the time, not just use up what time is left each week/month. It's like saving, you must put the money away at the beginning of the month and live on what is left, not think you will save what is left – usually nothing. You must plan the time, not fit research into what is left – usually nothing!!

	What would you tell someone beginning this process? What are the key things they should know/avoid/prepare for?	I would engage with your study group. Our group has been amazing in supporting each other through the highs and lows. Loved working with the group, but you need to be mindful as it does also provide a benchmark to where you are and can cause anxiety as you realise you are not where other people are. I would recommend writing as often as possible. I started a 15-minute free writing session each day. Just to get ideas and thoughts down. I read a book on ‘how to write your dissertation in 15 mins a day’ and they talked about a version zero, and this made a lot of sense. So much of what we do, and our research comes from our own thoughts and biases, so this free writing is helping me see these biases and influences. It helped when I was writing up to return to these notes and reflect on ideas generated through the process. I would recommend a stronger plan with your supervisors. I did not check in enough and had a few elements of high anxiety on whether the work I was doing was of the right standard. More frequent check ins would have reduced time wasted on anxious thoughts. Plan your time and set milestones and then celebrate the milestones. Those small wins will keep you going on what sometimes can feel like an unachievable goal.

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Appendix 1 - Quality Assessment

Author	Design	Methodological	Conceptual	Reporting	Notes	Rating
Bimrose, Jenny, McMahon, Mary Watson, Mark (2013) Career trajectories of older women: Implications for career guidance	Qualitative	Low Quality	Low Quality	Moderate Quality	Semi-Structured interviews were held with 36 females aged between 45 and 65 in UK. Interview protocol comprised 5 sections, demographics, present, past, and future work and learning experiences, previous work and learning transitions and moving forward. Grounded theory research was used to support the explorations of real-life world experience of the participants in terms of their career. There was not any information on sample requirements or a clear hypothesis to lead the inclusion requirements. Results were led by themes but with limited data to support. Strong discussion in terms of limitation and application to practice	1 - Low Quality
Cahill, Kevin E. Giandrea, Michael D. Quinn, Joseph F. (2006)	Quantitative	Moderate Quality	low quality	Moderate Quality	Data from Health and Retirement Study in the USA looked at work histories and retirement patters of a sample aged between 51-61 during a 10-year period from 1992 - 2002. A multinomial logistic regression model was used to analyse the data. There was no clear hypothesis set out for the analysis,	2 - Moderate Quality

Retirement patterns from career employment.					although the results were detailed in looking at the work trends. Limited discussion regarding implications or application to practice	
Dendinger, Veronica M. Adams, Gary A. Jacobson, Jamie D. (2005) Reasons for working and their relationship to retirement attitudes, job-satisfaction and occupational self-efficacy of	Quantitative	High Quality	Medium Quality	High Quality	Introduction explored the theory of Mor-Barak (1995) four reasons for work (social, personal, financial, and generative) and link to attitudes to bridge employment (job satisfaction, retirement attitude and occupational self-efficacy). The study did not have clear hypothesis but looked to explore the relationships between these measures. Sample was 108 university retirees. analysis included coeffient alphas for internal consistency for the measures used. Two step regression analysis were completed for the demographics and measures. Methods section was clear and would support replication. Findings were clearly reported and there were some implications for further study along with practical implications	3 - High Quality

bridge employees.						
Kautonen, Teemu Kibler, Ewald Minniti, Maria (2017) Late-career entrepreneurship, income, and quality of life.	Quantitative	High Quality	High Quality	High Quality	clear hypothesis that focused on effects of income and quality of life on voluntary transitions from paid employment to entrepreneurship. Data was analysed from five biennial waves (2002 - 2011) of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) with a total number of observations of 52,636. Strong analysis and key insights in terms of limitation and application to practice	3 - High Quality
Kim, Seon-Joo (2014) The Career Transition Process: A Qualitative Exploration of Korean Middle-	Qualitative	Moderate Quality	Moderate Quality	High Quality	Aim of study was to understand career transition of middle-aged Korean professions and the role of learning in their career transition. The sample for this study was 9 middle-aged workers in postretirement work recruited through a personal network. Interviews were analysed using a constructivist constant comparative method of grounded theory. Questions were open-ended and efforts were made through the post interview coding to remove bias in the analysis of data. Study provided a clear model of career transition of 4 stages that provides a good basis for further research. Design of study	2 - Moderate Quality

Aged Workers in Postretirement Employment.					is difficult to replicate though through the lack of information on interview questions.	
Rice, Candy K. (2015). The phenomenon of later-life recareering by well-educated baby boomers.	Qualitative	Moderate Quality	Moderate Quality	High Quality	Detailed introduction that explored the area of recareering in detail. The study was a small sample of 5 participants. Sample was from a group on LinkedIn of which members were active in discussing topics related to career and professional development. The process for interviewing was described clearly and there was clear awareness of the need to reduce bias in the interview process. Lincoln and Guba's (1985) model for trustworthiness was used to support credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Data was analysed using Mustakas's (1994) Modified Kaam Method of Data Analysis and their process of data analysis is well presented and documented. Themes documented and supported with data from interviews	2 - Moderate Quality
van Solinge, Hanna (2014) Who opts for self-employment after retirement? A	Quantitative	High Quality	Moderate Quality	Moderate Quality	Study used data from Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute Work and Retirement Panel which follows older workers and their spouses over a 10-year period. 1304 participants were included in the sample for this research. There was clear hypothesis for their research. Their results compared those who left occupational role and selected self-employment with those who took bridge employment. full employment or full retirement. Limitations in that the study was limited to 4 large companies with all	2 - Moderate Quality

longitudinal study in the Netherlands.					participants in DB pension scheme. Limited ideas for future research or application to practice	
Zissimopoulos, Julie M. Karoly, Lynn A. (2007) Transitions to self-employment at older ages: The role of wealth, health, health insurance and other factors.	Quantitative	High Quality	Moderate Quality	High Quality	This study analysed data from a USA Health and Retirement Study. This was a longitudinal survey of middle aged and older Americans from 1992 to 2000. This study was able to use 2000 in their sample over 5 waves. They analysed the pattern of transitions between waves for different demographics of sex and age. Due to the volume of data, there is a good range of insights related to gender, health status, health insurance, hob characteristics. There is rich data in their summary of possible reasons for moving to self-employment	3 - High Quality

Table 19 – SLR Quality Assessment

Appendix 2 -Interview Proforma

The following are the questions and prompts to be used to the interviews

1. Please tell me about your previous occupational role
   Prompt questions regarding length of service, attitude to role, role responsibilities

2. Can you describe the decision-making process that led to your leaving your occupational role?
   Prompt question – what was some of the factors within your organisation that prompted you to consider leaving?
   Prompt question – How did you feel about your organisational job/company?
   Prompt question – Did you like/enjoy your role?

3. What work do you do now?
   Prompt question – What type of work do you do?
   Prompt question – What would be your typical week?

4. How would you describe your role/career?
   Prompt question – How do you answer the question 'what do you do'?
   Prompt question – How would you describe your employment status?

5. How did you decide on your current career?
   Prompt question – How did you know about your current work?
   Prompt question – How did you decide to look for a non-organisational job?

6. Did you seek or receive any support for your career transition?
   Prompt question – who did you speak to about your career transition?
   Prompt question – Did anyone suggest this work to you?
   Prompt question – Who do you speak to most about the career transition?

7. Can you describe any feelings or emotions involved in your career transition?
   Prompt question – Was there any stress involved?
   Prompt question – How did you feel leaving your organisational role?

8. Did you undertake any personal or professional development?
   Prompt question – Did you do any training?

9. How do you feel about your current way of working/role?
   Prompt question – Are you satisfied with your current career?
   Prompt question – Do you have any worries?

10. What are your plans for the next 5/10 years?
    Prompt question – do you have a view of what retirement may look like for you?

Appendix 3 - Coding Framework

IGLOO	Theme	Sub Theme	Description	Files	Ref's
Individual	Financial awareness		Individual awareness of financial risks and financial planning	7	16
	Future work plan or retirement		Longer term career plans through to retirement	13	27
	Hobbies and interests		Individual hobbies and non-work interests	8	14
	Leap into career transition		Planning for career transition as a leap into new role	14	33
	Happiness and meaning	Not happy in job	Aspects of previous occupation role individuals were not happy with	13	41
		Search for meaning	Wanting meaning from career	8	26
	Confidence		Self-awareness of own levels of confidence	5	10
	Skills and knowledge	Lifelong learning	Engagement with learning and development	15	46
		Transferable skills	Skills from occupational role that were transferrable to a contemporary career	11	27
Group	Peer Support or influence		Support from network or influence on career change from others in network	15	54
	Relationship with colleagues		Relationship with colleagues in occupational role	8	10

Leader	Leader Change		Change in leadership personal within occupational role	3	8
	Leader Relationship		Relationship with leader within occupational role	7	17
Organisation	Career choice		Opportunities for career with an occupational setting Options/decisions/reflections during period of resigning/redundancy till actual leave date	13	65
	Organisational Culture and Change		Culture and change withing the organisation of occupational role	9	27
Outside	COVID		Impact of COVID pandemic	10	15
	Government and council support		Support available for career transition from government or local council bodies	5	7
Outcomes of career transition	Worry		Worries and concerns about new career	14	29
	Portfolio Career		Engagement with a portfolio career for new career	13	39
	Satisfaction		Elements of satisfaction with new career choice	9	17
	Work life balance and time management	Control	Feelings of being in control with working life	9	14
		Freedom	Freedom for choices about work and life	10	16
		Time Management	Managing time within new career	11	19
		Work life balance	Work life balance of new career and life	15	35

Table 20 - IGLOO framework of themes

Appendix 4 - Full theme list within IGLOO framework

IGLOO	Theme	Sub Theme	Description
Individual	Confidence		Confidence in decision and in self
	Financial awareness		Individual awareness of financial risks and financial planning
	Future work plan or retirement		Longer term career plans through to retirement
	Leap into career transition		Planning for career transition as a leap into new role
	Happiness and meaning	Not happy in job	Aspects of previous occupation role individuals were not happy with
		Search for meaning	Wanting meaning from career
	Skills and knowledge	Lifelong learning	Engagement with learning and development
		Transferable skills	Skills from occupational role that were transferrable to a contemporary career
Group	Peer Support or influence		Support from network or influence on career change from others in network
	Relationship with colleagues		Quality of relationship with peers and colleagues in organisational role
Leader	Leader Relationship		Relationship with leader within occupational role
	Leader change		Change in personal of leader or their responsibilities
Organisation	Career choice		Opportunities for career with an occupational setting
	Organisational Culture and Change		Perception of organisational culture
Outside	COVID		Impact of COVID pandemic
	Government and Council Support		Government or local council support for new career
Outcomes of career transition	Worry		Worries and concerns about new career
	Portfolio Career		Engagement with a portfolio career for new career
	Satisfaction		Satisfaction regarding new career choices
	Work life balance and time management	Freedom	Freedom for choices about work and life
		Time Management	Managing time within new career
		Work life balance	Work life balance of new career and life

Table 21 - Full theme list within IGLOO framework