

Context

This document recognises the groundbreaking work of Gene D. Cohen, author of *The Mature Mind*, who directly challenged the relevance and limiting implications of the terms retire and retirement. His research and advocacy helped establish, well ahead of mainstream acceptance, that an ageing population represents a scientifically demonstrable cognitive asset, a largely untapped reservoir of experience, pattern recognition, judgment and creativity.

This short paper is directly inspired by Cohen's recognition of the absence of a word capable of properly expressing the cognitive and societal value of the mature mind. Its purpose is to replace the terminal connotations of retirement with a concept that reflects continued contribution, compounding wisdom and enduring human value that Cohen recognise was absent in the English lexicon. I may be wrong, but here goes ...

Experigence

An Oxford-style dictionary entry for the neologism 'experigence', written to the conventions used by the Oxford English Dictionary and Oxford Languages; neutral tone, precise semantics, etymology etc.

Experigence

/ɪk'spɪrɪdʒəns/

Noun

Meaning

A phase of life or mode of activity in which accumulated experience develops into discernment, creative capacity and selective agency, characterised by autonomy, generativity, and depth rather than withdrawal or decline.

Extended Definition

A condition typically associated with later adulthood, characterised by the compounding of lived experience, knowledge and judgement into purposeful, often self-directed contribution across intellectual, creative, civic or advisory domains.

1. The compounding cognitive capacity that emerges with age, combining accumulated experience, judgment, pattern recognition, and creative insight.
2. A state of continued contribution and value beyond traditional notions of retirement, characterised by synthesis rather than decline.

Etymology

Early 21st century; formed in English from experience *n.* + intelligence *n.* + emergence *n.*, denoting the maturation and outward expression of accumulated experiential knowledge.

- Experience > accumulated lived knowledge
- Intelligence > discernment, judgement, signal-over-noise
- Emergence > something coming into form not ending

(I felt it sounds English, feels intuitive on first read, and avoids Latinate stiffness or new-age vagueness)

Usage

Chiefly *formal* and *policy* or *professional* contexts.

Examples

“Rather than marking an exit from economic life, experigence reflects a transition to selective and high-impact contribution.”

“Public institutions must adapt to populations spending longer in experigence.”

“Experigence enables judgement and creativity to replace speed and scale as primary sources of value.”

“Organisations that fail to harness experigence systematically discard one of their most powerful strategic assets.”

Derived Forms

experigent *adj.*

characterised by mature judgement derived from accumulated experience

experigential *adj.*

relating to or arising from experigence

experige *v. (rare)*

to operate or contribute in an experigent mode

Notes on Use

The term *experigence* is intended to replace or supplement the concept of *retirement* in post-industrial societies, emphasising continuity of agency, value, and contribution rather than cessation of activity.

Semantic Field

Longevity studies; public policy; labour economics; organisational governance; ageing and work; cultural studies.

Register

Neutral to elevated; suitable for academic, policy, financial, and institutional usage.

Antonyms (contextual)

retirement (traditional sense); withdrawal; obsolescence.

Cross-References

experience *n.*; maturity *n.*; generativity *n.*; longevity *n.*