

# Development of a Mental Imagery Training Package for the Career Development of Unemployed Youth

Shahriar. Shiaraninezhad<sup>1</sup>, Zahra. Yousefi<sup>2\*</sup>, Mohsen. Golparvar<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Educational Psychology, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Assistance Professor, Department of Cilinical Psychology, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

<sup>3</sup> Professor, Department of Psychology, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran Research Center for Behavioral and Psychological Science, Department of Psychology, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

\* Corresponding author email address: Dr\_yousefi@iau.ac.ir

| E d i t o r                                                                                                                                                                 | R e v i e w e r s                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Izet Pehlić <sup>✉</sup><br>Full professor for Educational sciences, Islamic pedagogical faculty of the University of Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina<br>izet.pehlic@unze.ba | <b>Reviewer 1:</b> Masoud Asadi <sup>✉</sup><br>Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and Counseling, Arak University, Arak, Iran.<br>Email: m-asadi@araku.ac.ir<br><b>Reviewer 2:</b> Mahdi Khanjani <sup>✉</sup><br>Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran.<br>Email: khanjani_m@atu.ac.ir |

## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the first paragraph of the Method section, the sentence “In the present study, the concepts were derived from the examination of mental imagery and interviews with unemployed individuals” conflicts with the rest of the manuscript, which describes the data source as published texts and does not report an interview phase. This is a major internal inconsistency. The authors should either remove the reference to interviews or provide a complete account of the interview component, including participants, recruitment, sample size, interview guide, ethical approval, informed consent, saturation, recording, transcription, and analysis. The Findings section must also clearly distinguish findings derived from documents from those derived from interviews.

In the section on qualitative validity and reliability, the manuscript cites utility, contextual integrity, reporting method, and researcher triangulation, but it does not systematically address established trustworthiness criteria such as credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. The authors should reorganize this section around a recognized framework and state the concrete procedure used for each criterion. For example, credibility could be supported through prolonged

engagement with the corpus and peer debriefing; dependability through an audit trail; confirmability through reflexive memos and independent coding; and transferability through a detailed description of the document corpus and sociocultural context.

The statement “the interviews were coded by the researcher” in the final paragraph of the validity section again suggests an unreported interview component and must be corrected. More importantly, the description of researcher triangulation is incomplete. The authors should state how many coders independently coded the material, whether all documents or only a subset were double-coded, how coding disagreements were resolved, and whether any intercoder agreement statistic was calculated. If consensus rather than statistical agreement was used, the consensus procedure and documentation should be described.

The five-stage analysis attributed to Hsieh and Shannon in the “Data Analysis” section does not closely correspond to the procedures normally presented in their methodological paper. Statements such as “providing examples and instances for the foundational concepts” and “relating the sub-concepts to the foundational concepts” appear to be the authors’ adapted procedure. The manuscript should distinguish clearly between the original method and the study-specific adaptation. It would be preferable to state that the analysis was informed by Hsieh and Shannon and then provide the exact analytic stages used in this study, rather than implying that the five listed stages are reproduced directly from that source.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph titled “Research Setting, Research Population, and Participant Selection in the Qualitative Phase,” the use of the term “participant selection” is inappropriate if the unit of analysis consisted exclusively of documents. The authors should use terminology such as “document selection,” “source selection,” or “sampling of texts.” In addition, “research population” should be operationally defined as the accessible corpus of documents rather than “all texts” on the topic, because no search can realistically establish access to every relevant publication worldwide.

The inclusion criterion stating that documents had to be published “during the preceding 15 years” is inconsistent with Table 1, which includes Ronen (2011), Holmes and Mathews (2010), and potentially older foundational materials, depending on the actual search year. Table 2 also includes Bhat (2010). The authors should specify the exact Gregorian date range—for example, January 2010 to December 2025—and verify that every included source falls within it. If seminal sources outside the time window were intentionally retained, this should be stated as a separate exception criterion and methodologically justified.

The document-selection procedure requires substantial strengthening. The manuscript states that “purposive sampling was used to select the texts, and the number of texts was determined by recurrence and data saturation,” but it does not explain how saturation was assessed in documentary analysis. The authors should specify whether saturation meant the absence of new codes, subcategories, or major categories; how many successive texts produced no new information; who made this determination; and whether a saturation grid or code-accumulation table was maintained. Without an operational definition, the claims that saturation occurred after nine and eleven texts are not verifiable.

Tables 1 and 2 should be reviewed for conceptual relevance and bibliographic accuracy. For example, the source “Images Tell Stories” by Ronen et al. (2025), published in the *Financial Analysts Journal*, appears potentially unrelated to clinical or psychological mental imagery and may concern financial image analysis. Similarly, Ebbinghaus’s work on memory and Russell’s *The Analysis of Mind* may be theoretically relevant but do not necessarily address mental imagery interventions. The authors should explain the relevance of every selected source to the coding objectives and consider adding columns for document type, population, topic, and contribution to the analysis.

In the “Research Instrument in the Qualitative Phase” paragraph, the manuscript describes the instrument as “a detailed examination of the texts.” Text examination is a procedure rather than a research instrument. The authors should identify the actual data-extraction and coding instrument, such as a structured document-review form, coding matrix, analytic memorandum

template, or codebook. The manuscript should provide examples of the extraction fields, describe how the form was developed and revised, and preferably include the final form as a supplementary appendix.

The same paragraph states that sources were “examined line by line, reviewed in terms of content, subjected to content analysis, and coded,” but the coding process remains insufficiently specified. The authors should report the unit of meaning, unit of context, and unit of recording; describe open coding, code consolidation, category development, and abstraction; and clarify whether coding was conducted manually or with qualitative-analysis software. A worked example showing the progression from an original textual excerpt to a condensed meaning unit, initial code, subcategory, and main category would greatly improve methodological auditability.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.