








Predicting Depression Based on Ego Weakness and Integrative Self-Knowledge with the Mediating Role of Defense Mechanisms and Psychological Pain

Zahra. Karimi¹, Ahmad. Karbalee Mohammad Meygoni^{2*}, Hossein. Rezabakhsh², Robabeh. Ataeifar²

¹ PhD student in general psychology, Department of Psychology, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Karaj, Iran

² Assistant Professor of Psychology Department, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Karaj, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: ahamadkarbalee@kiauo.ac.ir

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Seyed Hamid Atashpour  Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran hamidatashpour@gmail.com	Reviewer 1: Azade Abooei  Department of Counseling, Faculty of Humanities, University of Science and Art, Yazd, Iran. Email: a.abooei@tea.sau.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Roodabeh Hooshmandi  Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada. Email: roodhooshmandi@kmanresce.ca

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the first Introduction paragraph (“Among individuals facing mental health issues such as depression and suicidal risk, seafarers can be highlighted...”), the rationale for focusing on male marine transportation workers is underdeveloped. Expand with data on prevalence or unique risk factors for this occupational group.

The section “The Ghorbani et al. Integrative Self-Knowledge Scale (2003) consists of 38 items with three subscales” conflicts with later reporting of a 12-item short version (Ghorbani et al., 2008). Clarify whether the 38- or 12-item version was actually used.

In the last Discussion paragraph (“By conducting training sessions and providing mental health interventions...”), suggestions for interventions are useful but overly generic. Specify what kinds of “mental health education” or therapy modules could be effective for seafarers.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The paragraph starting “Defense mechanisms are considered tools for escaping psychological pain (Babel et al., 2019)” presents multiple constructs but lacks a clear theoretical framework linking ego weakness, defense mechanisms, and psychological pain. Suggest structuring this review around a central model (e.g., Vaillant’s hierarchy) to improve conceptual integration.

The discussion states, “The results showed a significant direct relationship between integrative self-knowledge, neurotic defense mechanisms, psychological pain, and depression,” but earlier you explained that higher scores indicate weaker self-knowledge. Reconcile this to prevent misinterpretation.

In the paragraph beginning “Individuals with high integrative self-knowledge analyze their experiences...”, further theoretical grounding could be provided (e.g., self-concept integration, mentalization) to strengthen the mechanism proposed.

In the discussion of ego weakness (paragraph starting “Overall, individuals with ego weakness...”), consider acknowledging other mediators (e.g., social support, coping styles) that might compete with or complement defense mechanisms and psychological pain.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.