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The development and validation of a multi-dimensional Job Interview Self-efficacy scale

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The Multi-Dimensional Job Interview Self-Efficacy Scale

The Development and Validation of a Multi-Dimensional Job Interview Self-Efficacy Scale

Abstract

Psychological reactions towards personnel selection are acquiring growing importance, as they significantly impact applicants' performance in the selection process. This study introduces the Multi-dimensional Job Interview Self-efficacy (MJISE) construct and its operationalisation into a sound MJISE measurement. We propose that MJISE consists of five factors related to interviewees' Self-efficacy: self-promoting, managing demanding interaction with the interviewers, dealing with interview-related anxiety, preparing for the contents and the logistics of the job interview. After developing the items for the MJISE measure, we examined its validity. We tested content validity with an independent panel of job interview experts. Subsequently, two studies dealing with Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analyses revealed that the multi-dimensionality of MJISE is represented by a bifactor structure (one general factor and five specific factors, orthogonal to the general factor). We evaluated the external (convergent, discriminant, and predictive) validity for establishing the MJISE factors' plausibility over and beyond other interview-related variables, such as personality traits, obtaining mixed results. The discussion describes the implication of using the MJISE scale in practical job search programs and outlines recommendations for research to improve the scale's robustness further.

Keywords: Job Interview, Self-Efficacy, Interview Self-efficacy, Psychometric Evaluation, Job Search Process, Personnel Selection, Scale Development.

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24 1. Introduction

25 The interest in the job interview is still elevated, as it represents a popular selection technique
26 for employers (Macan, 2009; McCarthy & Cheng, 2014), and applicants see it favourably to obtaining
27 the desired position (Anderson et al., 2010). Over the last years, the focus has shifted towards the
28 interviewees' reactions to the interview (i.e., attitudes, emotions, cognitions) and their impact on
29 performance (i.e., Nikolaou & Georgiou, 2018). Our objective here is to strengthen understanding of
30 Interview Self-Efficacy (henceforth, ISE), which reflects perceived ability to manage the job
31 interview and represents a prominent self-cognition explaining performance in the job interview (Tay
32 et al., 2006; Tross & Maurer, 2008). Indeed, the current conceptualisations of ISE consist of a single-
33 dimension structure stressing mainly the perceived ability to succeed in the job interview (Brenner et
34 al., 2016; Tay et al., 2006; Tross & Maurer, 2008). Additionally, the ISE measures used so far (i.e.,
35 Tay et al., 2006; Tross & Maurer, 2008) were adapted from existing scales and not validated
36 thoroughly. We contend that ISE needs a multi-dimensional conceptualisation and measure, as there is
37 a range of interview-related behaviours (Caldwell & Burger, 1998; Levashina et al., 2014; Macan,
38 2009) that ISE construct should encompass. Our primary goal is to clarify and define the ISE concept
39 by isolating the central efficacy beliefs about job interview performance and success through a
40 literature review and a focus group with experts in the field of the job interview (Study 1). We also
41 aim at translating the newly developed ISE concept into a sound measurement scale, with a content
42 validity analysis (Study 2), exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (Study 3 and 4), and external
43 validity analysis (Study 5).

44 We contribute to ISE's theoretical development by drawing the network of job interview-
45 related behaviours and their corresponding efficacy beliefs that we translate in a sound measure. We
46 match the need for SE measure to be tailored depending on the peculiar activity domains (Bandura,
47 2006). Given the importance of SE enhancing techniques in job search interventions (i.e., Liu et al.,
48 2014), practitioners may diagnose job seekers' beliefs regarding their interviewing capabilities with
49 the scale and find strategies to enhance those capabilities.

50

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51 2. ISE Theory and Measurement

52 The Career Self-Management model (CSM model, Lent & Brown, 2013) posits that the
53 positive forethought yielded by self-efficacy about the execution of job search activities sustains one's
54 motivation, efforts, and persistence towards favourable outcomes. Consistently, ISE is expected to
55 raise confidence in performing typical interview behaviours (i.e., verbal and non-verbal
56 communication; Huffcutt et al., 2011). Research has confirmed that ISE positively predicts effective
57 behaviours during the interview (Latham & Budworth, 2006; Tross & Maurer, 2008) and interview
58 success (i.e., job offers; Tay et al., 2006).

59 Existing conceptualisations, definitions, and related ISE measures mainly rely on a unitary
60 dimension reflecting the belief regarding a job seeker's capability to perform behaviours properly
61 during a job interview (Tay et al., 2006; Tross & Maurer, 2008) and to succeed in a job interview (i.e.,
62 Brenner et al., 2016; Wilhelmy et al., 2017). Moreover, these operationalisations do not refer to the
63 network of discrete behaviours (e.g., self-promotion, anxiety management), which affect interviewees'
64 performance and the interviewer's evaluation (Huffcutt et al., 2011; Macan, 2009; Levashina et al.,
65 2014) or to pre-interview behaviours, which are relevant for a good performance (Barbulescu, 2015).
66 The ISE measurement tools are adapted from other scales with a different purpose (Tay et al., 2006;
67 Tross & Maurer, 2008; Wilhelmy et al., 2017), unpublished (Brenner et al., 2016; Latham &
68 Budworth, 2006), or are subscales of broader job search self-efficacy scales (i.e., Hergentrather et al.,
69 2008; Wanberg et al., 2010). Although all the scales have shown a good internal consistency, a
70 thorough examination of the measures' validity is lacking, with Tay et al.'s scale (2006) being an
71 exception in terms of evaluation of invariance.

72 We claim that a single-dimensional ISE construct, focusing only on a general belief about
73 succeeding in a job interview, may result in a partial understanding of ISE, as suggested by Bandura
74 (1997; 2006). For instance, interviewees may feel capable of presenting themselves well in the
75 interview's first moments yet feeling low capability to deal with the anxiety when the pressure rises.
76 Moreover, a single-dimension measure may not tell of which perceived ability affects the
77 performance most. A multi-dimensional conceptualisation of ISE can increase our insight into

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78 efficacy beliefs underlying interviewees' performance and improve the related measure's predictive
79 power.

80 **3. Study 1: Construct Conceptualisation and Hypothesised Factorial Structure**

81 We began by building a multi-dimensional ISE conceptualisation using both inductive and
82 deductive approaches (see MacKenzie et al., 2011). First, we conducted a thorough literature review
83 of relevant behaviours in the realm of job interviewing. Subsequently, a focus group study was
84 applied to refine and complete this conceptualisation stage.

85 *3.1. Literature Review*

86 To guide our review and identify the dimensions of ISE, we used the work by Huffcutt et al.
87 (2011) and the reviews by Macan et al. (2009) and Levashina et al. (2014). They pointed out which
88 behaviours affect the evaluation of a candidate in a job interview. We searched for scientific
89 publications concerning the most relevant features of interviewees' behaviours and corresponding
90 self-efficacies that influence job interview performance on databases like Web of Science, Scopus,
91 and PsycInfo. We looked for articles that had in their title or abstract terms like "job interview", "job
92 interview performance", "job interview behaviours", "predictors of job interview performance",
93 "interviewees factor in the job interview", "job interview assessment". We translated this review into
94 four ISE factors.

95 *3.1.1. Interview Preparation SE*

96 Interview preparation is pivotal for interview performance (Huffcutt et al., 2011). Barbulescu
97 (2015) and Caldwell and Burger (1998) highlighted actions like collecting information about the
98 organisation, job requirements, the type of questions and structure of the interview, and the interviewers'
99 evaluative criteria. Van Hooft et al. (2013) argued that interviewees could prepare through thinking
100 about questions and rehearsing compelling answers. Schudlik et al. (2020) presented five categories of
101 interview preparation, encompassing the search for information and advice (information research,
102 reading guides and watching online videos) and practice (rehearsing and simulating interview).
103 Information seeking SE has been shown to predict effective job and occupational information-seeking
104 behaviours (Fetherston et al., 2017; Pesch et al., 2018). SE also entails the perceived ability to rehearse
105 to retain learnt task features (Schunk, 1989). Therefore, we include Interview preparation SE (IP SE)—

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106 namely the perceived capability to properly prepare for the interview—into the ISE multi-dimensional
107 construct.

108 *3.1.2. Interview Anxiety Management SE*

109 Managing interview-related anxiety— namely the feelings of tension and apprehension
110 elicited by the worries to fail—is crucial for a good performance (Huffcutt et al., 2011; Macan, 2009).
111 Interviewees may experience anxiety towards their verbal, non-verbal and social behaviours,
112 appearance, and overall performance (McCharty & Goffin, 2004), resulting in poor performance
113 (Feiler & Powell, 2016). SE at coping with stressful situations and unpleasant emotions in evaluative
114 contexts facilitates more effective self-regulation and coping strategies, reduces anxiety, and promotes
115 positive performance (Chang & Edwards, 2014; Marquez & Mcauley, 2001; Nicholls et al., 2010). As
116 no ISE scale has assessed the perceived ability at coping with anxiety, we included Interview-related
117 Anxiety Management SE (IAM SE) as our second dimension.

118 *3.1.3. Self-Promotion SE*

119 Self-promotion is a self-focused impression management tactic that is functional to direct
120 listener attention to show that the applicant possesses desired qualities (Huffcutt et al., 2011;
121 Levashina et al., 2014). Candidates can state that they are competent and claim their responsibility for
122 positive outcomes in their experience (Amaral et al., 2019; Ellis et al., 2002), reaching better ratings
123 (Bourdage et al., 2020). The existing ISE concepts and measures mostly pertain to the perceived
124 ability to make credible self-presentation and impression, which leads to better interview outcomes
125 (Latham & Budworth, 2006; Tay et al., 2006). We introduced the Self-Promotion SE (S-P SE)
126 dimension, reflecting a candidate's perceived capability to value their expertise and present them as
127 suitable during a job interview.

128 *3.1.4. Interaction SE*

129 The interviewer's rate is influenced by how interviewees interact with them and react to the
130 interviewer's style (Levashina et al., 2014). Interviewers may use probing—
131 asking follow-up questions to complete vague answers (Levashina et al., 2014)—to challenge
132 interviewees for various purposes (i.e., reduce faking or test their self-regulation; Chen et al., 2019;
133 Roulin et al., 2016). Past research highlighted that SE is positively associated with effective

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134 communication in interpersonal interaction (Downie et al., 2008). Therefore, we included Interaction
135 SE (IN SE), which is one's perceived capability to manage the interaction with the interviewer.

136 *3.2. Focus Group Study with Subject-Matter Experts*

137 We employed the focus group technique (as indicated by Hennink, 2014) to obtain further
138 insights into interview-related behaviours and corresponding efficacy beliefs. We invited experts in
139 personnel selection and practitioners in job search training programs, basing on their expertise as
140 reported by their resume. In total, eight experts (Experts in personnel selection = 5, Women = 3, Men
141 =2; Job search programs practitioners = 3, Women = 2, Men = 1; Mean Age: 37) accepted the
142 invitation. The ethical standards for this study and the following studies were reviewed and approved
143 by the lead institution's bio-ethical committee. Before each study, we guaranteed the participants'
144 anonymity and confidentiality. We obtained their informed consent in compliance with the EU
145 Regulation no. 679/2016.

146 We conducted the focus group and analysed the data following the procedure described by
147 Hennink (2014). The focus group confirmed the relevance of:

- 148 • self-promotion in facilitating a good impression (i.e., the more candidates emphasise
149 their experience and qualities, the better the interviewer's evaluation);
- 150 • interaction and probing (i.e., interviewees being probed might elaborate on their
151 claims and statements regarding their suitability for the job);
- 152 • anxiety management in the candidate's evaluation of proficiency in the job interview
153 (i.e., the higher self-control, the better performance);
- 154 • the interview preparation (i.e., being as much as possible knowledgeable of the job).

155 The focus group study also revealed that candidates should be mindful of a job interview's
156 logistical aspects. Organising an interview's logistics (i.e., planning to arrive on time at the job
157 interview site) may positively affect the impression candidates' give before the interview and
158 subsequent interviewers' evaluation (Barrick et al., 2010). We introduced Logistical SE (LO SE)—
159 one's perceived capability master the interview's logistic aspects—as the fifth dimension of the ISE

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160 multi-dimensional construct, distinct from IP SE, as the experts claimed that they reflect two different
161 behavioural spheres.

162 3.3. MJISE Hypothesised Structure and Definition

163 Based on what presented above, we conceptualise ISE as a five-factor multi-dimensional
164 variable, comprising IP SE, LO SE, IAM SE, S-P SE, IN SE. We refer to it as a Multi-dimensional Job
165 Interview Self-Efficacy (hereafter, MJISE). Coherently, we define MJISE as the candidate's judgment
166 about their interviewing capabilities, reflecting their beliefs in executing a given performance through
167 behaviours acted before and during the job interview.

168 4. Study 2: Initial Scale Development

169 4.1. Items Generation

170 We generated 26 items for the MJISE scale based on the indication of the work presented
171 above. Each item invites the respondents to rate their confidence to execute a specific interview-
172 related action or task on a Likert response scale ranging from 1 "not at all" to 5 "completely". The
173 items tap the five factors that emerged from the literature study and the focus group study. Examples
174 of the items created are: "How confident are you that you could ... "emphasise the most valuable
175 work experiences you had" (S-P SE); "handle a probing interview" (IN SE); "have self-control" (IAM
176 SE); "obtain information about the job you are applying for" (IP SE); "arrive at the interview venue on
177 time" (LO SE). We discussed the items in terms of relevance to the dimensions before the content
178 validity evaluation phase. This procedure led to selecting 20 final items and a slight rewording of
179 some of them.

180 4.2. Content Validity

181 A panel of seven experts (two psychologists, Men=1; Women=1; two university professors,
182 Men=1; Women=1; one practitioner with expertise in personnel selection, Women=1; two involved in
183 job search programs; Men=1; Women=1), was asked to assess the content validity of the MJISE
184 items. These experts were independent from those interviewed for construct conceptualisation. We
185 invited the experts to evaluate each item's relevance, clarity, simplicity, and ambiguity on a scale from
186 1 to 4 (as suggested by Polit et al., 2007). We computed the content validity index (I-CVI) through the

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187 proportion of experts who rated the single item as valid (namely, scored 3 or 4). We also assessed the
188 content validity on a scale level by computing the average I-CVI across all items with a valid single I-
189 CVI (S-CVI/Ave). The I-CVI indices scored above .78, and the S-CVI/Ave index above .90 for
190 relevance, clarity, simplicity, and ambiguity, reaching acceptable values (Polit et al. 2007). Only the
191 item "planning for the interview" did not reach an acceptable I-CVI on ambiguity. Still, we did not
192 remove it as it performed well on other validity indicators.

193 5. Study 3: Exploratory Factor Analysis and Revision

194 5.1. Sample and Procedure.

195 We invited Italian university students and recent graduates via social media to complete a
196 preliminary version of the MJISE scale. The removal of respondents with missing values for one or
197 more items resulted in a sample of 482 participants who filled out the complete questionnaire (287
198 women, 59.5%) with a mean age of 25.81 years ($SD = 4.62$). Most of the participants had a university
199 degree (bachelor's or master's; 51.9%), were unemployed (56.4%), and had attended at least one job
200 interview in the last year (59.54%) at the time of the study.

201 5.2. Results

202 We used Principal Axis Factoring with Promax rotation and examined the scree plot (Cattell
203 criterion; Cattell, 1966) to select factors to retain. We retained five factors that accounted for 64.72 of
204 the total variance. We retained items with a minimum factor loading of .32 and a cross-loading with
205 more than .15 difference on two factors (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). Therefore, we removed
206 one item. A second EFA with the scree plot examination suggested a five-factor solution accounting
207 for 66 per cent of the total variance. The factors were IP SE (four items), LO SE (three items), S-P SE
208 (six items), and interview anxiety IAM (three items), IN SE (three items). Table 1 shows each item's
209 mean and standard deviation and the pattern matrix with the regression coefficients holding the factor
210 loadings.

211

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214 **Table 1.**

215 Means, standard deviations, and factor loadings for the MJISE items in the Pattern Matrix.

Items	Item Loadings						
	M	SD	Self-promotion SE	Interview Anxiety Management SE	Interview preparation SE	Logistical SE	Interaction SE
Convey a professional image	4.27	.84	.82	.004	-.12	-.01	.09
Elicit the interviewer's interest in deeming you suitable for the job	4.09	.87	.77	-.02	-.06	-.001	-.01
Emphasise the most valuable work experiences you had	3.99	.98	.68	-.06	.18	-.003	-.09
Emphasise your work experiences and job-related skills	4.05	.89	.66	.09	.07	.002	-.06
Show your strengths that make you suitable for the job	3.97	1.02	.63	-.10	.19	.06	-.01
Show that you are motivated to do the job	4.34	.80	.61	.08	-.12	-.01	.13
Stay calm	3.89	1.06	-.09	1.05^a	.04	-.07	.01
Manage the interview-related anxiety	3.83	1.07	-.04	.73	.07	.04	.03
Maintain a calm approach	4.04	.95	.22	.69	-.09	.05	-.02
Search for information about the company	3.74	1.04	-.14	-.04	.64	.09	.14
Obtain information about assessment criteria during the selection	3.10	1.19	.06	.04	.62	-.05	-.13
Obtain information about the job you are applying for	3.78	1.04	-.06	.07	.57	.02	.05
Get ready for the interview questions	3.12	1.26	.14	-.002	.52	-.12	-.01
Answer properly to tricky questions	3.745	.86	-.04	-.08	-.05	.99	.03
Answer readily to unexpected questions	3.80	.91	.05	.18	.01	.65	-.01
Handle a probing interview	3.62	.96	.20	.08	.06	.47	-.09
Arrive at the interview venue on time	4.63	.82	-.001	-.01	-.07	.000	.74
Find the venue of the interview	4.53	.82	-.05	.05	.05	-.01	.69
Plan for the interview	4.28	.99	.23	-.03	.13	-.004	.53
Eigenvalue			6.78	1.79	1.63	1.29	1.04
Variance %			35.67	45.08	53.67	60.51	66.00

216 *Note.* N = 482. ^aAs explained by Jöreskog (1999), factor loadings produced by oblique extraction

217 methods are regression coefficients and, therefore, they can be greater than one in magnitude.

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218 Given the results of the EFAs, we sought to level the factors for the number of items by
219 having four items for each, to find a compromise between the recommendations to have at least three
220 items factor, capture each factor's facets, and keep a scale brief to optimise the response rate
221 (Robinson, 2018). To this end, we removed the two items that loaded least the S-P SE subscale and
222 added one item to the IAM SE, LO SE, and IN SE subscales. These new items resulted from a
223 replication of the qualitative procedure followed for the original items (literature review and a second
224 focus group study session). The second focus group session study involved the same participants as
225 the first one. The additional items captured some more aspects of the MJISE factors that were initially
226 neglected. The same panel that performed the first content analysis evaluated the additional items'
227 content validity, using the same procedure and techniques. The second content validity analysis
228 resulted in an acceptable I-CVI for each new item in terms of relevance, clarity, simplicity, and
229 ambiguity. The S-CVI/Ave reached acceptable values as well. At the end of study 2, we obtained a
230 revised 20-item scale, with four items for each subscale. The final version of the scale is shown in
231 Appendix A.

232 **6. Study 4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

233 We evaluated the structure of MJISE, following the literature on the sources of multi-
234 dimensionality (Morin et al., 2015), also used in recent works validating SE constructs (i.e.,
235 Barbaranelli et al., 2018). We contrasted single-factor, correlational, hierarchical and bi-factor models
236 through independent CFAs using maximum likelihood estimation. The single-factor solution model
237 regressed all the items onto the general factor of MJISE, assuming a single general factor explaining
238 the variance of the 20 MJISE items. The first-order correlational model comprised the items' loadings
239 on the five MJISE factors, which correlated. The second-order hierarchical model included the five
240 first-order factors of MJISE regressed onto a second-order general factor of MJISE, which could
241 establish whether there was a higher-order general factor underlying the five MJISE factors (Morin,
242 2015). The bi-factorial model is an alternative to the hierarchical model that posits that a unitary
243 general factor produces the items' variance. Besides, more specific factors, uncorrelated with the
244 general factor, account for items' variance above and beyond the general factor. The bi-factor model
245 allows examining the general and specific factors independently and assessing their plausibility

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246 (Morin et al., 2015). This type of modelling is assumed to represent a multi-dimensional
247 psychological construct better than the correlational and hierarchical ones. Indeed, it permits
248 simultaneously exploring the contribution of general and specific factors to the construct indicators'
249 variance (Reise et al., 2010). Herein, the bi-factor model included all the 20 items loading onto their
250 respective factors and a general factor of MJISE, which was orthogonal to the specific factors. The
251 comparison between single-factor and multi-factor solutions allowed us to establish the MJISE multi-
252 factor solution's adequacy. Also, contrasting the three multi-factor models would have let us represent
253 the MJISE construct better.

254 *6.2. Sample and Procedure.*

255 A sample of 514 university graduates (from bachelor's and master's degree courses) was
256 recruited among those attending career services in a leading Italian University and invited to complete
257 MJISE 20 items. After removing responses with missing values, the final sample comprised 476
258 participants (303 women, 63.7%) with a mean age of 25.73 years ($SD = 3.18$). We conducted the CFA
259 with the AMOS software (Arbuckle & Wothke, 2012). We used different fit indices for evaluating the
260 distinguished models (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002; Kline, 2016), namely the Comparative Fit Index
261 (CFI), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and the Standardised Root Mean
262 Square Residual (SRMR). General recommendations are that a CFI greater than 0.90, with RMSEA
263 and the SRMR below 0.08, suggest a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). We used Akaike's information
264 criterion (AIC; Akaike, 1974) and the Bayesian information criterion (BIC; Schwarz, 1978), of which
265 the lowest values among the models indicate the best fitting model. We adopted the omega (ω) index
266 to test MJISE overall scale and subscales' reliability, which is considered preferable over Cronbach's
267 alpha (Hayes & Coutts, 2020). The coefficient ω estimates the proportion of variance in the MJISE
268 total scale score attributed to common variance.

269 *6.3. Results.*

270 The fit indices shown in Table 2 suggest that the single-factor model had a poor fit with the
271 data, confirming the multiple-factor solution's adequacy. We retained the bi-factorial model because it
272 fitted better with the data than the correlational and hierarchical models. It also showed the lowest
273 AIC and BIC values. All its factor loadings were significant (see Figure 1). The MJISE total scale had

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274 a ω coefficient of .93, which means that 93% of the total MJISE score variance is explained by five
 275 factors and 11% by the error term. The coefficient ω was high for each of the five specific MJISE
 276 factors: .86 for S-P SE; .91 for IN SE; .95 for IAM SE; .78 for IP SE; and .79 for LO SE.

277 **Table 2.**

278 CFA fit indices of the models in the sample of Study 4.

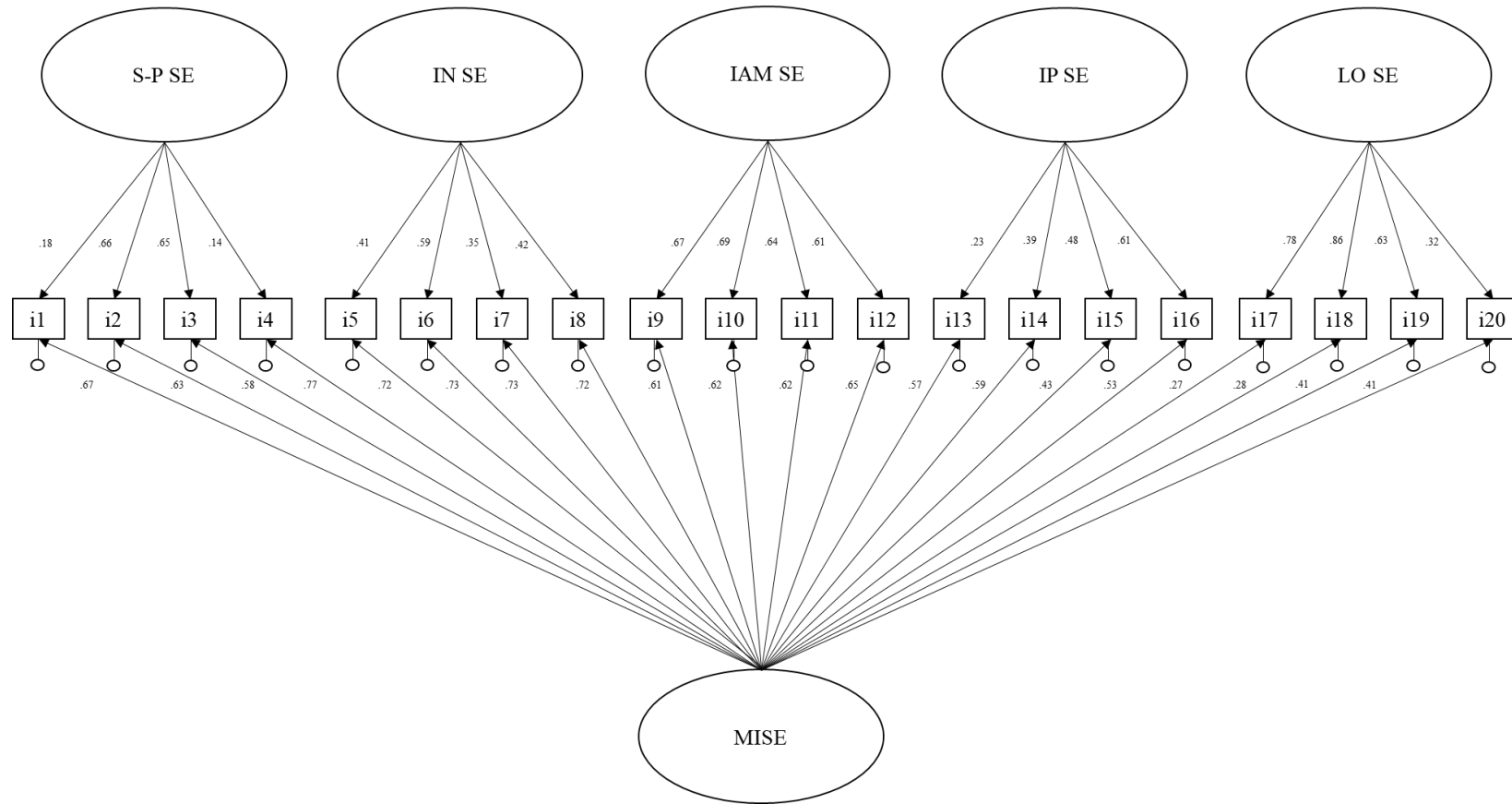
Model	χ^2	df	CFI	RMSEA [90% CI]	SRMR	AIC	BIC
Single	2920,724***	170	.58	.19 [.18; .19]	.12	3000,724	3167,341
Correlational	696,356***	160	.92	.08 [.08; .09]	.08	796,356	1004,627
Hierarchical	738,697***	165	.91	.09 [.08; .09]	.08	828,697	1016,140
Bi-factorial	504,282***	150	.95	.07 [.06; .08]	.05	624,282	874,207

279 *Note.* N=476; χ^2 = chi square; *df*=degrees of freedom; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA = Root
 280 Mean Square Error of Approximation. SRMR = Standardised Root Mean Square Residual; AIC =
 281 Akaike's information criterion; BIC = Bayesian information criterion. ****p* < .001.

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282 **Figure 1.**

283 Confirmatory bi-factor model of the MJISE scale.



284

285 *Note.* MJISE= Multidimensional Interview Self-efficacy; S-P SE= Self-promotion self-efficacy; IN SE= Interaction self-Efficacy; IAM SE=Interview-related Anxiety

286 Management self-efficacy; IP SE = Interview preparation self-efficacy; LO SE = Logistical SE. All the factor loadings are significant at $p < .01$.

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287 7. Study 5: External Validity

288 In line with Grimm and Widamann (2012) recommendations, we evaluated the MIJSE scale's
289 convergent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity. We built on the CSM model (Lent & Brown,
290 2013) to frame the relationships between MJISE general and specific factors, and the related factors.

291 7.2. Convergent Validity

292 To provide convergent validity evidence, we posited that each of the MJISE subscales and the
293 MISE overall scale correlate positively with the Interviewing Self-efficacy (I-SE) Scale by Tay et al.
294 (2006). I-SE scale had good psychometric properties and positive relationships with job interview
295 performance and outcomes. We expected the measure by Tay et al. (2006) to have stronger
296 correlations with S-P SE and IP SE, as these subscales in our newly developed measure have been
297 somewhat addressed in the I-SE measure, though generally.

298 7.3. Discriminant Validity

299 We tested the discriminant validity of MIJSE by hypothesising that the MIJSE overall scale
300 and each of the MIJSE subscales' scores have low correlations with three individual differences traits:
301 extraversion, emotional stability, and conscientiousness from the Big Five personality theory (Costa
302 & McRae, 1992). The CSM model (Lent & Brown, 2013) understood SE and personality as two
303 separate predictors of job search behaviours, including performance in the job interview. Coherently,
304 research has highlighted that these three personality traits are involved with ISE (Tay et al., 2006) and
305 other SE beliefs (i.e., Kim et al., 2019) in predicting interview and job search outcomes. For instance,
306 extroverted, emotionally stable and conscientious interviewees are more capable of using self-
307 promotion, managing stress management, and preparing for an interview (Bourdage et al., 2020;
308 Huffcutt, 2011). Rooting upon these capabilities, their ISE raises (Tay et al., 2006). Agreeableness
309 and openness to experience traits from the same personality theory are not involved with SE in
310 interview endeavours (Tay et al., 2006). Though related with SE, personality differs from it since they
311 are global and relatively stable, whereas SE is task-specific and malleable (Bandura, 1997, 2006;
312 Caprara et al., 2011), as confirmed by weak or modest correlations in past research (i.e., Tay et al.,
313 2006; Kim et al., 2019). Following this rationale, we posit that MJISE and personality traits may be
314 understood as different, although linked, constructs.

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315 7.4. Predictive validity

316 To provide predictive validity of our newly developed instrument, we posited that the MJISE
317 overall scale score and the MJISE subscales' scores have positive relationships with job interview
318 performance. Following the CSM model (Kim et al., 2019), SE is a significant predictor of job search
319 behaviours, as it produces positive thoughts and increases motivation and persistence in one's
320 activities. Accordingly, and as already shown by Tay and colleagues (2006) and by Tross and Maurer
321 (2008), we contend that MJISE yields optimal functioning in the job interview and has a positive
322 relationship with the applicant's performance rating.

323 7.5. Sample and Procedure

324 We collected data with a sample of recent graduates from different degree courses of a
325 leading Italian University who accepted to attend a simulation of a job interview offered by the
326 university's career services and held by experts in personnel selection. We contacted them with an e-
327 mail containing preliminary indications at least one week before the simulation. We asked participants
328 to prepare for the interview simulation thinking of a real position they desired and indicate it to the
329 research team. The interviewers could become aware of the participants' desired job and prepare a
330 suitable employment interview structure.

331 Before each simulation session, we collected participants' I-SE (Tay et al., 2006), MJISE,
332 extraversion, emotional stability, and conscientiousness. We asked interviewers to rate the
333 participants' performance at the end of the session. At the end of the data collection process, 271
334 people participated in the simulated interview. The removal of respondents with missing data resulted
335 in a total of 251 valid questionnaires. Participants were mostly women (157, 62.5%) with a mean age
336 of 25.68 years ($SD = 2.99$) and had already had a job interview experience at the time of the
337 simulation (58%). All the interviewers had a multi-year involvement in the selection process both for
338 companies (public and private; $N = 3$; Women=2; Men=1) and career services ($N = 3$; Women=1;
339 Men=2).

340

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341 7.6. Materials

342 We measured MJISE with the same items as used in Study 4. We used the Tay et al.'s (2006)
343 five-item scale, with items like "How confident are you that you can successfully make the best
344 impression during the job interview?" and a seven-point Likert scale from 1 "not at all" to 7 "to a very
345 great extent". We measured extraversion, emotional stability, and conscientiousness, with two items
346 for each taken from the Ten-Item Personality Inventory developed by Gosling et al. (2003) and
347 validated in Italian by Chiorri et al. (2015). Respondent had to answer items like "I am..."
348 "extroverted, enthusiastic", "dependable, self-disciplined", "calm, emotionally stable", on a seven-
349 point Likert scale from 1 "it is not describing me at all" to 7 "it describes me completely". The
350 interviewers were asked to rate the interviewees' performance by giving them a score on a Likert
351 response scale ranging from 1 "very poor" to 6 "excellent" on self-promotion, knowledge of the
352 position, management of emotions, adaptation to unexpected and uncommon questions. A sample
353 question was, "how do you rate the applicant's performance at presenting themselves and their
354 skills?". Scores on each interview performance dimension were aggregated to obtain a single score.

355 7.7. Analyses

356 We ran all analyses with SPSS statistics version 25. We tested convergent and discriminant
357 validity with correlations between the MJISE general factor, its specific factors, and Tay et al.'s
358 (2006) I-SE scale. Also, we calculated the correlations of the MJISE general factor and its specific
359 factors with extraversion, conscientiousness, and emotional stability. We ran two hierarchical
360 regressions to test the predictive validity, considering the interviewees' performance as the dependent
361 variable. In both hierarchical regressions, we included age and gender in step one, extraversion,
362 conscientiousness, and emotional stability in step two. These variables were included as control
363 variables because they influence the job interview outcomes (Bourdage et al., 2020; Caldwell &
364 Burger, 1998; Tay et al., 2006). In step three of one hierarchical regression, we included the MJISE
365 general factor as the independent variable. We had the specific MJISE factors in step three of the
366 second hierarchical regression as independent variables to explore their unique contribution in
367 explaining interview performance.

368

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369 7.8. Results

370 7.8.1. Convergent and discriminant validity.

371 Table 3 displays the means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha values, and correlations
372 among study variables. The MJISE total and subscales had good Cronbach's alpha values (i.e., .70 -
373 .91; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Concerning the convergent validity, Tay et al.'s (2006) I-SE
374 showed strong correlations with the MJISE general factor and the specific S-P SE factor. They were
375 equal to or above Pearson's r -value of .70 (Polit & Beck, 2007). Furthermore, Tay et al.'s (2006) I-SE
376 displayed a moderate correlation with the IN SE, IAM SE, IP SE, and LO SE factors. Therefore, we
377 found empirical evidence supporting the convergent validity of the newly developed MJISE scale.

378 Discriminant validity analyses showed mixed findings (see Table 3). As expected, the MJISE
379 general factor and specific factors correlated weakly or non-significantly with extraversion and
380 conscientiousness. Contrary to our expectations, moderate correlation coefficients emerged between
381 the MJISE general and specific factors and emotional stability. Therefore, we found only partial
382 support for the discriminant validity of the MJISE measure.

383

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384

385 **Table 3.**

386 Means, Standard deviations, Cronbach's Alpha values, and bivariate correlations among variables in the sample of study 5.

	M	SD	Cronbach's α	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1. Gender ^a	-	-	-	-												
2. Age	25.68	2.99	-	-.02	-											
3. MJISE	3.39	.53	.91	-.12	.07	-										
4. S-P SE	3.23	.67	.83	-.10	.03	.76**	-									
5. IN SE	3.09	.64	.75	-.09	.03	.81**	.51**	-								
6. IAM SE	3.10	.81	.87	-.11	.06	.79**	.46**	.64**	-							
7. IP SE	3.29	.68	.70	-.08	.08	.83**	.57**	.56**	.55**	-						
8. LO SE	4.24	.60	.78	-.07	.05	.66**	.38**	.44**	.29**	.52**	-					
9. I-SE	2.96	.61	.85	-.13*	.05	.70**	.78**	.54**	.49**	.53**	.36**	-				
10. Extraversion	3.98	1.51	.76	-.09	-.06	.16*	.16*	.18**	.21**	-.002	.05	.13*	-			
11. Conscientiousness	5.83	.89	.50	.14*	-.13*	.27**	.25**	.19**	.10	.20**	.32**	.15*	.10	-		
12. Emotional Stability	4.47	1.32	.64	-.18**	-.03	.49**	.39**	.36**	.56**	.34**	.23**	.32**	.22**	.21**	-	
13. Interview Performance	3.86	.94	.89	.19**	-.11	.19**	.25**	.11	.12	.17**	.08	.15*	.16*	.12	.17**	.

387

388 Note. N = 251. ^a1 = man, 2 = woman; MJISE= Multidimensional Interview Self-efficacy; S-P SE= Self-promotion self-efficacy; IN SE= Interaction self-Efficacy; IAM

389 SE=Interview-related Anxiety Management self-efficacy; IP SE = Interview preparation self-efficacy; LO SE = Logistical SE; I-SE = Interviewing self-efficacy (Tay et al.;

390 2006); **p<.01; *p<.05

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391 7.8.2. Predictive validity.

392 The first hierarchical regression (Table 4) revealed that gender influences performance ratings
 393 $F(2, 248) = 6.46, p < .01$, and accounted for 5% of the variance in step one. With the introduction of
 394 personality traits, the variance increased by 1.4%, and emotional stability contributed to performance
 395 ratings, $F(5, 245) = 4.51, p < .001$. Finally, the inclusion of the MJISE general factor explained an
 396 additional 1.8% of the variance. With all the independent variables included, only MJISE general
 397 factor and gender emerged predictors of performance ratings, $F(6, 244) = 5.51, p < .001$. The second
 398 hierarchical regression (Table 5) revealed that gender influences performance ratings $F(2, 248) =$
 399 $6.46, p < .01$, and accounted for 5% of the variance in step one. With the introduction of personality
 400 traits, the variance increased by 5.2%, and emotional stability contributed to performance ratings, F
 401 $(5, 245) = 5.51, p < .001$. Finally, the inclusion of the specific MJISE factor explained an additional
 402 5.1% of the variance. With all the independent variable included, only S-P SE and gender emerged as
 403 predictors of performance ratings, $F(10, 240) = 4.29, p < .001$.

404 **Table 4.**

405 Hierarchical Regression Analysis for predictive validity (MJISE general factor as Independent
 406 Variable)

Variable	β	t	R^2	ΔR^2	p
Step 1			.05		
Gender ^a	.19	3.12			.002
Age	-.12	-1.85			.65
Step 2			.10	.05	
Gender ^a	.21	3.38			.001
Age	-.10	-1.66			.09
Extraversion	.09	1.51			.13
Conscientiousness	.03	.43			.67
Emotional Stability	.18	2.77			.01
Step 3			.12	.02	
Gender ^a	.23	3.59			.00
Age	-.12	-1.94			.05
Extraversion	.09	1.37			.17
Conscientiousness	-.01	-.07			.94
Emotional Stability	.11	1.55			.12
MJISE general factor	.16	2.24			.03

407 *Note.* N = 251. ^a1 = man, 2 = woman; MJISE = Multidimensional Job Interview Self-Efficacy

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408 **Table 5.**

409 Hierarchical Regression Analysis for predictive validity (MIJSE specific factors as Independent
410 Variables)

Variable	β	t	R^2	ΔR^2	p
Step 1			.05		
Gender ^a	.19	3.12			.002
Age	-.12	-1.85			.07
Step 2			.10	.05	
Gender ^a	.21	3.38			.001
Age	-.10	-1.66			.09
Extraversion	.10	1.51			.13
Conscientiousness	.03	.43			.67
Emotional Stability	.18	2.78			.01
Step 3			.15	.05	
Gender ^a	.23	3.66			.000
Age	-.18	-1.93			.06
Extraversion	.10	1.52			.13
Conscientiousness	-.02	-.28			.78
Emotional Stability	.12	1.65			.10
S-P SE	.22	2.82			.01
IN SE	-.04	-.46			.65
IAM SE	-.06	-.67			.50
IP SE	.11	1.26			.21
LO SE	-.03	-.39			.69

411

412 *Note.* N = 251. ^a1 = man, 2 = woman; S-P SE= Self-promotion self-efficacy; IN SE= Interaction Self-
413 Efficacy; IAM SE=Interview-related Anxiety Management Self-efficacy; IP SE = Interview
414 preparation self-efficacy; LO SE = Logistical Self-Efficacy

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415 8. Discussion

416 With this research, we progress the understanding of ISE, which is a prominent resource for
417 mastering the job interview situation. We do so by introducing a new operationalisation and
418 measurement that we claim be necessary given the lack of tools based on thorough validation. By
419 doing so, we prevent the drawbacks of not having SEs about specific behavioural domains measured
420 by corresponding tools (e.g., flawed predictivity of individual performance; Bandura, 2006)

421 At a theoretical level, this study expands the knowledge about ISE by posing its multi-
422 dimensionality, reflecting the complexity of the network of behaviours related to job interview
423 performance (Levashina et al., 2014; Macan, 2009). We, therefore, present a multi-dimensional
424 operationalisation of ISE, namely MJISE. We identify three distinct SE beliefs about behaviours
425 performed during the interview (S-P SE, IN SE, and IAM SE). Also, we focus on some aspects of the
426 pre-interview stages, with IP SE and LO SE. These two components of the MJISE construct remark
427 that a comprehensive ISE construct should also cover SE beliefs about preparatory behaviours that job
428 interview research has found decisive for positive outcomes (Schudlik et al., 2020).

429 The phase of development and validation of measurement for MJISE has mainly satisfactory
430 results. The items are rated well in terms of content validity. The EFA (Study 3) suggest the existence
431 of a 5-factor structure of the MJISE construct. A CFA (Study 4) shows that the best fitting model
432 representing the MJISE dimensionality is a bi-factorial model. Therefore, we contribute to ISE theory
433 by presenting its architecture consisting of a general factor (namely, MJISE) and five specific factors,
434 orthogonal to the general factor. The MJISE general factor represents the general and overall
435 perceived ability related to the job interview. The specific factors refer to the perceived ability to
436 prepare the contents and the logistics before the job interview and manage anxiety, interaction, and
437 self-promotion during the interview. The bi-factorial model allows us to better represent the MJISE
438 factor by establishing that a unitary dimension and multiple specific dimensions are involved in
439 MJISE scale answers. Furthermore, the MJISE scale and subscales have acceptable internal
440 consistency values (through coefficient Omega in Study 4 and Cronbach's alpha in Study 5).

441 The external validity results (Study 5) require further explanation. The MJISE total scale and
442 subscales show good correlation patterns for convergent validity, yet results support only partially

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443 discriminant validity. As expected, the MJISE total scale and subscales have weak or insignificant
444 correlations with the extraversion and conscientiousness personality traits. However, the MJISE total
445 scale and subscales display moderate to strong correlations with the emotional stability trait. This
446 result may depend on the fact that the sample in Study 5 involved mainly recent graduates, whose lack
447 of experience, and a consequent lower sense of control over the job interview situation, may trigger
448 pervasive physiological and psychological reactions (Bonaccio et al., 2014). Therefore, emotional
449 stability may assume high relevance in influencing new entrants' judgments about their interviewing
450 capabilities since the dominant role that emotions play in this stage of career development. Thus, we
451 propose that our sample's peculiar nature produced the correlation patterns between the MJISE scale
452 and subscales and emotional stability. Research may be further exploring the relationship between
453 these constructs to reduce the risk of overlap between them. Moreover, this relationship should be
454 further studied also with more experienced job seekers to clarify the impact of emotional stability on
455 MJISE and, in turn, on job interview performance.

456 In line with the CSM model (Lent & Brown, 2013), the predictive validity assessment (Study
457 5) reveal that MJISE's total scale is positively associated with the interviewees' performance ratings in
458 a simulated job interview, controlling for demographic variables and personality traits. However,
459 among the specific MJISE subscales, only S-P SE has a positive relationship with the performance
460 rating in a simulated job interview. These results may be explained by what was proposed by Bandura
461 (2006). Namely, facets of efficacy beliefs within a particular domain may assume different
462 importance depending on the specific phase of an activity's execution. For instance, IP and LO SE
463 may be more relevant before the interview and lose predictive power in favour of S-P SE later, during
464 the interview's performance. Future research may be exploring the dynamic chain connecting distinct
465 facets of MJISE.

466 *8.2. Implications for Research and Practice*

467 The MJISE scale has several practical strengths. Its brevity and quality make the MJISE
468 questionnaire an agile tool used both in the research and intervention settings because it is filled
469 quickly. Furthermore, the multi-dimensional approach used here may benefit both researchers and
470 practitioners in career management and job search support programs. Researchers may exploit the

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471 MJISE scale and subscales to expand the empirical research about ISE and explore it with information
472 coming from two levels. With different and independent sources of variance, the bifactor structure
473 allows exploring discrete predictors of the general factor and the specific factors of MJISE and
474 understand the differential contribution of both on interview performance (Reise et al., 2010).

475 At a practical level, the MJISE scale may help job search support services tailor job search
476 interventions focused on interviewing tasks. A multi-dimensional assessment tool helps articulate the
477 job seekers' strengths and weaknesses regarding the job interview. Counsellors working with job
478 seekers can use the overall scale or the subscales to understand what affects job seekers' beliefs
479 regarding their interviewing capabilities to strengthen what they report to be less confident at. For
480 instance, based on the score obtained on S-P SE or IP SE, a training program for the job interview
481 might improve impression management skills (i.e., by enhancing the self-presentation ability; Liu et
482 al., 2014).

483 *8.3. Limitations and Future Research Recommendations*

484 This study has some limitations. First, the samples used in Study 3, 4 and 5 involved only
485 students and recent graduates. As already stated, such homogeneous samples may have some
486 drawbacks in terms of external validity. It reduces the possibility of establishing a clear distinction
487 between the MJISE factors and other variables involved (e.g., emotional stability). Moreover, the
488 sample's homogeneity hinders the MJISE scale's applicability to other populations with different
489 characteristics. For instance, older job seekers who do not have recent job search experience may have
490 obsolete networks, from which they could not retrieve precise company-related information (Wanberg
491 et al., 2016). Therefore, the MJISE scale items could behave differently in validation analyses with
492 other groups of job seekers. Future research may want to replicate the studies conducted herein with
493 more heterogeneous samples for ameliorating the validity and usability of the MJISE Scale.

494 Concerning the external validity, we advocate for further research to address the convergent
495 and discriminant validity of the MJISE total scale and subscales. Other than correlational analysis, a
496 Multi-trait Multi-method could be preferred to study convergent and discriminant validity.
497 Furthermore, the cross-sectional design used herein does not make it possible to infer causal
498 relationships among the study variables, thus reducing our results' strength in predictive validity.

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499 Moreover, the cross-sectional data prevented us from evaluating the dynamic chain that connects the
500 different facets of MJISE and underpins their relevance while preparing and conducting a job
501 interview. Future studies may consider using a longitudinal design.

502 Furthermore, even though the simulated interview setting in Study 5 was as much as possible
503 close to reality, a simulation may elicit different feelings and cognitions from a real set (e.g., different
504 anxiety levels; Young et al., 2004). This could have influenced the response that participants gave
505 (e.g., to the items measuring IAM SE). We put forward future research to validate the MISE scale in a
506 natural job interview setting. Lastly, the MISE scale introduced here assesses SE about mastering
507 face-to-face job interview situations. However, the emergence of some digital forms of job interview
508 – which acquired crucial importance in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent
509 restrictions about physical proximity – requires future research to develop and validate a scale
510 thoroughly to assess SE related to digital interviewing. This new tool may determine the perceived
511 ability in dealing with the novelty of digital interview formats itself, with the technical features of a
512 digital interview, and with the necessity to convey a good impression without social and interpersonal
513 cues.

8.4. Conclusion

515 In conclusion, we make a significant attempt to conceptualise the ISE variable further. We
516 hypothesise it to rely upon a multi-dimensional factorial structure (namely, MJISE), which the data
517 reveal to be a bifactor model. Although further investigations are needed to increase the robustness of
518 the MJISE scale's validity, the use of such a scale may present both research and practice with
519 significant benefits in assessing one's perceived ability to face a job interview.

9. Declarations of interest

521 None.

522

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709 Appendix A.

710 MJISE questionnaire's items after study 3.

Factor	Item
Self-promotion SE (S-P SE) In relation to the job interview, how confident are you that you could...	1. Convey a professional image
	2. Emphasise the most valuable work experiences you had
	3. Emphasise your work experiences and job-related skills
	4. Elicit the interviewer's interest in deeming you suitable for the job
Interview-related Anxiety Management SE (IAM SE) In relation to the job interview, how confident are you that you could...	5. Stay calm
	6. Manage the interview-related anxiety
	7. Maintain a calm approach
	8. Keep good self-control.
Interview Preparation SE (IP SE) In relation to the job interview, how confident are you that you could...	9. Get ready for the interview questions
	10. Obtain information about assessment criteria during the selection
	11. Search for information about the company
	12. Obtain information about the job you are applying for
Logistical SE (LO SE) In relation to the job interview, how confident are you that you could...	13. Arrive at the interview venue on time
	14. Find the venue of the interview
	15. Plan for the interview
	16. Find a company contact person for the interview
Interaction SE (IN SE) In relation to the job interview, how confident are you that you could...	17. Answer properly to tricky questions
	18. Answer readily to unexpected questions
	19. Handle a probing interview
	20. Handle properly questions you were not prepared for

711 *Note.* SE = Self-efficacy

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