

The "OrientaUnito" Project. Educational Guidance Pathways Through Rap Music and Photovoice Methodology: A Thematic Analysis

Teodora Lattanzi, Email: teodora.lattanzi@unito.it

University of Turin, Department of Philosophy and Educational Sciences



Introduction

Starting from the year 2022-23, the University of Turin (Italy) has introduced 15-hour educational guidance programs, funded by PNRR NextGen EU (2023-2026), for students attending upper secondary schools in the Piedmont region. This study focuses on two innovative educational guidance pathways, addressed to third year upper secondary students, that use rap music and photovoice methods. In the year 2023-24, a total of 483 students participated to these programs allowing us to explore the outcomes of the two methods. The students are 64.3% females and 35.7% males, with ages ranging from 15 to 18 years. Notably, 75% of the participants were 16 years old. This contribution presents a thematic analysis of the photographs and rap songs, highlighting key differences and commonalities.

Theoretical Framework

The guidance model used integrates various approaches rooted in the tradition of educational and vocational guidance (Pelletier, 1974; Viglietti, 1989; Biagioli, 2003).

In the **Photovoice program**, students create and share four photographs (or pick images from the web), providing a title and description, that address questions about self-perception and future aspirations ("How do I see myself?"; "How do others see me?"; "How do I see my future?"; and "How do I view the world of work and the professional I want to become?") fostering self-knowledge and decision-making (Corbi & Sirignano, 2022).



The **Rap pathway**, facilitated by the "Large Motive" Association, encourages students to write about self-image and future goals, culminating in a collaboratively created rap song (Travis, 2012; Forgiorno, 2021).



Methodology

- A **Thematic Analysis** was conducted on **1,110 photographs/images** and **14 rap songs (11,771 words)**.
- Four main themes** emerged from both pathways: **Self-image/identity**; **Goals and aspirations**; **Idea of Future**; **Profession/becoming an adult**. Each theme contained distinct codes, as illustrated in the bar charts.
- Data analysis was performed using **NVivo software**, focusing on differences and similarities in themes and codes between the two methodologies.

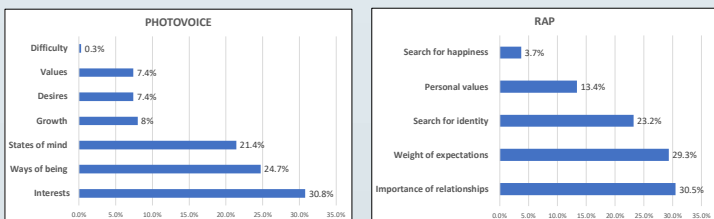
Results

In general, when comparing images and songs, different stimuli emerge regarding identity dimensions. In particular, differences can be observed in:

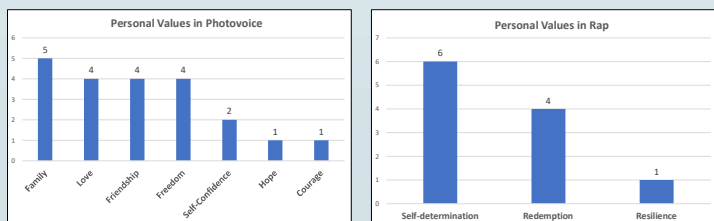
- Personal values identified;
- self-image vs. the weight of expectations.

A common theme between the two approaches is, however, the aspect of indecision/uncertainty and the search for self.

Identity: Diverse Factors




Personal Values Identified




As shown by the initial findings, Photovoice predominantly reveals positive themes related to identity and the personal values represented. In contrast, the analysis of rap songs highlights a strong sense of belonging to a community or minority group, where peer relationships are often perceived as a source of support. The values that emerge from the rap songs analysis include redemption, self-determination, and resilience—an expected outcome, given that these themes are characteristic of this music genre.

Personal Values: Examples

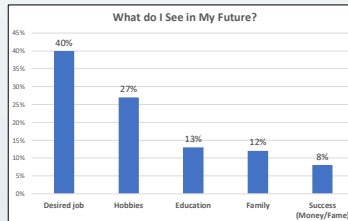
PHOTOVOICE	RAP
Title: Grow Up  Description: I deeply relate to this image because the rising sun represents my growth throughout life. I can now see a small part of myself that I'm trying to shape, and little by little, I continue to develop until I can rise fully, expressing all my light—the best part of me.	Not Surviving <i>I've chosen to live</i> Only I can decide that → Self-determination (Song: "Words scratch") In this life, I don't want to give up → Resilience (Song: "Blah, blah, blah") I want to live the good life And have what I've never had → Redemption (Song: "Movie")

As demonstrated in the following examples, themes of indecision, insecurity, and self-discovery are common threads that run through both pathways.

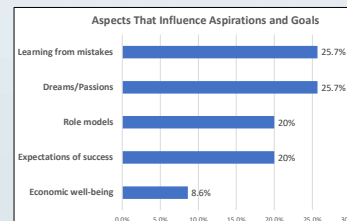
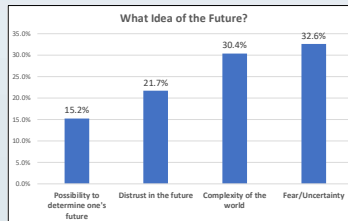
PHOTOVOICE	RAP
Title: Just to Avoid Choosing, I Sink with Serenity  Description: A person could move and go anywhere, but they don't. The boat they're on is sinking, just like I live in a constant state of indecision, even over trivial matters. This indecision often stems from indifference, much like a perfectly calm sea.	I Seek My Light To Not Lose My Way, To Acknowledge to Myself My True Achievement (Song: "Like Avalanches") Time to Decide Who I Am To Bring Order to This Chaos (Song: "For All That I Have").

What Idea of Future?

Photovoice



Rap



A common and widespread theme among the students is the fear and uncertainty regarding the future and the labour market. Let's see some examples.



In my opinion, the world of work, with all these innovative technologies, will ultimately be taken over by artificial intelligence.



In the future, society will be consumed by war, both internal and external. Our degrees and qualifications will no longer matter.



I see the future as an earthquake, because everything can seem fine at first, and then at some point, everything can go wrong.

Conclusions and future research

The results were analyzed using the **System Theory Framework (STF)** (Patton & McMahon, 2006), highlighting the dynamic nature of career development (McMahon, 2005). Key themes of self-development emerged through three interconnected systems: individual (identity, values), social (relationships, expectations), and environmental (world complexity, global issues). This supports the educational guidance model's goal of fostering self-awareness and creating realistic life projects. Future research will explore differences in thematic outcomes based on methodology (rap music or photovoice), school type, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Scan QR code for:

1. Abstract and further references
2. Link to the rap songs performed by students (Rap program)
3. Collection of images (Photovoice program)



Essential Bibliography:

- Boerchi, D., Castelli, C. & Gullotta, A. (2000). I valori professionali per l'orientamento: un excursus teorico e un nuovo inventario sui valori professionali. GIPO - Giornale Italiano di psicologia dell'orientamento, 1(1), 21-34.
- Cadaret M. & Hartung P. (2020). Efficacy of a group career construction intervention with urban youth of colour. British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 49(2), 187-199.
- McMahon, M. (2005). Career counseling: applying the systems theory framework of career development. Journal of Employment Counseling, 42: 29-38

