



Research Article

Parental autonomy support and the impostor phenomenon: the mediation role of self-esteem in psychology students

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Abstract

The feeling of unworthiness experienced by individuals due to the large number of demands often brings feelings of high stress and can affect the individual's performance and productivity at work or in an academic context. By understanding this phenomenon, it is hoped that we can develop more effective interventions to help individuals who experience these feelings so they can maintain good mental health. This research aims to determine the role of parental autonomy support on the impostor phenomenon with self-esteem as a mediator in psychology students at Muhammadiyah University, Purwokerto. The hypothesis of this research is that the role of parental autonomy support on the impostor phenomenon in students is mediated by self-esteem. This research method is quantitative with accidental sampling. The number of participants was 278 psychology students at Muhammadiyah University, Purwokerto, Indonesia. The measuring instruments used in this research include the Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS), the Perceived Parental Autonomy Support Scale (P-PASS), and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). This research uses path analysis with $p < 0,001$ results of 95,77% calculated jamovi program version 2.4.11.0 for windows. The results of this study show that parental autonomy support can affect the impostor phenomenon but through self-esteem which if the individual self-esteem is high tends to reduce the impostor phenomenon on the contrary if the individual self-esteem is low it tends to increase the risk of the impostor phenomenon. The conclusion of this research is that parental autonomy support plays a role in the impostor phenomenon with self-esteem as a complete mediator and has a big influence.

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Introduction

Students experience many demands from various aspects, both psychological and academic. Demands can cause a psychological crisis in students, but if students can overcome these demands, students will think about developing these demands into a new challenge that can be overcome, and can even be used as an achievement or accomplishment (Xu et al., 2022).

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Achievement should bring a sense of pride to students, but in fact some students feel not proud of their achievements, not because the achievements are less than satisfactory. On the other hand, students believe that their achievements are caused by external factors rather than their own abilities (Nurhikma et al., 2020). This can happen because there are many expectations from other people which give rise to the feeling that the individual has to fulfill them. As mentioned Rahmawati (2017) stress can come from things such as expectations, goals, pressure, competition in peer groups, and also expectations from parents.

Feelings where one cannot accept one's success can bring worry, anxiety, and even depression resulting from the pressure to embody one's image of success and the fear that one will be seen as unworthy and incompetent (Langford et al., 1993). Even though the impostor phenomenon was introduced from western culture, several studies have found that many students in Indonesia experience feelings of unworthiness for their achievements, often due to cultural, social or family factors. As in research Suryaning Ati (2015) explained that impostor syndrome can cause increased academic anxiety in students due to fear of failure and high social expectations. This can influence students in Indonesia to develop their potential.

Impostor phenomenon is defined as an internal experience of intellectual falsehood in which a person feels that he has deceived others about his achievements and abilities (Clance et al., 1978). This phenomenon is characterized by feelings of self-doubt, decreased performance, constant feelings of anxiety that other people will view oneself as someone who has no abilities (Hutchins et al., 2018). The impostor phenomenon was first studied by Clance and Imez (1978) in his research it was found that there were intelligent women who were experts in their respective fields and had extraordinary academic achievements but still believed that these women were actually not intelligent and felt they had deceived anyone who thought otherwise. As research continues to develop, there are studies which say that the impostor phenomenon is not only experienced by women but can also be experienced by men (Langford et al., 1993; Clance et al., 1978).

Chrisman (1995) said the aspects contained in the impostor phenomenon include fake, discount, and luck. Fake is an aspect that shows self-doubt and worry about an individual's intelligence and abilities, discount is an aspect that shows its connection with the inability to acknowledge praise and good performance, while luck is an aspect that shows its relationship with the thought that someone has achieved something by chance or mistake (Chrisman et al., 1995). The impostor phenomenon is influenced by external and internal factors, external factors consisting of parents, friends and teachers. Internal factors consist of perception and motivation (Nabila et al., 2022).

One external factor that influences the impostor phenomenon is parents, Parents play an important role in shaping children's social, psychological, and academic functioning (Vasquez et al., 2016). One of the basic psychological needs that helps improve a person's development and functioning is autonomy (Vasquez et al., 2016). According to Inguglia (2015) Autonomy can be developed through support from parents.

Mageau (2009) states that autonomy support refers to adults considering children as separate individuals who have the right and need to express their feelings and preferences. Parental autonomy support is the characteristic of parents who feel empathy with their children, allow children to choose their own choices, and provide reasonable reasons when restrictions are imposed (Ryan et al., 2016). The more often a child has the opportunity to be left free by his mother and father, the greater the child's encouragement to carry out activities according to his own wishes (Fadilah et al., 2019). According to research conducted by Castro (2004) that impostor phenomenon can be explained as a significant long-term effect of parenting during childhood. Children will feel like they have to live up to their parents' expectations because many children find it difficult to be independent and never really learn what they can do (Castro et al., 2004).

According to Clance and Imez (1978) one of the two types of family dynamics that play a role in the formation of the impostor phenomenon can come from a child who is considered by his parents to be unintelligent, but has an attractive appearance, the child has instilled this perception until he grows up. As a result, when they receive awards and academic achievements, children do not feel that their achievements are the result of their own abilities but because of their attractive appearance. The second type of family has parents who instill the belief that their children have

extraordinary abilities and are talented. After growing up and facing difficult challenges, children feel doubtful about their parents' judgment and hide the difficulties they experience to maintain their own image in the eyes of their parents. The child has doubts because his parents believe that intelligent children do not need to make excessive efforts (Clance et al., 1978).

Study King and Cooley (1995) also said that family dynamics play a role in the emergence of this impostor phenomenon when parents have high expectations of their children's success and perfection. On the other hand, if parents support their children, such as listening to complaints, not comparing children, and being a source of motivation for children towards success, this can reduce the impostor phenomenon that occurs (King et al., 1995). Inconsistent assessment between two environments, family and school, causes individuals to experience confusion in forming self-perceptions, feeling self-doubt, and the emergence of impostor symptoms (Rose et al., 1988; Clance et al., 1978). On research Sudrajat (2023) said that parental support such as communication supported by empathy towards children can reduce the impostor phenomenon. As autonomy support is part of parental support itself, as is caring support and security support (Rohinsa et al., 2021).

Although many studies have found that parental support can reduce the emergence of the impostor phenomenon, no one has yet explained the mechanisms that occur between parental autonomy support and the impostor phenomenon. The use of mediating variables can help better explain the relationship between parental autonomy support and the impostor phenomenon (Baron et al., 1986).

Although there has been no research between parental autonomy support and the impostor phenomenon using mediating variables. However, there is previous research using several mediating variables in researching the impostor phenomenon, namely personality (Windradi, 2023), self-esteem (Cokley et al., 2018), and social anxiety (Yaffe, 2021). Each variable explains the position of mediation well. Apart from that, there is research that uses self-esteem as a mediator in a phenomenon that is almost the same as the impostor phenomenon and parental autonomy support, namely research Prasetio (2022) between family social support and psychological disorders in students. Further research from Yaffe (2020) namely between parenting style and feelings of impostor. Both explain the position of self-esteem as a mediator well. Excessive parental attention and protection is related to feelings of impostor through self-esteem, where attention can increase feelings of self-esteem while excessive protection can reduce children's self-esteem, which in turn changes feelings of self-esteem can influence feelings of unworthiness in the individual (Yaffe, 2020).

The position of self-esteem as a mediator explains why and how impostor phenomena occur and functions as a link between parental autonomy support and impostor phenomena (Baron et al., 1986). In the field of psychology, phenomena occur due to many reasons, so if a mediator can reduce a phenomenon that occurs then it can be said that the mediator is indeed functioning (Baron et al., 1986). Study Arya (2023) shows that there is a relationship from within, namely between self-esteem and the impostor phenomenon. It is explained that the impostor phenomenon involves feelings of intellectual self-doubt which often occur in someone who has achieved achievement, so that the higher a person's level of self-esteem, the lower the possibility of someone experiencing the impostor phenomenon. Based on this explanation, the researchers chose self-esteem as a mediator between parental support for autonomy and the impostor phenomenon.

Self-esteem is a person's beliefs based on their level of esteem and evaluation of themselves, which can include positive or negative views (Rosenberg, 1965). Self-esteem is the tendency to view oneself as capable and having the strength and effort to face the basic challenges of life and be happy (Sariman, 2019). According to Mruk (2006) self-esteem is divided into two types, the first type is high self-esteem, where someone with high self-esteem usually shows a high level of competence and worthiness, while the second type, namely low self-esteem, shows reduced competence and worthiness.

High self-esteem is characterized by feeling comfortable with oneself, being open to new experiences, feeling accepted and accepted. People who have high self-esteem when they excel will be competent enough to continue to be successful in whatever is important to that individual. Individuals tend to have a positive assessment of the size of their self-esteem

(Mruk, 2006). Low self-esteem is characterized by a lack of skills in dealing with problems and a lack of positive feelings in evaluating oneself. People who have low self-esteem tend to have a cautious attitude, fearfulness, lack of initiative, conflict avoidance, insecurity, anxiety, depression, and so on (Mruk, 2006).

There is research that finds that parental support predicts an individual's level of self-esteem. As in research Baharuddin (2022) Children are allowed to express their opinions so that children can respect themselves as valuable individuals. Apart from that, research Solekha (2022) says that a child's positive self-esteem arises from fulfilling positive components such as feelings of acceptance, capability and worth. Apart from that, the efforts made by parents are acceptance, warmth and emotional support for children (Solekha et al., 2022). This shows how parents play a role in building children's self-esteem.

The impostor phenomenon was discovered at the Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto, this university has superior accreditation, which means it is better than A accreditation, which according to the official LLDIKTI website has high quality education, is ready to compete internationally and has students who are academically qualified. Based on initial studies conducted by researchers on 24 psychology students, it showed that 4 students experienced the impostor phenomenon in the medium category, 17 students in the high category, and 3 students in the very high category. It is hoped that this research can become a source of knowledge in the clinical, educational and developmental and social fields that is useful for future researchers, especially regarding the mediating role of self-esteem in parental autonomy support with the impostor phenomenon. For parents, it can be used as knowledge material as well as evaluation to pay more attention to the child's development period. Apart from that, it is hoped that this research can help decision making in overcoming the problem of the impostor phenomenon among students at the psychology faculty of Muhammadiyah University, Purwokerto.

Based on this background explanation, researchers are interested in studying the impostor phenomenon in relation to the variables of parental autonomy support and self-esteem as mediators among psychology students at University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.

Problem of Study

The formulation of the problem of this research is whether self-esteem plays a mediator role in parental autonomy support against the phenomenon of fraudsters among university psychology students? As well as producing a hypothesis about the role of self-esteem mediation in parental autonomy support against the phenomenon of fraudsters among university psychology students.

Method

Research Model

This research is a correlational quantitative research. Quantitative correlational research is defined as a type of study conducted with the purpose of determining how two or more variables are related to each other. This research aims to ascertain whether there is a positive, negative, or no relationship at all (Sugiyono, 2013).

Participants

The subjects of this research were psychology students at the Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto with a population of 1087 and a sample of 278 students based on the krejcie table. The age of the research participants was between 17-24 years. The sampling technique used was accidental *sampling*, which is a technique used when sampling by selecting subjects who are accidentally encountered (Sinaga, 2014). Criteria for the research sample: (1) active student at the psychology faculty, (2) has a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3,00, (3) has parental figures (parental figures do not have to be biological parents). GPA determination is used to ensure that students have sufficient academic abilities to contribute to the validity of research. According to website official PMBUMP accepts prospective professional students at the Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto using requirements with a minimum GPA of 3,00 at the previous level of education.

This study obtained data from 278 subjects aged 17-24 years and GPA $\geq 3,00$. Information can be seen in table 1.

Table1. Demographic structures of participants

Variables	N	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Man	39	14 %
Woman	239	86 %
Age (years)		
17- 20	196	70.50 %
21-24	82	29.50 %
Semester		
Semester 2	131	47.12 %
Semester 4	67	24.10 %
Semester 6	53	19.06 %
Semester 8	27	9.71 %
Cumulative achievement index (GPA)		
3.00	20	7.19 %
> 3.00	258	92.81%
Organization		
Follow the organization	197	70.86 %
Not joining an organization	81	29.14 %
Total	278	100%

In table 1 it can be seen that the indirect section has a mediation amount of 95,77%. This means that self-esteem has a full role as a mediator between parental autonomy support and the impostor phenomenon, where paths a and b have a significant influence, but path c apparently does not experience a significant influence which can be seen in the direct amount of 4,23.

Data Collection Tools

The validity of this research uses content validity with expert judgment by psychology lecturers at Muhammadiyah University, Purwokerto. Content validity is the validity of testing the feasibility and relevance of a test, through rational analysis and the assessment of competent experts (Hendryadi, 2017). The discrimination index for this research item was 0,25 (Azwar, 1994). According to Azwar (1994) The better the discrimination power of an item, the closer the index value is to 1,00. This reliability measurement uses Cronbach's alpha. Reliability is always related to the level of accuracy and consistency of the scale of the research variables (Hardani et al., 2020). Therefore, test reliability can be measured using certain procedures, where if the index is close to 1,00, it means that the scale or measuring instrument used has a high level of confidence and reliability (Suwartono, 2014).

This research uses three scales, namely the clan impostor phenomenon scale (CIPS), perceived parental autonomy support scale (P-PASS), and self-esteem scale. This impostor phenomenon scale is a modification of from Clance (1988) with reference to the aspects it includes fake, discounts, and luck. The number of items on this scale is 15 items with response points consisting of strongly disagree (STS), disagree (TS), neutral (N), agree (S), and strongly agree (SS). Scale impostor phenomenon translated from English to Indonesian via LDC (*Language Development Center*) and checked again to ensure that the items have the same meaning and can be understood by respondents. The higher the score a person has, the more frequently and seriously the impostor phenomenon disrupts a person's life (Clance et al., 1988). The reliability of this scale uses Cronbach's alpha of 0,891.

This parental autonomy support scale is a modification of Mageau (2015) referring to the aspects in it, namely autonomy support, and controlling parenting, where the higher the score obtained indicates that a person has better autonomy support from parents. The number of items in this research scale is 20 items with response points consisting

of not agree at all (TSSS), almost disagree (HTS), somewhat agree (AS), neutral (N), agree (S), more agree (LS), and strongly agree (SS). The parental autonomy support scale was translated from English to Indonesian through the LDC (Language Development Center) and checked again to ensure that the items had the same meaning and could be understood by respondents. The reliability of this scale uses Cronbach's alpha of 0,835.

This self-esteem scale is an adaptation of Maroqi (2019) with the Indonesian version which refers to aspects in it which consist of self-competence and self-liking, where the higher the score obtained indicates someone has high self-esteem. The number of items in this research scale is 8 items with response points consisting of strongly disagree (STS), disagree (TS), agree (S), and strongly agree (SS). The reliability of this scale uses Cronbach's alpha of 0,803.

In this study, we used a scale of parental autonomy support for the impostor phenomenon through self-esteem in students. So to measure the role of these three variables, researchers used data analysis techniques, namely path analysis. Path analysis is a procedure used to test causal relationships between variables (Sarwono, 2011). Calculations from the data obtained will be calculated using the Jamovi program version 2.4.11.0 for Windows.

Procedure

The research was conducted starting with a preliminary study in October 2023. Furthermore, a scale try out was carried out on 30 students. then data collection will be carried out in May 2024 for two weeks. The data obtained was obtained from the questionnaire scale using a Google form distributed to Psychology students of the University of Muhammadiyah, Purwokerto, Indonesia.

Ethics

This research has complied with research ethical permits (No. KEPK/UMP/07/I/2024). through the Health Research Ethics Committee of the Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto.

Results

In this research, it is proven that parental autonomy support plays a role in the impostor phenomenon with self-esteem as a mediator. It can be seen from the magnitude of each path, which for path a, namely parental autonomy support for self-esteem, has a magnitude of 0,02877 with a p value $<0,001$. path b, namely self-esteem towards the impostor phenomenon, has a magnitude of -1,23724 with a p value $<0,001$. path c, namely parental autonomy support for the impostor phenomenon, has a magnitude of -0,00157 with a p value = 0,904.

It is known that self-esteem explains 95,77% of the total effect so it can be classified as full mediation because the indirect effect is greater than the direct effect. Apart from that, in the direct test there was no significant direction of influence, whereas if seen separately, path c could have an influence, but the presence of self-esteem was able to better explain the direction of the relationship between parental autonomy support, which could lead to the impostor phenomenon, namely parents. which does not give the child the opportunity to give his opinion, does not allow the child to choose between his options, and gives a feeling of guilt so that the child wants to obey his parents.

Based on this, it can be strengthened by the individual's own self-esteem, with low self-esteem individuals have a tendency to view themselves as incapable so that it can cause individuals to experience the impostor phenomenon, thus it can be said that the mediating variable plays a full role in variables of parental autonomy support and impostor phenomenon.

Table 2. Mediation estimates

Effect	Label	Estimate	SE	Z	P	% Mediation
Indirect	$a \times b$	-0.03559	0.00933	-3,813	< .001	95.77
Direct	c	-0.00157	0.01302	-0.121	0.904	4.23
Total	$c + a \times b$	-0.03716	0.01542	-2,410	0.016	100.00

Table 3. Path analysis of mediation model

			Label	Estimate	S.E	Z	p
PAS	→	Self-esteem	a	0.02877	0.00713	4,037	< .001
Self-esteem	→	IP	b	-1.23724	0.10651	-11,616	< .001
PAS	→	IP	c	-0.00157	0.01302	-0.121	0.904

PAS: Parental Autonomy Support IP: Impostor Phenomenon

The following is a visualization of the relationship between the variables parental autonomy support, self-esteem, and the impostor phenomenon:

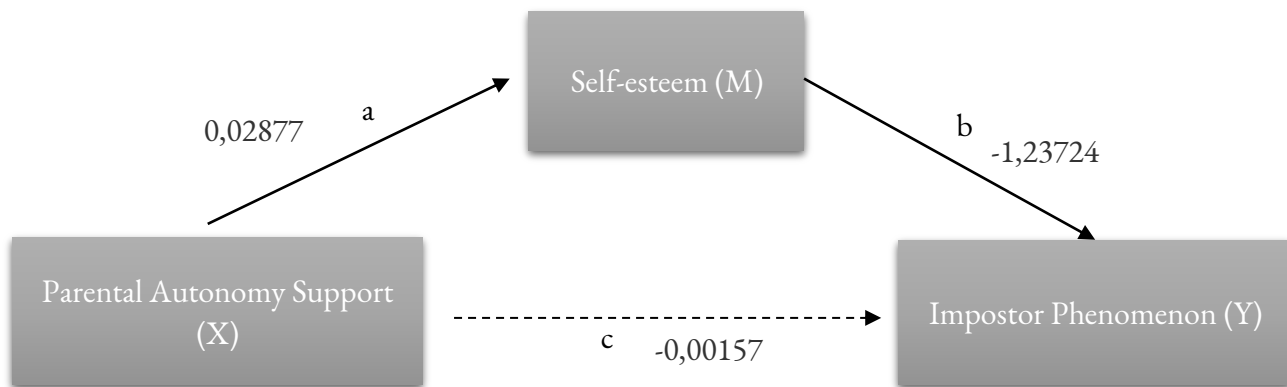


Figure 1. Mediation model of self-esteem as a mediator

In Figure 1 is a mediation model of self-esteem as a mediator. Based on theory Baron and Kenny (1986) The main concept of this model is that the response to a stimulus is influenced by various internal processes in an organism, in other words the impostor phenomenon is not only influenced by direct stimulation but is also influenced by thought processes, feelings of worth, and situations experienced by the individual.

Discussion

The results of this study show that the self-esteem variable has a mediating role in parental autonomy support and the impostor phenomenon. Parental autonomy support does not directly influence the impostor phenomenon and must go through self-esteem first because based on the mediation test self-esteem explains 95,77% of the total effect so it can be classified as full mediation. Full mediation is a mediation concept where the independent variable is not directly related to the dependent variable and must go through the mediating variable to be able to influence the dependent variable (Budhiasa, 2016), thus it can be said that self-esteem has a big influence and is a complete mediator.

Parental autonomy support can influence someone to experience the impostor phenomenon. Autonomy support involves being given freedom and responsibility to make decisions and manage each individual's life, where if someone has good autonomy support from their parents, the individual tends to be more confident and have a sense of ownership of individual achievements. On the other hand, if someone has poor autonomy support from their parents, the individual will feel doubtful and think that their achievements or accomplishments do not come from themselves but from external factors such as luck (Nabila et al., 2022). Study Nabila (2022) also said that one of the external factors that influence the impostor phenomenon is parents, teachers and friends. The impostor phenomenon can be explained as a

significant long-term impact of parenting in childhood. Children will feel like they have to live up to their parents' expectations, because of this, many children struggle to develop a sense of independence and never really learn to recognize their own abilities (Castro et al., 2004).

However, because this factor of parental autonomy support comes from external sources that cannot be controlled, the direction of parental autonomy support does not directly influence the impostor phenomenon, but there are other factors that bridge it. In other research, it is stated that parents play a role in increasing children's self-esteem. Children are allowed to express their opinions, so they can learn to respect themselves as valuable individuals (Baharuddin, 2022).

Self-esteem has a negative role, namely its role in reducing the impostor phenomenon that occurs in individuals which can be seen in table 3. from a significant value of $p < 0,01$. So, the higher a person's self-esteem, the lower the impostor phenomenon they experience. These results are in line with research studies Arya (2023) which shows that there is a connection from within, namely between self-esteem and the impostor phenomenon, which explains that the impostor phenomenon involves feelings of intellectual self-doubt which often occur in someone who has achieved achievement. Besides that, Travers (2021) also said the same thing, namely that one of the characteristics of the impostor phenomenon is low self-esteem, which can increase feelings of unworthiness and self-doubt.

In this study, it was shown that when parental autonomy support and the impostor phenomenon were explained through the mediation of self-esteem, the position of both became insignificant. This means that parental autonomy support does not influence the impostor phenomenon directly but must go through self-esteem first before being able to explain the impostor phenomenon that occurs.

Based on the results of demographic data, it can be seen that 92,81% of respondents had an Academic Achievement Index (GPA) $> 3,00$. Studies show that good academic achievement is often associated with increased self-confidence and self-esteem. High academic achievement can also offer a sense of personal accomplishment and recognition from academic and social circles, as well as greater career opportunities. All of these factors increase a person's self-confidence because the individual feels more valued, competent, and successful in the academic and professional world (Gonzaga, 2023). There were 197 students who actively participated in organizations out of 278 respondents. Study from Yorensa (2023) students gain a greater sense of self-confidence as a result of the self-management skills learned while actively participating in the organization. In accordance with most of the respondents in this study, they have a high level of self-esteem. The limitations of this research lie in the gender of the respondents. Even in research Langford (1993) And Clance (1978) The impostor phenomenon can happen to anyone, both men and women. However, there has been no research that examines predominantly men who experience the impostor phenomenon. Meanwhile, the respondents from this study dominated among women, so it is hoped that future research will examine men further. Limitations of this research also lie in the subject. The impostor phenomenon can happen to anyone, but because this research conducted an initial study on psychology students and it cannot be denied that this impostor phenomenon can occur in students of other faculties at Muhammadiyah University, Purwokerto, it is hoped that future researchers will use subjects other than psychology students.

Conclusion

Based on the research results that have been explained, it can be concluded that parental autonomy support can influence the impostor phenomenon but not directly and through self-esteem as a mediating variable, where self-esteem plays a full role as a mediator of 95,77%, thus having a big influence on influencing someone to experience the impostor phenomenon. Individuals with high self-esteem can reduce the risk of impostor phenomena, while someone with low self-esteem tends to increase self-doubt so that they are more likely to give rise to impostor phenomena. So, autonomy support from parents does not only directly influence the impostor phenomenon but through self-esteem as a mediating variable. The limitation of this research is that it only focuses on psychology students and the dominant subjects are women. Further research is recommended on more diverse groups.

Recommendations

For further research, it is recommended to conduct research with more diverse male dominant subjects, not only in the Faculty of Psychology because it does not allow impostor phenomenon to occur in other faculties.

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