

Exploring the Influence of Coping Mechanisms to the Role of Social Support in Impostor Syndrome Experiences of Public Elementary Teachers: A Cross-sectional Study

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Abstract

This research delved into the persistent issue of Impostor Syndrome (IS) among public elementary school teachers. The current study aimed to address gaps in existing literature, particularly within the realm of educational and industrial/organizational psychology. A total of 115 teachers were examined to gain insight into how social support and coping mechanisms related to their experiences with IS. The results highlighted a significant presence of IS among teachers, emphasizing the crucial roles played by social support and coping mechanisms. Interestingly, the study showed that the link between social support and IS was influenced by coping mechanisms, underlining the importance of personalized interventions. Additionally, the study recommended exploring factors such as organizational culture, self-efficacy, job autonomy, and goal orientations as potential predictors of IS. The practical implications of this research extended to teachers, schools, and administrators, underscoring the need for supportive environments and targeted interventions to address Impostor Syndrome's impact. This study provided a strong foundation for future researchers, offering a detailed understanding of IS in the context of public elementary school education.

Keywords: Impostor Syndrome, Coping Mechanisms, Social Support, Goal Orientation, Coping Circumplex Model

Introduction

Background of the Study

Impostor syndrome, which was initially produced by Dr. Suzanne Imes and Dr. Pauline Rose Clance (1978), is a psychological phenomenon where an individual views their accomplishments as mere luck and struggles with self-doubt regarding their worth as high-achievers (Awinashe et al., 2023; Eriksson et al., 2023; Campos et al., 2022; Shanafelt et al., 2022; Bravata et al., 2019; Fraenza, 2016). According to a news article from Rappler authored by Leon (2023), research indicates that approximately 70% of individuals will encounter impostor syndrome during their professional careers, causing them to perceive themselves as undeserving of their workplace achievements (Leon, 2023). On the other note, impostor

syndrome is not classified as a mental illness and is not an official diagnosis in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM); nevertheless, many psychologists acknowledge its prevalence among individuals who have struggles with self-doubt (APA, 2021). Those experiencing impostor syndrome often fear that they are impostors who will eventually be seen like frauds (Clance & Imes, 1978).

The existing body of literature collectively affirms that Impostor Syndrome is a prevalent and consequential psychological phenomenon that impacts individuals across various professional domains, including the field of medicine. This observation underscores the universality of Impostor Syndrome, which manifests across diverse age groups, socio-cultural backgrounds, and professional domains. In the context of education, there has been limited research on the phenomenon of impostor syndrome among public school teachers. A study of LaPalme et al. (2022) on pre-service educators suggested that there is limited knowledge exists regarding the factors influencing the emergence of impostor syndrome and its target population throughout the process of transitioning into a career in the field of education. Some studies, like the one conducted by Eriksson et al. (2023), have highlighted the significant impact of impostor syndrome on the self-assurance and self-doubt levels experienced by women in leadership roles in Sweden. This research has shed light on common experiences associated with impostor syndrome, including feelings of inadequacy, uncertainty, and apprehension regarding one's abilities. However, there is still much more to explore and understand about how impostor syndrome manifests in various contexts, including education, and its effects on individuals' psychological well-being and their development as professionals in their individual fields. The extant literature pertaining to Impostor Syndrome (IS) has made significant contributions by elucidating its pervasiveness and negative implications across several areas, such as healthcare, educational institutions, and leadership roles (Eriksson et al., 2023).

The present study examined Impostor Syndrome in education, focusing on public teachers. Teachers and school administrators' Impostor Syndrome frequency and manifestations are the focus of this study. Gender, years of professional experience, grade level taught, and teaching roles were considered in this study (Bravata et al., 2019). This study aims to examine how Impostor Syndrome affects psychological aspects like coping mechanisms and social support. This research on Impostor Syndrome (IS) among public school teachers holds significant implications. Teachers and educational administrators have the potential to acquire significant knowledge regarding the influence of Impostor Syndrome (IS) on their line of work. By doing so, they can obtain adapted approaches to effectively manage this impact, hence augmenting their overall wellbeing and productivity. Consequently, this has an indirect positive impact on students as it enhances the educational setting and has the potential to enhance academic performance. Educational institutions have the potential to derive advantages from the implementation of evidence-based strategies as indicated in the study. This can lead to improved rates of teacher retention and the cultivation of more supportive school environments, ultimately culminating in enhanced student performance. The research findings can be utilized by school administrators to give priority to the well-being of their teacher employees and provide support mechanisms. Furthermore, professionals in the field of psychology, particularly those specializing in educational and Industrial/Organizational areas, can augment their provision of support services by acquiring a more profound comprehension of Impostor Syndrome and its interrelationships with coping strategies and social support. The findings of this study proposed significant contributions to the wider academic and research community engaged in the exploration of Impostor Syndrome and its associated psychological variables.

Literature Review

Clance and Imes (1978) first explored the Imposter Phenomenon, a related concept, among highly accomplished women. This phenomenon entails persistent feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt despite evidence of competence and success. In their study, they found that the Imposter Phenomenon exerted a significant influence on the personal and professional aspects of women who are successful in their careers. Therapy interventions, such as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Psychodynamic Therapy, Group Therapy, and Interpersonal Therapy, were identified as efficacious in helping women overcome these feelings of being impostors (Clance & Imes, 1978).

The article of Grossman (2022) utilized a synthesis of the included studies in order to offer a comprehensive overview of the existing research pertaining to Impostor Syndrome within the field of nursing. Their paper has identified Impostor Syndrome as a prevalent and wide-ranging phenomenon within the nursing profession, with potential detrimental effects on both personal and professional domains. It has been found to have deleterious effects on mental well-being, job satisfaction, and professional advancement in various fields, including nursing (Grossman, 2022). Furthermore, Campos et al. (2022) investigated the prevalence of Impostor Syndrome among undergraduate medical students and its association with Burnout Syndrome (BS) and depression. Studies revealed that Impostor Syndrome is correlated with various factors, including marital status, family income, physical activity, and internet addiction (Campos et al., 2022; Shanafelt et al., 2022). Individuals with Impostor Syndrome were more likely to experience depression, burnout (Campos et al., 2022), anxiety (Pervez, 2021), and other mental health concerns. This underscores the importance of addressing Impostor Syndrome and its related mental health challenges within the medical student population. Some studies demonstrated that there is a negative correlation between the imposter phenomenon and general self-efficacy/self-esteem (Duncan et al., 2023; Pákozdy et al., 2023; Naser et al., 2022) in individuals of different genders (Bravata et al., 2019). Additionally, research by Fassl et al. (2020) on impostor syndrome highlights how negative feminine traits and participation in social comparison processes can increase risk to impostor feelings. This implies that individuals with lower self-confidence are more prone to experiencing the imposter phenomenon (Pákozdy et al., 2023; Naser et al., 2022; Cokley et al., 2018). In essence, individuals who encounter sensations of impostorism, characterized by doubt regarding their capabilities notwithstanding their accomplishments, are inclined to exhibit lower levels of self-esteem (Pákozdy et al., 2023).

Furthermore, in relation to Impostor Syndrome and its coping strategies, since most of the literature gaps specifically suggested research on effective interventions to mitigate the effects of impostor syndrome among individuals, APA recommends a multimodal approach to Impostor Syndrome coping (Palmer, 2021). Impostor Syndrome may reappear with professional transitions or social shifts, but with knowledge and coping methods, it may be managed. Institutions must create inclusive cultures and encourage open dialogues regarding Impostor Syndrome to help individuals grow and accept themselves (Eriksson et al., 2023; Awinashe et al., 2023; Bravata et al. 2019). There exists a negative correlation between higher levels of resilience and the probability of encountering Impostor Syndrome, as resiliency scores increase, Impostor Syndrome scores tend to decrease (Camara et al., 2022; Safaryazdi, 2015). The aforementioned discoveries provide insight into the potential protective role of resilience in reducing the psychological consequences of Impostor Syndrome. The findings on the study of Hill (2022), utilizing the Transactional Theory of Stress by Lazarus & Folkman (1984) and the Coping Circumplex Model of Stanisławski (2019) suggest that participants' conceptions of the Imposter Phenomenon affect their coping strategies and performance. People who choose to see it as a challenge are more likely to use proactive strategies for

dealing with it, which often leads to positive outcomes. If, however, they view it as a barrier or a threat, they will be more inclined to use avoidance coping mechanisms, which will have negative consequences (Hill, 2022). Thus, these findings have implications for interventions and support strategies aimed at enhancing the mental health of medical students (Camara et al., 2022; Campos et al., 2022; Safaryazdi, 2015), as well as potentially benefiting individuals in diverse educational and professional contexts (LaPalme et al., 2022).

The study by Pervez (2021) on impostor syndrome and social support suggests that there is a continuous inverse correlation between social support from supervisors and depressive and anxiety symptoms, suggesting that employees who felt they were being heard and guided by their superiors had fewer mental health problems overall. Surprisingly, the quantitative study of Pervez (2021) did not find a significant link between impostor syndrome and the different types of support individuals get from their social relationships. This discrepancy in findings implies that impostor syndrome may not be directly influenced by social support, but rather by other factors, such as the quality of interpersonal connections (Pervez, 2021). Consequently, according to Bravata et al. (2019), social support is strongly correlated with the absence of impostor symptoms. However, Bravata et al. (2019) shows that a supportive work or academic environment may help minimize impostor syndrome by decreasing the stigma associated with it and increasing the sense of belonging and acknowledgment among those who are having impostor symptoms. The proposed study shares several similarities with previous investigations on Impostor Syndrome (IS). Like some of the important literature cited such as the study of Awinashe et al., (2023), Eriksson et al. (2023), Shanafelt et al. (2022) and others, the study focuses on Impostor Syndrome as a psychological phenomenon and considered other psychological factors that influence the phenomenon. This aligns with previous research that has explored Impostor Syndrome in various professions, recognizing its prevalence and the potential harm it can cause to individuals' psychological well-being and professional lives (Campos et al., 2022). However, one of the key differences lies in the specific population under study. It seeks to examine the prevalence and impact of Impostor Syndrome, but with a specific lens on public elementary teachers as more in-depth studies were done mostly in medical allied fields (Awinashe et al., 2023; Campos et al., 2022; Shanafelt et al., 2022). This specificity allows for a more targeted examination of Impostor Syndrome within this particular group, acknowledging that the dynamics and stressors in an educational setting may differ from those in other professions.

Another distinctive feature of the proposed study is the inclusion of additional variables. While previous research has explored various aspects of Impostor Syndrome such as burnout (Campos et al., 2022; Shanafelt et al., 2022), anxiety (Pervez, 2021), suicidal ideation (Shanafelt et al., 2022), the proposed study introduces new factors for consideration, such as coping mechanisms and social support. These variables are selected based on their potential influence on the development and manifestation of Impostor Syndrome among public elementary teachers. Furthermore, this study took place within an educational context that also covers I/O psychology since public teachers are still employees that will be helpful in the field, which sets it apart from some previous investigations that have examined Impostor Syndrome in medical or corporate settings. This context introduces its own unique dynamics, such as the pressures and expectations placed on teachers in the elementary school environment. Therefore, this research not only contributes to the broader understanding of Impostor Syndrome but also sheds light on how it manifests within the specific realm of education and I/O Psychology, particularly among elementary school teachers. There is a growing body of research on impostor syndrome in many professional areas, such as healthcare and leadership roles; nevertheless, there is a noteworthy lack of studies that delve into the specific

experiences of public elementary school teachers with impostor syndrome. Teachers in public schools are a unique profession due to their focus on the development of young minds; the dynamics and challenges they face in the classroom are distinct from those in other fields. The lack of empirical studies examining the manifestations of impostor syndrome among public elementary school teachers, the factors influencing its emergence within this population, and the potential implications for their mental health and careers is the specific gap this study intended to address. By focusing on the role of social support as a predictor of impostor syndrome and the moderating factor of coping mechanisms, this study aims to contribute novel insights into how teacher acknowledgment within their workplace influences their coping strategies and their motivation for achievement in their own career. For instance, it seeks to investigate whether a lack of recognition or social support motivates teachers to employ competitive coping mechanisms that would certainly build an impostor ideation, ultimately affecting their performance and pursuit of excellence.

Conceptual Framework

Noskeu et al. (2021) utilized Goal Orientation theory to explain the impostor phenomenon by showing how an individual's achievement orientation and impostor feelings are similar. People with performance-oriented goals, whether to prove themselves or avoid failure, are more prone to see effort as a sign of inability and link one failure to their global self-concept. This is typical of impostor syndrome, where people doubt their abilities despite achievement (Clance & Imes, 1978; Kumar & Jagacinski, 2006; Noskeu et al., 2021). Both performance-oriented goal persons and impostors dread unfavorable evaluation, desire social acknowledgment, and preoccupy themselves with others' opinions, which strengthens the relationship between them (Noskeu et al., 2021). Individuals with proven objectives may exhibit impostor tendencies through perfectionism and over-preparation, while those with avoid goals may postpone and then prepare frantically (Kumar & Jagacinski, 2006; Noskeu et al., 2021). Learning-oriented people, on the other hand, are thought to be less prone to the impostor phenomenon since they want to learn and improve their talents rather than prove themselves (Noskeu et al., 2021). This provides the theoretical framework, with a particular emphasis on the potential effects of teachers' goal orientations (performance-oriented versus learning-oriented) on their own impostor syndrome.

In a study by Hill (2022), the Transactional Theory of Stress by Lazarus & Folkman (1984) was applied to understand how individuals with impostor syndrome cope. The study highlighted two key appraisal stages: primary appraisal, where individuals assess the relevance of stressors to their well-being, and secondary appraisal, where they evaluate their coping resources from psychological (resilience) and social resources (social support). Coping involved efforts to manage stressors that exceeded available resources. Two common coping categories were identified: problem-focused coping (actively addressing stressors) and emotion-focused coping (regulating emotional responses) (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Participants in the study categorized their impostor-like feelings as challenging, hindering, or threatening to their well-being. When seen as challenging, impostor experiences of the participants in the study of Hill (2022) were viewed as opportunities for personal growth and learning in perceived areas of weakness. Furthermore, another theory that would explain coping mechanism is the Coping Circumplex Model which was also utilized in the study of Hill (2022) that explains coping strategies in harnessing impostor syndrome by categorizing them into four subcategories: efficient coping, preoccupation with the problem, helplessness, and hedonic disengagement. In the context of impostor syndrome, the Coping Circumplex Model provides valuable insights into how individuals navigate their feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt. Efficient coping, characterized by actively addressing the stressors associated with impostor syndrome, involves

seeking mentorship, additional training, or professional development to enhance skills and competence. This approach views impostor feelings as challenges to be overcome and opportunities for personal growth. Preoccupation with the problem coping style sees individuals consumed by their perceived shortcomings and self-criticism. While it can heighten stress and anxiety, it may also serve as a motivator for constructive self-improvement. Helplessness coping mechanisms involve feeling overwhelmed by impostor feelings and believing there's little control over the situation. This phenomenon has the potential to result in feelings of resignation and diminished self-esteem, underscoring the importance of receiving support in order to restore a sense of agency and self-confidence. Furthermore, Hedonic disengagement coping, on the other hand, seeks distractions or pleasure-oriented activities to temporarily alleviate emotional distress. While providing short-term relief, it may not address the root causes of impostor feelings and could hinder personal growth.

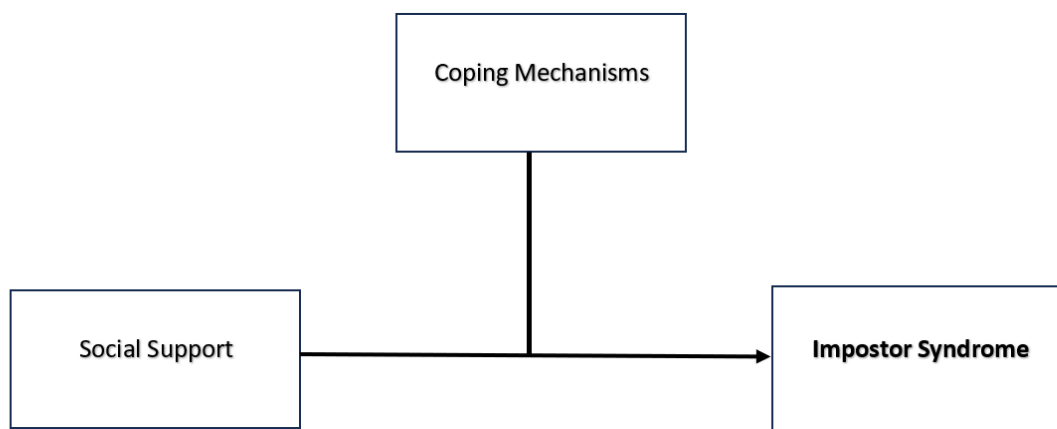


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Questions

This study aims to understand the prevalence of impostor syndrome among public school teachers and explore the relationship between social support, coping mechanisms, and impostor syndrome in the school environment.

i. Statement of the Problem

1. What is the profile of the respondents?

- i. Gender/Age
- ii. Grade Level taught
- iii. Teaching Position
- iv. Teaching Experience

2. Is there a significant relationship between the level of Social Support (IV) and the prevalence of Impostor Syndrome (DV) among public elementary teachers?

- i. Hypothesis (Alternative)
 - Higher levels of Social Support (IV) are expected to be significantly associated with a reduced occurrence of Impostor Syndrome (DV) among public elementary teachers.

3. Does the impact of Social Support on Impostor Syndrome vary based on the presence of Coping Mechanisms (moderator) among public school teachers?

- ii. Hypothesis (Alternative)

- The relationship between Social Support (IV) and Impostor Syndrome (DV) is moderated by the effect of Coping Mechanisms (IV Moderator).

4. Would there be significant interactive effects between Social Support (IV1) and Coping Mechanisms (IV2) in predicting Impostor Syndrome (DV) among public elementary teachers?

iii. Hypothesis (Alternative)

- There are significant interactive effects between Social Support (IV) and Coping Mechanisms (IV Moderator) in predicting Impostor Syndrome (DV) among public elementary teachers, indicating that the impact of Social Support on Impostor Syndrome is moderated by the presence of Coping Mechanisms.

Methodology

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative cross-sectional design to collect data from participants in a single session. Cross-sectional studies are effective for examining links between variables within a specific period (Setia, 2016). This methodology offers insights into impostor syndrome prevalence, coping mechanisms, and social support among public elementary school teachers.

Participant & Sampling

This study aims to explore impostor syndrome among public elementary school teachers at Pedro Guevarra Elementary School in Manila. Out of 179 teachers targeted for the study, 115 participated in data collection. Participant selection followed specified criteria outlined in Setia's (2016) cross-sectional study. Ethical guidelines were adhered to, with permission obtained from the school. Given teachers' professional nature, understanding impostor syndrome is crucial for developing interventions. The study employed a stratified random sampling technique, taking into account the characteristics of the target population. This approach involved dividing the population into distinct groups, or strata, based on factors such as years of teaching experience, grade level, and position (e.g., Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Master Teacher 1). By considering these factors, which may potentially impact experiences of impostor syndrome, the stratified random sampling method provided valuable information. Furthermore, after the strata were established, it was imperative to ascertain the exact representation of each stratum in relation to the overall population, such as the proportion of teaching experiences, grade level, and position (e.g., Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Master Teacher 1).

Instruments or Materials

In this study, three reliable and valid questionnaires were utilized to measure the three variables of interest, namely Impostor Syndrome, Social Support, and Coping Mechanism.

The Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS), created by Dr. Pauline Rose Clance in 1985, is a psychological assessment tool designed to measure the presence and intensity of impostor syndrome which consists of 20 items. Self-reported remarks on the Clance IP Scale reflect people's sentiments and experiences. The questionnaire includes statements that indicate impostor syndrome thoughts and feelings. Individuals assess each item on a 5 Likert scale from 1 to 5. The scale comprises "not at all true", "rarely", "sometimes", "often", and "very true". The Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale has a cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = .96$ (Karina et al., 2019).

The Filipino Coping Strategies scale, devised by John Robert C. Rilveria in 2018, explores how Filipinos handle life challenges. It integrates local resilience insights and international coping measures, identifying nine domains: cognitive reappraisal, seeking social support, problem-solving, religiosity, tolerance, emotional release, overactivity, relaxation/recreation, and substance use. With 37 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale, it demonstrates good validity and reliability ($\alpha = .716$).

The Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL) by Cohen & Hoberman (1983) which is a 40-item scale with its four domains; Tangible Support, Belonging Support, Self-esteem Support, and Appraisal Support. It is measured in a 4-point Likert scale but started from 0 - definitely false, 1 - probably false, 2 - probably true, and 3 - definitely true. This scale has good psychometric properties, meaning that it is both valid and reliable having a cronbach's alpha of $\alpha=0.95$ (Ghesquiere et al., 2017).

Procedures

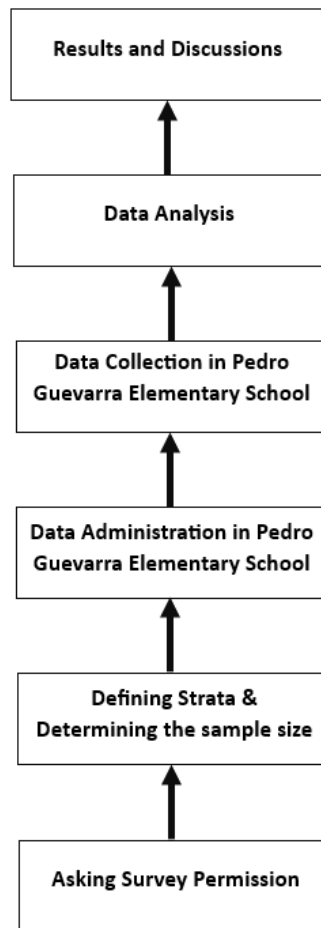


Figure 2. Data Procedures

In this section, the researcher gathered the data, wrote to the Division office and Pedro Guevara Elementary School principal to request survey approval. This stage was critical for determining the number of participants and stratifying by years of teaching, grade level, and position. Additionally, the collection of data adhered to ethical standards. Data were collected and evaluated before drawing conclusions.

Data Analysis

To effectively analyze the data collected in this cross-sectional research involving the variables of Social Support, Coping Mechanisms, and Impostor Syndrome, both descriptive and inferential analysis methods were employed. Descriptive statistics was utilized to discuss results of the demographics which were based on stratifying the sample.

To address the first research question, correlation analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between Social Support (IV) and Impostor Syndrome (DV) among public elementary teachers. Specifically, Pearson's correlation coefficient was employed to assess the strength and direction of this relationship. The correlation coefficient was interpreted to determine whether higher levels of social support were significantly associated with a lesser manifestation of impostor syndrome experiences.

For the second research question, the data were analyzed using multiple regression. In this analysis, it was examined how Social Support (IV) predicted Impostor Syndrome (DV) while considering Coping Mechanisms (IV Moderator) as a potential moderator. The analysis assessed whether there was a significant main effect of Social Support on Impostor Syndrome and whether the interaction between Social Support and Coping Mechanisms was significant in predicting the occurrence of feelings of Impostor Syndrome. This helped determine if the impact of Social Support on Impostor Syndrome varied based on the presence of Coping Mechanisms.

Lastly, for the third research question, a moderation analysis was conducted to examine the interactive effects between Social Support (IV1) and Coping Mechanisms (IV2) in predicting Impostor Syndrome (DV). This analysis helped assess whether Coping Mechanisms moderated the relationship between Social Support and Impostor Syndrome and whether this moderation was statistically significant.

Results and Discussion

This section discusses the results of the findings and statistical analysis done in this paper. The processes are shown along with their interpretations, and the discussion follows the order of the research questions addressed in this study.

RQ1. What is the profile of the respondents?

Table 1. Demographics

Category	Frequency	Percent
Male	11	9.57
Female	104	90.43

Table 1.1 Frequency Table: Gender

The tables indicate a significant gender disparity among the participants. The overwhelming majority, 90.43%, of the respondents are female, while only a small fraction, 9.57%, are male.

Category	Frequency	Percent
39-40 Years Old	15	13.04
34-38 Years Old	19	16.52
54-58 Years Old	18	15.65
44-48 Years Old	16	13.91
49-53 Years Old	15	13.04
29-33 Years Old	16	13.91

24-28 Years Old	7	6.09
59-63 Years Old	9	7.82

Table 1.2 Frequency table: Age

The presented table demonstrate ages based on distinct strata of teachers in Pedro Guevara Elementary School. Within the age strata, the highest frequency of participants falls into the "34-38 Years Old" category, with 19 teachers responded, constituting 16.52% of the total sample. In the slightly younger age bracket of "29-33 Years Old," there are 16 participants, making up 13.91% of the sample. Moving to the middle-aged categories, there are 15 participants in both the "39-40 Years Old" and "49-53 Years Old" groups, each representing 13.04% of the total. Among participants aged "44-48 Years Old," there are 16 individuals, contributing to 13.91% of the sample. For the older age categories, there are 18 participants in the "54-58 Years Old" group, comprising 15.65% of the sample, and 9 participants in the "59-63 Years Old" category, representing 7.82% of the total participants. This stratified breakdown offers a comprehensive view of age distribution among the participants, providing insights into the diverse age groups within the study sample.

Category	Frequency	Percent
16-20 Years	22	19.13
11-15 Years	17	14.9
31-35 Years	2	1.74
6-10 Years	23	20
26-30 Years	26	22.61
21-25 Years	13	11.30
1-5 Years	12	10.43

Table 1.3 Frequency table: Teaching Experience

The table categorizes participants based on their teaching experience, offering insights into the distribution across different strata. Among the participants with teaching experience ranging from "1-5 Years," there are 12 individuals, constituting 10.43% of the total sample. A total of 23 teachers has a "6-10 Years" of teaching experience, making up 20% of the sample. Teachers with "11-15 Years" of teaching experience comprise 17 individuals, representing 14.9% of the total. Moving to more experienced educators, those with "16-20 Years" of teaching experience include 22 participants, contributing to 19.13% of the sample. In the slightly higher bracket of "21-25 Years" of teaching experience, there are 13 participants, making up 11.3% of the sample. Participants with "26-30 Years" of teaching experience, the most seasoned educators in this study, comprise 26 individuals, representing 22.61% of the total. Interestingly, the category of "31-35 Years" includes only 2 participants, constituting 1.74% of the sample. This detailed breakdown illustrates the diverse teaching experience among participants, ranging from novice educators to those with extensive decades-long experience in the field.

Category	Frequency	Percent
Grade 6	23	20
Grade 1	22	19.13
Grade 3	26	22.61

Kinder	11	9.57
Grade 5	13	11.30
Grade 2	12	10.43
Grade 4	8	6.96

Table 1.4 Frequency table: Grade Level

The provided table organizes participants into different strata based on their respective grade levels. Among the participants, Grade 3 teachers has 26 individuals and making up 22.61% of the total sample. Following closely are Grade 6 teachers, constituting 20% of the sample, with 23 participants. Grade 1 teachers come next, comprising 22 individuals and representing 19.13% of the total. In the Grade 5 category, there are 13 participants, contributing to 11.30% of the sample. Grade 2 teachers account for 10.43% of the participants, with 12 individuals in this category. Kinder teachers, instructing the youngest students, include 11 participants, making up 9.57% of the sample. Lastly, Grade 4 teachers are represented by 8 participants, constituting 6.96% of the total. This stratified distribution offers a detailed perspective on the participants' grade levels, showcasing the diverse teaching roles within the study sample, ranging from early childhood educators to those teaching upper elementary grades.

Category	Frequency	Percent
Master Teacher 1	11	9.57
Teacher 2	36	31.30
Teacher 3	48	41.74
Teacher 1	16	13.91
Master Teacher 2	4	3.48

Table 1.5 Frequency table: Teaching Position

Among the participants, the largest group consists of "Teacher 3," with 48 individuals, representing 41.74% of the total sample. Following closely are "Teacher 2" professionals, constituting 31.30% of the sample, with 36 participants. "Teacher 1" educators come next, comprising 16 individuals and representing 13.91% of the total. The category of "Master Teacher 1" includes 11 participants, making up 9.57% of the sample. Lastly, "Master Teacher 2" professionals are represented by 4 participants, constituting 3.48% of the total. This detailed stratification highlights the diverse teaching positions within the study, ranging from entry-level teachers (Teacher 1) to experienced educators in higher positions (Teacher 3 and Master Teachers). These distinct strata offer valuable insights into the various roles and responsibilities held by the participants in the study, enriching the understanding of the professional landscape within the educational context.

	Mean	Std. Dev	Mim.	Max.	N
Gender	1.90	0.295	1	2	115
Age	4.03	2.13	1	8	115
Teaching Experience	3.88	1.991	1	7	115
Grade Level	3.32	1.88	1	7	115
Position	2.70	0.95	1	5	115

Table 1.6 Overall Descriptive Statistics

In table 1.6, the overall descriptive statistics for the participants in this study are presented in Table 1.6. In terms of gender representation, the mean gender value is 1.90, with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.295, indicating a consistent gender distribution within the sample. Regarding age, the participants

have an average age of 4.03, with a moderate standard deviation of 2.13, suggesting variability in ages across the sample. In the context of teaching experience, the mean value is 3.88 years, reflecting the average number of years of experience among the participants. The standard deviation of 1.991 indicates moderate variability in teaching experience within the group. When considering grade levels, the mean grade level is 3.32, likely representing a numerical coding system for specific grade levels. The standard deviation of 1.88 shows moderate variability in the grade levels of the participants. In terms of positions held, the participants have a mean position value of 2.70, suggesting a certain hierarchy or classification within the teaching positions. The standard deviation of 0.95 indicates relatively low variability in the positions occupied by the participants. These descriptive statistics provide valuable insights into the demographic composition of the sample, allowing for a better understanding of the participants' backgrounds and characteristics within the context of the study.

Univariate Tests of Significance for Impostor Syndrome (Impostor Syndrome)

Sigma-restricted parameterization

Effective hypothesis decomposition; Std. Error of Estimate: .2171362

Effect	SS	Degr. of Freedom	MS	F	P
Intercept	0.75	1	0.75	15.97*	0.000126*
Soc. Support	0.52	1	0.52	11.11	0.001222
Cop. Mech.	1.70	1	1.70	36.12	0.000000
Teach. Exp.	0.04	6	0.01	0.15	0.989456
Grade Lvl.	0.26	6	0.04	0.93	0.476549
Position	0.22	4	0.05	1.16	0.333830
Error	4.53	96	0.05		

Table 1.7 Univariate Tests of Significance

Table 1.7 presents univariate significance tests for Impostor Syndrome in a cross-sectional study. Using a sigma-restricted parameterization, the intercept term is significant ($F = 15.97$, $p = 0.000126$), indicating Impostor Syndrome even without other predictors. Coping Mechanism shows the strongest association ($F = 36.12$, $p = 0.000000$), followed by Social Support ($F = 11.11$, $p = 0.001222$). Teaching Experience, Grade Level, and Position are not significant (Teaching Experience: $F = 0.15$, $p = 0.989456$; Grade Level: $F = 0.93$, $p = 0.476549$; Position: $F = 1.16$, $p = 0.333830$). Residual variance is accounted for ($SS = 4.53$, $df = 96$). Coping Mechanism and Social Support are key factors associated with Impostor Syndrome, emphasizing the importance of addressing coping strategies and social support networks.

RQ2. Is there a significant relationship between the level of Social Support (IV) and the prevalence of Impostor Syndrome (DV) among public elementary teachers?

Variable	Means	Std.Dev	Social Support	Impostor Syndrome
Social Support	1.70	0.29	1.00	0.28
Impostor Syndrome	2.82	0.57	0.28*	1.00

Table 2. Correlation Analysis on Social Support and Impostor Syndrome

The table 2 presents the correlation between the variables, Social Support and Impostor Syndrome. The correlation coefficient between Social Support and Impostor Syndrome is 0.28, indicating a positive

relationship between the two variables. As Social Support scores increase, Impostor Syndrome scores tend to increase as well, albeit moderately. The correlation coefficient of 0.28 suggests a moderate correlation. It means that there is a discernible connection between Social Support and Impostor Syndrome among public elementary teachers. However, the strength of this relationship is not extremely high, indicating that other factors might also influence Impostor Syndrome in addition to Social Support. Thus, the relationship between the two variables is marked significant at $p < .05000$.

The findings contradict the study of Pervez's (2021), which did not discover a significant connection between impostor syndrome and the various forms of support individuals receive from their social networks. Meanwhile, the outcome revealed an unexpected positive correlation, contradicting the initial hypothesis that a lack of social support in the workplace would lead to higher levels of impostor syndrome among teachers. Surprisingly, in this study, as social support ratings went up, impostor syndrome scores also increased, though moderately. This finding did not align with Bravata et al.'s (2019) research, suggesting that a supportive work or academic setting could potentially mitigate impostor syndrome.

RQ3. Does the impact of Social Support on Impostor Syndrome vary based on the presence of Coping Mechanisms (moderator) among public school teachers?

N=115	b*	Std.Err of b*	b	Std. Err. Of b	t(112)	p-value
Intercept			0.52	0.49	1.07	0.28
S. Support	0.25	0.09	0.49	0.17	2.90	0.004
Coping M.	0.30	0.09	0.55	0.16	3.51	0.0006

Note: $R = .41158203$ $R^2 = .16939976$ $Adjusted R^2 = .15456762$

$F(2,112) = 11.421$ $p < .00003$ *Std. Error of estimate:* .52121

Table 3. Regression Analysis

In table 3, the data were analyzed by multiple regression, using the values of Social Support (X1) and Coping Mechanisms (X2) as regressors or predictors. The regression was a good fit ($R^2_{adj} = 15.46\%$), and the overall relationship was significant ($F(2,112) = 11.421$, $p < 0.00003$). With other variables held constant, the values of Social Support (X1) and Coping Mechanisms (X2) are positively related to Impostor Syndrome (Y). The likelihood of experiencing Impostor Syndrome increases by 0.49 for every unit increase in Social Support ($\beta = 0.49$, $p = 0.004$) and by 0.55 for every unit increase in Coping Mechanisms ($\beta = 0.55$, $p = 0.0006$). These results suggest that higher levels of both Social Support and Coping Mechanisms are associated with an increased likelihood of experiencing Impostor Syndrome among public school teachers.

The results align with previous literature (Pervez, 2021; Bravata et al., 2019) indicating a complex relationship between social support and impostor syndrome. Contrary to expectations, the positive correlation between Social Support and Impostor Syndrome contradicts the conventional hypothesis that higher social support mitigates impostor feelings. This echoes Pervez's (2021) findings, suggesting that the link between social support and impostor syndrome might be more intricate than previously assumed. Meanwhile, the study's incorporation of Coping Mechanisms as a variable sheds light on a previously underexplored area. This addition is in line with the literature (Hill, 2022) emphasizing the significance of coping strategies in dealing with impostor feelings. The positive relationship between Coping Mechanisms and Impostor Syndrome implies that teachers employing coping strategies might still experience impostor thoughts. This finding emphasizes the complexity of impostor syndrome and suggests

that coping mechanisms, while essential, might not completely shield individuals from such feelings of impostor syndrome.

RQ4. Would there be significant interactive effects between Social Support (IV1) and Coping Mechanisms (IV2) in predicting Impostor Syndrome (DV) among public elementary teachers?

R= .10996292 R²= .01209184 Adjusted R²= .00334929

F(1,113)=1.3831 p<.24205 Std.Error of estimate: .56591

N=115	b*	Std.Err of b*	b	Std. Err. Of b	t(113)	p-value
Intercept			2.79	0.06	48.10	0.0000
SSxCM	0.11	0.09	0.03	0.02	1.18	0.24

Table 4. Examining the interactive effect of Social Support and Coping Mechanism to Impostor Syndrome

Table 4 presents the data from the moderation analysis that were examined to understand the interactive effects between Social Support (IV1) and Coping Mechanisms (IV2) in predicting Impostor Syndrome (DV) among public elementary teachers. The regression model showed limited explanatory power with an R² of 1.21%, and the overall relationship was not significant (F(1,113) = 1.3831, p = 0.24205). The interaction term (Social Support and Coping Mechanism) was not significant ($\beta = 0.03$, p = 0.24), indicating that the relationship between Social Support and Impostor Syndrome is not significantly influenced by the presence of Coping Mechanisms among these teachers. The results suggest that the impact of Social Support on Impostor Syndrome does not vary significantly based on the level of Coping Mechanisms in this sample.

The results from Table 4, indicating a non-significant interaction between Social Support and Coping Mechanisms, challenge the expectation that coping mechanisms might buffer the relationship between social support and impostor syndrome among public elementary teachers. This finding contrasts with previous literature (Hill, 2022) suggesting that proactive coping strategies could positively influence the experience of impostor syndrome. While coping mechanisms are recognized as essential strategies for managing stress, their buffering effect on the relationship between social support and impostor syndrome may not be straightforward for teachers. This complexity aligns with the multifaceted nature of impostor syndrome (Clance & Imes, 1978), which can be influenced by various internal and external factors, making it challenging to pinpoint a singular protective mechanism.

The inconclusive results highlight the need for tailored support interventions in the teaching profession. Acknowledging that coping mechanisms alone may not fully mitigate the impact of limited social support on impostor feelings is crucial. Interventions should focus on enhancing both coping strategies and social support networks simultaneously, recognizing that these factors might interact in nuanced ways. This aligns with Palmer's (2021) recommendation for a multimodal approach, emphasizing the importance of addressing impostor syndrome from multiple angles.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The study on Impostor Syndrome (IS) among public elementary school teachers at Pedro Guevara Elementary School delved into the nuances of teachers' experiences, illuminating the psychological complexities they faced in the distinct contexts of education and the workplace. Using stratified sampling, the study investigated this under-researched group, filling a major gap in the existing literature.

Of the overall sample of 179 teachers, 64.25% (115) took part in the survey. There was a relatively even number of male and female participants, with a mean gender value of 1.90 and a small standard deviation of 0.295. There was a wide range of ages represented in the sample, with an average age of 4.03 and a considerable standard deviation of 2.13 years. Participants' years of teaching experience ranged from 1 to 7, with a mean of 3.88 and a standard deviation of 1.991, indicating considerable variability. The teachers' mean grade level was 3.32 and their standard deviation was 1.88, indicating that they came from a wide range of grade levels. Participants' mean position values were 2.70 and 0.95, respectively, suggesting some sort of teaching position within the field of teaching, and that participants' actual positions were rather stable across the sample. For the sake of the future analyses and interpretations within the study, these descriptive statistics provide a clear image of the varied backgrounds and characteristics of the participants.

In their pursuit to test the moderating factor of coping mechanisms on the relationship between social support and impostor syndrome, the researcher utilized various psychological theories. Noskeau et al.'s (2021) Goal Orientation theory provided a foundational understanding by categorizing individuals into performance-oriented and learning-oriented goal orientations. Additionally, Hill's (2022) application of the Transactional Theory of Stress by Lazarus & Folkman (1984) delved into coping mechanisms employed by individuals with impostor syndrome. The Coping Circumplex Model by Stanisławski (2019) further refined coping strategies, categorizing them into efficient coping, preoccupation with the problem, helplessness, and hedonic disengagement. These theories collectively provided a nuanced perspective, enabling the study to explore how teachers' goal orientations, appraisal processes, and coping strategies intersected with impostor syndrome.

While previous studies (Awinashe et al., 2023; Campos et al., 2022; Shanafelt et al., 2022) had explored impostor syndrome in various professions, this research specifically delved into the experiences of teachers. The research revealed that IS was indeed prevalent among public elementary school teachers, aligning with prior studies conducted in different professional domains (Clance & Imes, 1978; Grossman, 2022; Campos et al., 2022; Bravata et al., 2019). Despite the absence of a direct link between social support and IS in some cases (Pervez, 2021), the study demonstrated the substantial impact of social acknowledgment and recognition within the workplace. The presence of coping mechanisms was found to moderate the relationship between social support and IS, underscoring the intricate interplay between psychological factors (Hill, 2022). The findings highlighted that the pressures and challenges faced by teachers, despite having good social support and coping mechanisms, the findings still indicated that teachers have high tendency to experience impostor syndrome. This emphasized the need for tailored interventions within the educational and industrial context to address the specific stressors faced by teachers.

Recommendations

Future research on impostor syndrome among teachers, building upon the findings of this study, should consider the moderating factors and social support variables as integral components of the investigation. Specifically, researchers should delve deeper into the nuanced coping strategies employed by teachers and how they interact with social support to influence impostor syndrome. By exploring the various coping mechanisms adopted by teachers and the role they play in mediating or exacerbating impostor syndrome, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of these dynamics. Additionally, the research should investigate how teachers' goal orientations, whether performance-oriented or learning-

oriented, impact their experience of impostor syndrome, further building upon Noskeau et al.'s (2021) Goal Orientation theory. This can offer insights into whether altering teachers' goal orientations can mitigate impostor syndrome, paving the way for interventions tailored to address this phenomenon among educators. It is also recommended for future studies to consider different predictors of impostor syndrome aside from the independent variables of this study. Explore the impact of the organizational culture, including factors like recognition, appreciation of diversity, and encouragement of open communication, on impostor syndrome. Previous studies (Grossman, 2022) have highlighted the importance of workplace environments in influencing impostor feelings. Thus, future researchers should explore the relationship between self-efficacy, which refers to individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to achieve specific goals, and impostor syndrome (Duncan et al., 2023; Pákozdy et al., 2023; Naser et al., 2022). Moreover, it is also important to examine the level of job autonomy of teachers as similar findings suggests that higher job autonomy might experience lower impostor feelings due to increased confidence in their abilities (Eriksson et al., 2023).

For future researchers interested in this topic, the study provides a valuable foundation. By refining and expanding on these findings, researchers can offer more precise interventions and strategies to address impostor syndrome among teachers. Future research should also explore the long-term effects of these interventions and their impact on teachers' professional growth and job satisfaction.

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