

## The Relationship Between Impostor Syndrome and Career Anxiety in Yogyakarta Students

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** career anxiety, impostor syndrome, students.

Anxiety is something that is susceptible to everyone, including someone who has just entered the work environment to continue their career. Impostor syndrome is someone who feels incapable if not for other people, meaning that he does not believe in himself and does not understand his own abilities. This study aims to determine whether there is a relationship between impostor syndrome and career anxiety in Yogyakarta students. The method in this study uses two Likert scales, namely: the CIPS (Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale) scale and the Career Anxiety Scale (CAS). The subjects of this study were Yogyakarta students aged 20-24 years, the sample used a purposive sampling technique totaling 115 respondents. Based on the results of the study conducted using the Pearson product moment correlation technique, it showed a significance figure of  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), this indicates a significant relationship between the impostor syndrome variable and career anxiety in students in Yogyakarta.



### Introduction

Education is something that is very much needed by every individual. Students are individuals who have an important role as agents of change for the order of life that is realistically and logically accepted by society. Students experience more challenges and demands when in higher education than at the previous level of education. However, this is not a barrier for some students to obtain good achievements during their study period. Students will try harder to obtain achievements both in terms of academics and non-academics and achieve the desired goals (Zarnaghash, Mirderikvand, Sevahpandi, Ali., 2015).

Planning and changes in learning methods make students have to adapt again, this causes many students to start worrying and worrying about the fate of their future careers. Individuals who cannot make their career plans will have feelings of anxiety, making individuals unable to make further decisions and being in uncertain situations, these anxiety factors are due to a lack of self-understanding, a lack of understanding of the workplace, a lack of confidence in their abilities, and psychological conflicts (Jannah &

Cahyawulan, 2023). During this period, they will generally experience worry, confusion and doubt about the direction of their life so that it will have an impact on their development in responding to and facing various demands within and outside themselves (Akhnaf, Putri, Vaca, Hidayah, Zahra, Rusdi., 2022).

Anxiety is something experienced by everyone, including someone who has just entered the work environment to continue his career. (Miller & Rottinghaus, 2014) defines anxiety as a reaction related to feelings of uncertainty and helplessness. Career anxiety is said to be like an uncomfortable feeling related to failure in the field of education or unemployment which has to do with the career development process (Vignoli, 2015).

Career is one of the aspects in life that is normal and even adaptive to be a little worried. Anxiety can be a benefit if it encourages us to be motivated, for example, studying to face exams, but anxiety can be abnormal if its capacity exceeds the proportion of threats obtained, in the sense of extreme anxiety and even interferes with daily activities, when a person has confidence that he is not able to face the challenges that occur in his life, then the person will feel anxiety that becomes more and more towards challenges in his life (Vignoli, 2015).

This phenomenon explains that anxiety has been increasingly felt by students because they are thinking about their future careers. Career anxiety can be caused by new things such as in employment, where job opportunities are unpredictable, fear of failure in career and difficulty making decisions about one's own career in the future. This career anxiety is a reality, where individuals are approached with worries about themselves, and the condition of individuals must choose a career that is suitable for the continuation of life in the future (Putri & Yusuf, 2021).

The researcher conducted a preliminary study through Video Call WhatsApp on 2 respondents and the result of the interview was that the respondents felt that they doubted their own abilities and knowledge. He is not confident in determining his career because of his lack of understanding of his own abilities, he feels that he has no intelligence or ability if it were not for his friends, and there is a demand from within him to be a perfectionist. Perfectionist thinking and anxiety about poor results elicit responses such as postponing work that should be done. Because the respondent feels that he has to complete a perfect task so that he will take a long time to complete a certain task. When respondents do not reach their goal, they will be disappointed and see it as a big failure. This phenomenon is an external factor called impostor syndrome.

Impostor syndrome can cause a negative impact on a person's career because they spend more time proving their competencies which can be exhausting and counterproductive. The phenomenon of impostor syndrome also has a negative impact that may occur such as losing career opportunities because they continuously feel unworthy even though they have sufficient competence. Impostor syndrome will be afraid of new challenges such as having a new job and new responsibilities because it will raise high expectations and create a feeling of fear of not being able to meet his own

expectations (Bravata, Watts, Keefer, Dhan, Taylor, Clark, Nelson, Ph,Hagg, Heather., 2020).

Individuals with Impostor Syndrome feel afraid of responsibility and expectations for their success, feel unworthy of praise and find it difficult to accept failure and criticism. Impostor syndrome has many significant implications for education (Qureshi, Taj, Latif., 2017).

Impostor syndrome is never ready to face the next challenge and feels like it has to be extraordinary with every new challenge it faces. Impostor syndrome is a phenomenon that occurs in a person whose achievements or achievements they have obtained are a matter of luck, they feel that they have deceived others regarding their abilities or intelligence. Impostor syndrome refers to an individual who succeeds according to external standards but has the illusion of personal incompetence (Patzak, Kollmayer, Schober, Lundy, James., 2017). A person with this phenomenon will feel persistent doubt about his ability to achieve achievements and the involvement to think about his career (Ménard & Chittle, 2023).

The characteristics of an Impostor are not able to attribute success to his own abilities but due to factors outside of him. They consider themselves less competent and less intelligent. Impostors often find it difficult to accept people's praise because the impression displayed is not in accordance with their identity so they feel that they have deceived others. Maintaining this impression, an impostor tends to work harder than others, but feels anxious for fear that others will find out his true abilities (Nurhikma & Nuqul, 2021). Research conducted by Rohmadani & Winarsih (2019) showed that impostor syndrome affected anxiety by 17.5% by involving 82 students from the psychology study program and the anesthesiology nursing study program. Research conducted by Ali, et al., (2015) also showed that 39.35% of new students were classified as impostors and 23.15% of new students experienced academic anxiety.

Based on the explanation in the background above, individuals will feel anxious if they do not have the ability and confidence, the factor of career anxiety that occurs in a person is due to the demands that exist in themselves. The factors that cause career anxiety are self-disbelief, not understanding the world of work, limited job vacancies, Impostor Syndrome is someone who feels that he is incapable if not because of others, which means that he does not believe in himself and does not understand his own abilities. Therefore, researchers are interested in researching whether there is a relationship between impostor syndrome and career anxiety in students in Yogyakarta.

## **Method**

This study uses a quantitative approach with the independent variable being impostor syndrome and the dependent variable being career anxiety. The population in this study is Yogyakarta students aged 20-24 years. The sampling technique used is nonprobability sampling, namely purposive sampling. The determination of the sample was carried out using the Lemeshow formula and the minimum number of samples

needed in this study was 115 respondents. The sample to be selected in this study must meet criteria such as: Active students in Yogyakarta, aged 20-24 years, male and female. The measuring tools used in this study used the Impostor Syndrome scale (CIPS) and the career anxiety scale (CAS) using the Likert scale model, with answer responses from 1 (strongly inappropriate) to 4 (very appropriate). The impostor syndrome scale is made based on three aspects, including Fake, Luck, Discount (Chrisman, et al. 1995). The Career Anxiety Scale is made based on four aspects, including personal ability, rational beliefs about work, professional training and education, and work environment (Tsai, et al. 2017).

The data analysis test used in this study was carried out using the Product Moment method using SPSS 24 for Windows. The first test carried out was a validity test, the questions presented in the questionnaire were declared valid. Next, measurements were made on variables using a reliability test. In the standard reliability test, the value used is the value of alpha Cronbach whose minimum value is 0.6. The alpha value of Cronbach of the Impostor Syndrome is 0.884 with the number of items 13 out of 21. For the results of career anxiety, Cronbach's alpha value was obtained with a result of 0.899gf with a total of 25 items out of 25. These results show that the research variables are declared reliable.

## Results and Discussion

The subject of this study is university students in Yogyakarta. The number of respondents participating in this study amounted to 115 subjects. The description of the subject is as follows:

**Table 1**  
**Subject Description**

Subject Description		Frequency	Percentage	sum
Age	20-21	65	65.00%	100
	22-24	35	35.00%	
Gender	Man	35	35.00%	100
	Woman	65	65.00%	

Based on the data in the table above, it can be seen that the majority of subjects are in the age range between 20-21 years (65.00%). The most subjects were based on gender, namely female (65.00%).

The description of the research data was obtained through categorization of variables using hypothetical statistics obtained based on the compiled scale. The categories of career anxiety scores can be seen in the following table:

**Table 2**  
**Categorization of Career Anxiety**

Category	Interval score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	$X < 26$	15	13.0%
Keep	$27 \leq x < 46$	79	68.7%
Tall	$X \geq 47$	21	18.3%
<b>Sum</b>		<b>115</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the data in the table above, it can be seen that out of 115 subjects, there are 15 people (13.0%) who have a low level of career anxiety, 81 people (70.5%) who are in the medium category, and 19 people (16.5%) who are in the high category. Based on the results of the categorization, the majority of subjects had a level of career anxiety that was classified as "moderate". The *Impostor Syndrome score categories* can be seen in the following table:

**Table 3**  
**Categorization of Impostor Syndrome**

Category	Interval score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	$X < 33$	15	13.0%
Keep	$34 \leq x < 51$	81	70.5%
Tall	$X \geq 52$	19	16.5%
<b>Sum</b>		<b>115</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the data in the table above, it can be seen that out of 115 subjects, there are 15 people (13.0%) who have Impostor Syndrome levels that are in the low category, 81 people (70.5%) who are in the medium category, and 19 people (16.5%) who are in the high category. Based on the results of the categorization, the majority of subjects had Impostor Syndrome which was classified as "moderate".

The assumption test used in this study consists of a normality test and a linearity test. The normality test was tested using the Kolmogorov Smirnov One-Sample. It is known that the variables of impostor syndrome and career anxiety show a value of 200 with ( $p > 0.05$ ) which means that the data of impostor syndrome and career anxiety are normally distributed. Meanwhile, the linearity test obtained a p-value of 0.00 with a significance value of ( $p > 0.05$ ) which means that the impostor syndrome variable does not have a linear relationship with career anxiety.

After testing the assumptions, then a hypothesis test is carried out using product moments, which can be seen in the following table:

**Table 4**  
**Hypothesis Test Results**

Variable	Pearson Correlation	Sig	Information
Impostor Syndrome	.769**	.000	Significant

Career Anxiety	.769**	.000	Significant
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The results of the data analysis in the table above show that the value of the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) is .769 with a significance level ( $p$ ) of 0.000. The hypothesis criteria used are that if the significance value is below 0.005,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted. A significance value of  $p$  0.000 indicates that there is a relationship between independent variables (impostor syndrome) and dependent (career anxiety). The value of the correlation coefficient  $r = .769$  indicates that the level of correlation/relationship between independent variables (impostor syndrome) and dependent (career anxiety) is very strong. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between impostor syndrome and career anxiety of students in Yogyakarta.

Based on the results of this study revealing that there is a relationship between impostor syndrome and career anxiety in Yogyakarta students, Research conducted by setiani (2022) shows that impostor syndrome is experienced by many new students involving 57 students from the Faculty of Medicine, Upn Veteran Jakarta, showing that impostor syndrome is vulnerable to being experienced by students with a result of (57.6%). Research conducted by Rohmadani & Winarsih (2019) showed that impostor syndrome affected anxiety by 17.5% by involving 82 students from the psychology study program and the anesthesiology nursing study program.

Based on one of the factors that affect career anxiety is irrational thoughts that include failure, namely the assumption from within a person that something bad will happen to him. Individuals experience anxiety and feelings of inadequacy and are unable to overcome problems (Ghufron, 2010). The feeling of an individual's inability to solve the problem arises due to doubts about their abilities and feelings of inadequacy and unworthiness towards the stages of development towards their own career. Aspects of impostor syndrome that can affect a person's career anxiety include, fake, which is an individual's doubts about themselves. This aspect also shows the individual's concern for intelligence and abilities that are actually known to others. Luck is an aspect that refers to the misattribution of success. Discount is an impostor who tends to downplay the meaning of the success achieved and reject praise from others for their success caused by the ability of Chrisman, et al. (1995).

Difficulties in the process of leading to a career can cause anxiety which will eventually lead to despair. Feelings of anxiety and hopelessness are caused by a lack of confidence in oneself (Putro, 2018). Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the higher a person's impostor syndrome, the higher the career anxiety experienced by a person, and vice versa, if the lower a person's impostor syndrome, the lower the career anxiety experienced by a person.

## Conclusion

The results of the hypothesis test that have been carried out can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between Impostor Syndrome and career anxiety of

Yogyakarta students. Impostor Syndrome and Career Anxiety are in the moderate category, which are 70.5% and 68.7%. Individuals who have high impostor syndrome tend to have career anxiety as well, which is influenced by several factors such as personal ability, rational beliefs about work, professional education, and work environment.

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