**An Investigation of the Impact of Parental Academic Success on the Experience of Impostor Phenomenon**

Impostor Phenomenon was first described as such in the study of high achieving women. It was characterised at this time as the “internal experience of intellectual phonies”, enduring a persistent belief that despite demonstrable success their intelligence is simply an act which has fooled those around them. Students who experience Impostor Phenomenon see their longer-term career outcomes suffer in comparison to others, as they tend to become disengaged from their studies as a result of the belief that they are not skilled enough. Impostor Phenomenon further impacts students’ wellbeing and career success, predicting reduced future intentions, career planning activity, and ambition, as well as increasing their likelihood to endure mental illness.

Several demographic factors including gender, age, and ethnicity return conflicting evidence regarding the causality of Impostor symptoms in previous research, however it is supported among current literature that first-generation student status is a consistent predictor of the experience.

Limited research has been conducted on the experience of Impostor Phenomenon in UK-based higher education students, with the study of first-generation students further limited. Moreover, while first-generation student status has been evidenced as a primary predictor of Impostor Phenomenon in non-UK populations, findings regarding the impact of the level of parental academic success on the severity of Impostor Phenomenon are severely lacking. Classic studies posit parental academic success to be a significant factor in the experience of Impostor Phenomenon, however only one study has examined this since the turn of the century and presents limitations in its approach to the subject. As such, it is crucial that the relationship between parental academic success and Impostor Phenomenon is retested, to determine whether parental academic success is a significant factor in Impostor Phenomenon, and thus to inform the development of intervention techniques and support for those at the highest risk of developing Impostor Phenomenon.

It is hypothesised that the level of education undertaken by an individual’s parents will be negatively correlated with Impostor Phenomenon, and therefore a lower parental education score will predict higher levels of Impostor Phenomenon in participants.

The subject pool for the current study consists of 86 higher education students who are currently studying in the United Kingdom. Participants filled out questionnaires measuring their demographic information, Impostor Phenomenon score, and the highest level of education undertaken by their parents. This data was assessed for a correlational relationship, however, contrary to the study’s hypothesis, no significant relationship between the factors was identified. Further analysis tested for relationships between Impostor Scores and other demographic factors but revealed further non-significant outcomes. Ultimately, neither parental academic success nor further demographic characteristics can be considered a sole predictor for the experience of Impostor Phenomenon in higher education student.

It is recommended that future research in this field continues to study the impact of parents on the extent to which their children experience Impostor Phenomenon. Studies may employ a mixed-methods approach to gain greater insight into the parent/child relationship, or assess further variables such as parenting style or socioeconomic background.