



## Finding Your Worth: Building Self-Confidence Amidst Imposter Syndrome Among College Students

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article History:</b> Submitted/Received March 01, 2025 First Revised April 06, 2025 Accepted May 21, 2025 First Available online June 06, 2025 Publication Date June 11, 2025</p> <p><b>Keyword:</b> <b>Imposter Syndrome,</b> <b>Self-Confidence,</b> <b>Self-Worthiness</b></p>	<p><i>This article examines the phenomenon of Imposter Syndrome, a common problem among students, where individuals often feel left behind despite having achieved significant accomplishments. This condition often leads to students lacking self-confidence and feeling unable to maintain competence in a university environment that is academically rigorous and subject to assessment. This research aims to identify effective strategies for building self-confidence and finding self-worth amidst academic and social challenges. In such situations, Imposter Syndrome makes students feel anxious and worried, even tending to avoid receiving praise due to feelings of undeservingness. The analysis shows that practices such as self-reflection, social support, and skill development can mitigate the impact of Imposter Syndrome.</i></p> <p>© 2025</p>

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamic world of college often presents challenges for students adapting to the changes. The academic environment at universities, filled with competition and rigorous assessments, has become a breeding ground for Imposter Syndrome (IS). According to Clance and Imes (1978) in research conducted by Anyelir and Sahrani (2024), IS is an internal experience in which individuals feel worthless or incapable, despite having potential and having achieved success. Research shows that students experiencing IS are generally characterized by persistent anxiety, low self-esteem, and a conflict between feelings of superiority and inferiority (Safaryazdi, 2014).

In an academic context, IS can hinder students' academic capabilities and potentially trigger larger problems. This phenomenon highlights the importance of individual differences in facing challenges. Amelia et al. (2014) explain that each individual has varying degrees of how they respond to life's problems or challenges. This suggests that students with strong academic resilience tend to be able to overcome various academic difficulties well (Harahap et al., 2020). Student life is always closely linked to pressure, both academically and socially. This also demands students to be responsive and adapt quickly even under pressure. It's undeniable that Imposter Syndrome often occurs in students, especially when they lack adequate problem-solving skills. In reality, college requires not only intellectual intelligence but also emotional intelligence. This psychological phenomenon occurs when individuals with good academic achievements feel unworthy of their achievements, which can reduce their self-confidence and sense of worthiness as students.

Talking about Imposter Syndrome is always closely related to self-worth. Ribaah and Yullah (2024) state that self-worth is a form of self-appreciation that recognizes one's worth. Self-worth is the antidote to Imposter Syndrome (IS). Unlike IS, which encourages the belief that success is merely a matter of chance, a sense of worth validates that an individual truly deserves success and goodness. Thus, self-worth becomes stable, no longer fluctuating based on test results or external validation, thus preventing extreme mood swings.

## 2. METHODS

This study adopted a descriptive quantitative bibliometric analysis method to map the development and trends of research related to Imposter Syndrome, Self-Eligibility, and Self-Confidence. Primary data was collected from the Google Scholar database using Publish or Perish (PoP) software. The data search was conducted using the primary keywords "Imposter Syndrome," "Self-Eligibility," and "Self-Confidence" covering publication periods from 2015 to 2025. The initial search yielded approximately 300 to 500 documents, which were then exported in RIS format for further processing. The data was then analyzed and visualized using VOSviewer. The VOSviewer analysis focused on mapping keyword co-occurrence to identify thematic clusters (research subfields), as well as co-citation and co-authorship analysis to visualize the intellectual structure and collaborative networks among researchers on the topic. The results of this analysis are then presented descriptively to formulate current research trends and potential future research gaps.

In this study, researchers also used qualitative analysis methods to identify and understand the phenomenon of Imposter Syndrome among college students. Data obtained from various sources, such as journal articles, books, and previous research, will be analyzed to provide a more comprehensive picture of the impact of IS on students' self-confidence and self-worth. The collected data will be processed to produce relevant findings that can be used as a reference in developing intervention strategies for students experiencing IS.

The data was then processed and visualized using VOSviewer, resulting in three main images that formed the basis of the analysis. The visualizations used include:

- 1) Keyword co-occurrence map to identify main thematic clusters,





If we look at the literature, we see that IS is most frequently studied by students and medical and educational professionals, with key terms like "medical student," "resident," and "female/women." This suggests that medical students and women (the blue-green cluster toward "student/resident/self-efficacy/depression") are the primary subjects of research. Conversely, the purple and orange clusters, consisting of words like "minority," "diversity," "color," and "failure," indicate that social identity, diversity, and minority status are also frequently associated with the emergence of impostor feelings, especially in highly competitive work or academic environments.

Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between IS and "depression," "anxiety," "stress," and "low self-esteem." This aligns with the findings of numerous studies that have found high IS in nursing or medical students, as well as a strong correlation between IS and negative psychological states. These results suggest that impostor syndrome is a systemic phenomenon in academia and medicine, particularly among women and minorities. It impacts a person's self-efficacy, mental health, and psychological well-being.

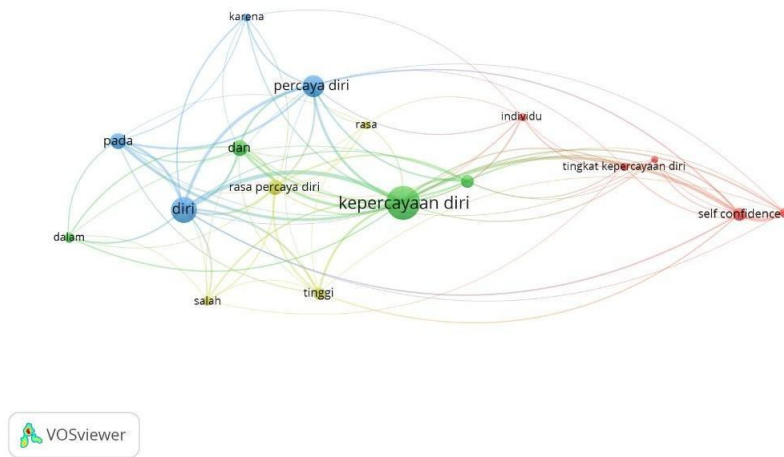


Figure 3. Network map visualization of research developments around Self-Confidence.

VOSviewer created a word map showing that the literature focuses heavily on the key term "self-confidence." The green cluster indicates "self-confidence/self-confidence/self-confidence level," the blue cluster indicates "self/personal self-confidence/individual contextualization," and the yellow-green cluster and transition colors indicate literature addressing the issue of self-confidence. This graph demonstrates that the literature on self-confidence is multifaceted, including definitions and basic concepts, measurements, and metrics.

Furthermore, terms such as self, self-confidence, self-confidence, self-confidence, and high/low frequently appear together, indicating that self-confidence research often integrates elements of personal identity, self-confidence strength, and subjective perception.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

According to the article, one of the main psychological factors contributing to academic anxiety in students, particularly new students adapting to the university environment, is Imposter Syndrome. Many students experience self-doubt due to the competitive university climate, despite their actual potential and academic achievements. A review of various studies shows that Imposter Syndrome can affect anyone, with no significant differences based on gender or field of study. This condition triggers academic anxiety because individuals fear that failure will reveal their perceived inadequacies.

Therefore, psychological interventions should not only focus on increasing self-confidence but also emphasize strengthening self-worth, or an individual's belief in their abilities and worth. To break the cycle of self-doubt and academic anxiety, strategies that can be implemented include building self-worth through developing self-empathy, reinterpreting failure, and providing support from their environment. Therefore, educational institutions need to implement comprehensive prevention and psychological support programs to help students achieve psychological stability, academic resilience, and the belief that they are worthy of success.

#### 5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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#### 6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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