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Research Article

Self-Efficacy and Impostor Syndrome Among Selected Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students of Cavite State University - Main Campus

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ABSTRACT

Nursing is a psychologically and emotionally stressful profession where students have to reconcile the demands of school, clinical practice, and strength. This paper has discussed the connection between self-efficacy and impostor syndrome among students in a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Cavite State University – Main Campus and whether there exists a sex difference in the variables. A total of 258 officially enrolled third- and fourth-year students were identified as having participated in the study in Academic Year 2024-2025 using total enumeration and purposive convenience sampling within the study with the descriptive comparative-correlational design. Frequency and percentage distributions, median, standard deviation, Mann-Whitney U test, Spearman rho and Fisher Z test were used as statistical analyses. Findings showed that the impostor feelings were common among both male and female students with average scores of 67.61 and 68.41 respectively which was categorized as frequent impostorism. Nonetheless, the level of self-efficacy in both groups was high with the mean scores of 30.98 and 29.66. There was no notable difference between the sexes in impostor syndrome ($t = 0.392$, $p = 0.696$), whereas, there was a notable difference in self-efficacy ($U = -2.229$, $p = 0.026$) with males having more confidence. The combination of intense impostor experiences and strong self-efficacy points has complex preparation in nursing education students believe they are competent but cannot learn to have their victory. These results indicate that self-efficacy can serve as an armor but a weak one against self-doubt. The research suggests mentorship and reflective interventions normalizing the state of self-doubt and reinforcing the authentic self-recognition. An intervention module was created to assist the nursing students cope with impostor thoughts and develop confidence in their academic development.

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Background

Nursing is generally known to be an educational challenge and an emotional strain. Besides the academic demands and clinical duties, nursing students are subjected to unending pressure to perform to high standards which may affect their perception of their potential and self-esteem. The significance of such perceptions lies in the fact that they influence the academic achievement, emotional condition, and stress coping abilities of students.

In this regard, two psychological constructs can be mentioned, namely impostor syndrome and self-efficacy. The first to investigate the concept of impostor syndrome were Clance and Imes in 1978, who described it as continuous self-doubt and the feeling that the person is not good enough to be successful and yet has the objective evidence of competence. It is not a clinical condition but is viewed as a psychological experience, which is marked by the fear of failure and the feeling of perceived fraudulence (Bravata et al., 2020). It has been reported in the previous research that impostor feelings are prevalent in medical and nursing students, and nursing students tend to report more severe cases (Rice et al., 2023). There are also sex differences in research, and in most cases, women report more impostor experiences (Khalil et al., 2023; Price et al., 2024).

The conviction in personal ability to effectively accomplish tasks and overcome difficulties, which is known as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), is an important factor in academic motivation and resilience. High self-efficacy correlates with persistence and improved performance whereas low self-efficacy correlates with stress, self-doubt, and feelings of being an impostor. Research has shown an overwhelming negative correlation between self-efficacy and impostor syndrome, meaning that the low level of confidence in own abilities correlates with the strong experience of impostorship (Batur et al., 2024). Sex differences in self-efficacy have also been described, and these differences are found in different academic areas (Mamnoun et al., 2023).

The existence of impostor syndrome and self-efficacy was previously reported in the studies conducted at the Cavite State University - Main Campus in relation to a range of student groups (Dela Cruz et al., 2017; Bantilo et al., 2024). Nonetheless, little literature has specifically addressed nursing students who have successfully completed the College of Nursing battery examination as a qualifying examination that is meant to demonstrate academic readiness and competence. Although these students might be at this benchmark, they still might have self-doubt and localized evidence surrounding impostor syndrome and self-efficacy in these students is lacking, especially when it comes to sex differences.

The paper presents the intensity of impostor syndrome and self-efficacy in third- and fourth-year nursing students of Cavite State University – Main Campus and the correlation and disparity between the two groups in terms of sex.

Statement of the Problem

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and impostor syndrome among Bachelor of Science in Nursing students of CvSU – Main Campus. It also intended to determine whether this relationship significantly differs depending on the sex of the students. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex and year level?
2. What is the mean score on impostor syndrome among male students and female students?
3. What is the mean score on self-efficacy among male students and female students?
4. Is there a significant difference between male and female students in terms of impostor syndrome?
5. Is there a significant difference between male and female students in terms of self-efficacy?
6. Is there a significant relationship between self-efficacy and impostor syndrome among male students and female students?

7. Is there a significant difference in the relationship between self-efficacy and impostor syndrome of male and female students?
8. Based on the research findings, how can the results of this study be used to propose a module that addresses self-efficacy and impostor syndrome among nursing students in their current academic experiences?

Methods

This study employed a quantitative descriptive–comparative–correlational research design to examine levels of self-efficacy and impostor syndrome among third- and fourth-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing students at Cavite State University – Main Campus who had passed the College of Nursing battery examination. This design was appropriate as it allowed the researchers to (1) describe respondents' demographic characteristics and psychological constructs, (2) determine differences between male and female students, and (3) examine the relationship between self-efficacy and impostor syndrome across sexes.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using three instruments: (1) a Demographic Profile Sheet to obtain information on sex and year level; (2) the Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS) to measure levels of impostor syndrome; and (3) the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) to assess perceived self-efficacy. Permission to use the standardized instruments was obtained from the respective test developers. Both scales have been previously validated in local studies, and their suitability for the Philippine higher education context was reviewed by a statistician.

Data Analysis

In this research, total enumeration and purposive convenience sampling were used to ensure that there was sufficient gender and year level representation of nursing students. All male respondents were enumerated using total enumeration to capture the views of a smaller subgroup of respondents and minimize sampling bias, whereas all female respondents were enumerated using purposive convenience sampling based on availability and proportional representation to ensure the efficient collection of data and remain relevant to the objectives of the study (Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2016; Israel, 2013).

The data collection was conducted by the researchers by administering the standardized survey tools to the respondents to get the required data. After getting the permission of the university authorities and the consent of the test developers, informed consent was given to all the respondents before the data was collected. The respondents were requested to fill in the demographic profile sheet, then Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS) and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) which were conducted using a pen-and-paper format. Upon completion, all the responses were thoroughly verified to be complete and accurate. The data were subsequently encoded in a secure database in a systematic manner to grant the data confidentiality and ease in the statistical analysis. This procedure had the effect of organizing, reliability, and suitability of the collected data towards the purpose of the research.

Participants of the Study

The respondents of this study were officially enrolled Bachelor of Science in Nursing students from Cavite State University – Main Campus who had successfully passed the College of Nursing battery examination. CvSU's College of Nursing is recognized as one of the top nursing schools in the Philippines, earning consistent high passing rates and the PRC Hall of Fame for Nursing due to its exemplary licensure performance. The study focused on third- and fourth-year students during the first semester of Academic Year 2025–2026, as they were deemed most exposed to academic and clinical pressures relevant to impostor syndrome and self-efficacy. Due to the uneven distribution of sexes, total enumeration was employed for all male students, while purposive convenience sampling was used for female students. This ensured adequate representation across sex and year level. The nursing program's demanding nature made its students suitable respondents, as previous studies (El-Ashry et al., 2024; Villan, Cunanan, & Macalaba, 2025) have shown that nursing students often experience impostor tendencies, anxiety, and

stress but maintain high self-efficacy through resilience and competence. Hence, this group provided meaningful insights into how self-efficacy and impostor syndrome interact in a rigorous academic environment.

Sampling Technique

The study employed a purposive convenience sampling technique. According to the population data sheet from the University Registrar of CvSU – Main Campus (AY 2025), the BSN program has Fouty nine (49) male and Two hundred forty nine (249) female students. Because of the small male population, all third- and fourth-year male students were included through total enumeration. Meanwhile, Two hundred nine (209) female students were selected through purposive convenience sampling, ensuring availability, accessibility, and proportional representation across year levels. This approach allowed both sexes to be adequately represented based on the actual population distribution of the program.

The respondents in this study were Two hundred fifty-eight (258) enrolled third- and fourth-year students were identified as having participated in the study in Academic Year 2024-2025.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers strictly adhered to the ethical standards set by the Psychological Association of the Philippines (PAP) to ensure the welfare, dignity, and rights of all respondents. These principles guided the conduct of the study, ensuring integrity, respect, and confidentiality throughout the research process.

Rights and Dignity of respondents. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and respondents were informed of their right to refuse or withdraw at any time without consequences. Their anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy were upheld at all stages of the research.

Informed Consent was distributed to all respondents, clearly explaining the study's purpose, objectives, and procedures, as well as respondents' rights. The researchers ensured that each respondent understood the form before answering the Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale and the General Self-Efficacy Scale.

Data Use and Storage, Collected data were used solely for academic purposes. All materials were securely stored and accessible only to the researchers. No personal information was disclosed, and data was not shared with unauthorized parties or used for commercial purposes.

Debriefing. After data collection, an online debriefing session was offered to respondents for clarification regarding the study's objectives, procedures, and findings. Respondents were also informed about university counseling services should they experience any discomfort related to the study.

Plagiarism. All external sources were properly credited following APA guidelines. The researchers utilized plagiarism detection tools to ensure originality and uphold academic integrity.

Data Disposal. Data will be retained for a maximum of five years, after which all physical copies will be shredded and digital files permanently deleted to prevent any form of data retrieval.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distributions of respondents according to sex

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	49	19.00
Female	209	81.00
TOTAL	**258**	**100.0**

The table shows the total number of respondents based on sex, there are 49 males and 209 females enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. This shows that there is a significant disparity in the number of the respondents in the two groups. In particular, 49 (19.00%) out of the respondents are male and 209 (81%) are female. The researchers could

not equally allocate respondents in terms of sex since the actual enrollment ratio is largely different and only 49 and 249 male and female Nursing students are enrolled respectively. Hence, total enumeration was used to ensure that all male students were included whereas the 209 female respondents were chosen by the calculated sample size in order to be representative of the population.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage distributions of respondents according to year level

YEAR LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Third year	134	51.90
Fourth year	124	48.10
TOTAL	**258**	**100.0**

The table above presents the distribution of respondents categorized by year level, comprising 134 third-year students and 124 fourth-year students. The data on year-level enrollment from A.Y. 2021–2022 to A.Y. 2024–2025 show dynamic changes in the third and fourth-year nursing students. Third-year enrollment has been fairly consistent over the four academic years with a range of 121-195 students whereas fourth-year enrollment is a natural adaptation as the students advance to a more rigorous phase of the program. As an example, the enrollment rate in the third year was 195, then 180 in the fourth year, and in A.Y. 2022-2023, the rates were 130 and 185, respectively, which is expected due to the differences in academic levels and program demands. Such variations of enrolment can be perceived as the transition requirements of higher coursework and clinical exposure which inherently correct and equip students to professional competence.

Table 3. Level of male and female respondents in terms of impostor syndrome

LEVELS	FREQUENCY (M)	PERCENTAGE (M)	FREQUENCY (F)	PERCENTAGE (F)
Intense IP experiences	10	20.41	36	17.22
Frequently has impostor feelings	25	51.02	118	56.46
Moderate IP experiences	13	26.52	50	23.92
Few impostor characteristics	1	2.04	5	2.39
TOTAL	**49**	**100**	**209**	**100**
MEAN SCORE AND LEVEL	**67.6122**	**FREQUENTLY HAS IMPOSTOR FEELINGS**	**68.4115**	**FREQUENTLY HAS IMPOSTOR FEELINGS**

The table above presents the distribution of Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS) scores among third- and fourth-year nursing students, categorized by sex. The vast majority of the respondents were in the range of frequently has impostor feelings, and the mean scores of males (n = 49) and females (n = 209) were 67.61 and 68.41 respectively. In males, 25 students (51.02%) said they experienced impostor frequently, 13 (26.52%) moderately, 10 (20.41%) intensely, and only 1 (2.04%) few experiences. In females, 118 students (56.46%) often to frequently felt impostors, 50 (23.92%) moderate, 36 (17.22%) intense and 5 (2.39%) few. These results are consistent with the recent literature that has associated impostor feelings with perfectionism and maladaptive study behaviors (Austria et al., 2024; Luz et al., 2024). In the case of upper-year nursing students, these experiences can manifest as the inability to identify previous achievements, such as passing the battery exam, satisfying academic expectations, and going through clinical rotations. These findings corroborate that

impostor phenomenon is common and has a strong influence on the perceptions of academic competence and confidence of nursing students, which means that academic success does not guarantee a sense of confidence.

Table 4. Level of male and female respondents in terms of self-efficacy

LEVELS	FREQUENCY (M)	PERCENTAGE (M)	FREQUENCY (F)	PERCENTAGE (F)
High	40	81.63	145	69.38
Moderate	9	18.37	64	30.62
TOTAL	**49**	**100**	**209**	**100**
MEAN SCORE AND LEVEL	**30.9796**	**HIGH**	**29.6603**	**HIGH**

Table 4 presents the distribution of General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) scores among third- and fourth-year nursing students by sex. Male students had a mean score of 30.98, with 40 out of 49 (81.63%) classified as high and 18.37% as moderate; none scored low. The mean score of the female students was 29.66 with 145 out of the 209 students (69.38) in the high category, and 30.62 in the moderate category and none in the low category. These findings indicate that majority of the students are resilient and motivated enough to sustain performance in challenging academic environments. On the whole, there is a high level of self efficacy in both sexes with a somewhat higher average and percentage in the higher category among the males. This is in accordance with the past research that shows that male nursing students tend to be more persistent and confident in clinical competence, but female students can be more prone to stress and self-doubt, which slightly lowers the scores of self-efficacy (Al-Harbi et al., 2020; Zamanzadeh et al., 2013).

Table 5. Test of difference between male and female respondents in terms of impostor syndrome

DIFFERENCE	T-TEST (t)	SIG (p-value)	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale Score	0.392	0.696	Accept Null Hypothesis	Not Significant

N=258 (Male 49, Female 209); df=256; If p < α0.05, significant; 2-tailed
Levene's test for equality of variances (F 0.220, Sig 0.640, No significant difference on variances of two groups)

Table 5 shows the comparison of impostor syndrome scores between male and female nursing students using the Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS). The computed t-value of 0.392 with a significance level of p = 0.696 shows that the difference between male and female respondents is not significant. This means that there is no actual way sex influences the prevalence of the impostor feelings amongst the nursing students. The mean scores in both groups are within the range of frequently has impostor feelings indicating that impostor tendencies are rather common among nursing students of both sexes. This study findings are in line with those of Cowman and Ferrari (2002, as cited in Feenstra et al., 2020), who also did not find a significant difference between male and female adults in impostor syndrome in both academic and professional contexts. Their research described that biological sex is not the primary cause of impostorism, but rather self-handicapping tendencies and propensity to feel shame when in contact with other people are more apt predictors of impostorism. That is, individuals who tend to undermine themselves might deliberately undermine their own work or get embarrassed in cases where they believe that others would notice their shortcomings. Contextually, the absence of a significant difference suggests that sex may not be as important in influencing impostor phenomenon among nursing students as compared to shared academic pressures.

Table 6. Test of difference between male and female respondents in terms of self-efficacy

DIFFERENCE	MANN-WHITNEY TEST (Z)	SIG (p-value)	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
General Self-Efficacy Score	-2.229	0.026	Reject Null Hypothesis	Significant

N=258 (Male 49, Female 209); If p < α0.05, significant; 2-tailed; Sum of ranks (Female 26020.50, Male 7390.50)

Levene's test for equality of variances (F 0.014, Sig 0.907, No significant difference on variances of two groups

Table 6 shows the comparison of self-efficacy scores between male and female nursing students using the General Self-Efficacy Scale. The computed value in the Mann–Whitney test is –2.229, with a significance level of p = 0.026, showing that the difference between male and female respondents is significant. This implies that the male students were marginally more likely to say that their levels of self-efficacy were high compared to the female students and this implies that sex does play a small yet significant role in how students perceive themselves in terms of their capability. The mean score of male respondents was 30.97 and the mean score of female respondents was 29.66 both under high self-efficacy category with an effect size of 0.139, which is a small effect. This observation is in accordance with Bulfone et al. (2021) who established that female nursing students had lower self-efficacy than their male counterparts at baseline but differences reduced with time as they gained clinical experience and academic encouragement, resulting in equal ratings by the third year. Chan (2022) observed also gender norms and expectations which led to lower female self-efficacy in STEM. Although confidence level might be different in the various fields: females more in language/arts, males more technical, these differences are not always consistent and they also rely on the learning environment and career. (Tenaw, 2013; Huang, 2013; Lars & Leiv, 2016). The implications of these findings highlight that although both male and female nursing students exhibit high levels of self-efficacy, small sex differences may still emerge from differences in adaptability, coping approaches, resilience in effort-based problem solving, and confidence in handling academic demands. This suggests that nursing institutions should continue promoting equal opportunities for skill mastery and confidence-building among students, regardless of sex. Strengthening mentorship, feedback, and clinical exposure can help narrow perceived confidence gaps and ensure that both male and female students develop strong self-belief and readiness for professional nursing roles.

Table 7. Test of relationship between impostor syndrome and self-efficacy of male and female respondents

CORRELATION	SPEARMAN CORRELATION COEFFICIENT	SIG (p-value)	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
Male	-0.073	0.616	Accept Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Female	0.031	0.651	Accept Null Hypothesis	Not Significant

N=49; If p < α0.05, significant; 2-tailed; Spearman interpretation of strength of correlation 0.001-0.19 very weak, 0.20-0.39 weak,0.40-0.59 moderate, 0.60-0.79 strong, 0.80-0.99 very strong, 1.00 perfect correlation

Table 7 shows the correlation of impostor syndrome and self-efficacy between male and female nursing students. For male respondents,the findings indicate a very weak negative relationship between self-efficacy and impostor syndrome among the male respondents. This implies that as one variable rises, the other is likely to fall, but this is a small relationship that is not significant or substantial to imply that there is any meaningful and reliable relationship between two variables. The relationship between the variables was tested using Spearman Correlation since data is not normally distributed and the (Spearman correlation coefficient) 0.73 value was obtained and the p-value = 0.616. The relationship is hence not significant and the researchers will hence accept the null hypothesis. The findings show that there is no significant correlation between the impostor syndrome and self-efficacy of male respondents. This implies that thoughts on impostor and confidence in abilities are independent of each other in this group. The large self-efficacy scores that were presented in the earlier table also indicate that male students have a high confidence in their academic abilities, their ability to manage difficulties, and their competence to complete assignments. Such high self-efficacy levels are not seen to be influenced by impostor feelings and their impostor tendencies do not appear to have an impact on their confidence. Ozsaker, Aykut, and Doruker (2025) observed that male nursing students tend to experience a high level of academic self-efficacy, which is influenced by motivation, previous experience, or a positive learning atmosphere. In this research, self-efficacy and impostor syndrome were not significantly correlated among the males, which means that their confidence does not correlate with, but accompanies impostor feelings. In the case of females, Spearman correlation indicated a very weak positive but non-significant relationship (= 0.031, p = 0.651), indicating that impostor thoughts and self-efficacy are independent. This is also in contrast with previous research in which greater impostorism in women was related to less self-efficacy (Pákozdy et al., 2023; Batur et al., 2024), which suggests they interact differently within a context. The gap between the present results and the available literature suggests that the correlation between impostor syndrome and self-efficacy can depend on the learning environment, grade, culture, or academic requirements. The findings in this study show that the female nursing students can develop impostor feelings and at the same time feel confident in their academic capabilities.

Table 8. Test of difference between correlation coefficients of male and female respondents in terms of Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale and General Self-Efficacy Scale scores.

DIFFERENCE	FISHER'S Z TRANSFORMATION	CRITICAL VALUE	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
Impostor Syndrome and Self-Efficacy Male and Female	0.0401	±1.96	Accept Null Hypothesis	Not Significant

Critical value (α = 0.05, two-tailed) = ±1.96. Male CI = [−0.2126, 0.3471]; Female CI = [−0.1052, 0.1660]. The z-scores corresponding to the correlation coefficients fall within the critical region, indicating no significant difference.

Table 8 presents the test of difference between the correlation coefficients of male and female respondents. Fisher's z-transformed correlations produced a small raw difference of 0.0401. When these Fisher z-values were referenced to the standard normal distribution, the resulting test statistic did not exceed the critical value of ±1.96 at α = 0.05. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted. This conclusion is justified by the fact that the confidence interval of both male ([-0.2126, 0.3471]) and female ([-0.1052, 0.1660]) respondents overlap, which means that the correlation between impostor syndrome and self-efficiency is not statistically different between male and female nursing students. Though not many studies directly relate the relationship between impostor syndrome and self-efficacy between the sexes, the current

literature provides the background of the current study. Pakozdy et al. (2023) discovered that there were negative correlations between impostor syndrome and self-efficacy in both men and women, and no significant difference in strength was observed. In the same way, Medline et al. (2022) showed that female surgeons more than male had impostor syndrome, yet there was no significant sex difference in the self-efficacy. These studies confirm the existing evidence that the correlation between impostor syndrome and self-efficacy is not significantly different in male and female nursing students.

Such studies that support the finding of the non-significant difference in correlation between the impostor syndrome and self-efficacy of the male and female respondents, may be the indication that, even though the impostor feelings are present, the self-efficacy is relatively similar between sexes. This confirms the hypothesis that impostor syndrome and self-efficacy may act as relatively independent variables, and their correlation may be moderated by coping strategies, professional socialization or context-specific variables instead of sex.

Proposed modules that address self-efficacy and impostor syndrome

Beyond the Mask. A self-directed module that assists nursing students to analyze their impostor-related thoughts and learn to evaluate themselves in a more balanced way. It prompts students to identify the challenges and encouraging sides of impostor feelings through short reflections, self-assessment, and psychoeducation to be able to evaluate their capabilities better, celebrate progress, and leverage self-doubt to become better people. According to Benjamin et al. (2025), the experience of impostors in nurses is associated with self-esteem and resilience and is occasionally involved in increased effort. According to Peng et al. (2022), impostor phenomenon is extremely prevalent in the nursing field, and specific coping modules should be introduced to justify the existence of Beyond the Mask. The frequency of impostor scores in distress was also reported by El-Ashry et al. (2024), which means that reflective, self-governed instruments are necessary to deal with such experiences and avoid adverse effects.

Steady and Strong. A development-focused module that strengthens nursing students' existing self-efficacy through reflective exercises, strategy-building tasks, and practical skill boosters. It supports the ongoing development process as it assists students in identifying their strengths, adjusting to the difficulties, and being confident both in the classroom and clinical practice. Kusol & Kaewpawong (2023) discovered that nursing students that have greater self-efficacy that is facilitated by classroom preparation, clinical exposure, and school support are better able to endure stressors. In the same vein, Nazari et al. (2025) also associated academic self-efficacy with greater self-compassion and less stress. The results indicate the necessity of the structured activities strengthening the confidence level, adaptive strategies, and stable skill development, and they correspond to the objectives of Steady & Strong.

Bold and Becoming. A development-oriented module for female nursing students designed to enhance self-efficacy in the stressful academic and clinical activities. It provides reflective and practice-based exercises that enhance the ability to deal with unforeseen circumstances, creatively solve problems, manage challenges, and assertiveness in stressful encounters. Bulfone et al. (2021) discovered that female nursing students had lower self-efficacy levels than male students, particularly in performance-based and high-stakes activities, although over time, their confidence levels increased. The initial weaknesses in managing the pressure, problem-solving, and assertiveness suggest that specific assistance, strengthening the meaning of the Bold and Becoming, is necessary to enable the female students in establishing a more robust and consistent level of academic and situational confidence.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, nursing students at CvSU – Main Campus consistently reported high levels of self-efficacy while also experiencing frequent impostor feelings. This paradox implies that students believe that they

are able to fulfill academic and clinical requirements, but they cannot internalize their accomplishments. The high level of impostorism in both sexes suggests that there are more powerful factors in the form of common academic pressure, high expectations, and stress associated with performance than biological sex. Although male students were a little higher in self-efficacy, the difference was not that much which suggests that environmental and experiential variables like exposure to clinical practice and institutional support are more influential in confidence development. Also, the insignificant and low correlations between self-efficacy and impostor syndrome indicate that these two variables can be independent in this scenario, and their linkage is moderated by coping mechanisms and culture.

Recommendation

1. In implementing self-directed and development-focused modules for nursing students, educators, curriculum planners, and mental health practitioners may incorporate activities that help students manage impostor-related thoughts (Beyond the Mask), strengthen self-efficacy through reflective exercises and skill-building (Steady and Strong), and provide targeted support for female students to enhance confidence and problem-solving in high-pressure situations (Bold and Becoming). It is also worth concentrating on the clarity of instructions, relevance of materials, and interesting activities (Format), supportive and motivating language (Presentation and Organization). These measures can be used to minimize self-doubt and preserve academic and clinical work confidence, as well as develop emotional resilience to personal and professional development.
2. Nursing students can participate in organized peer mentoring and mentoring reflection programs conducted by student councils, alumni, or clinical instructors. These safe places enable students to openly share impostor feelings, learn coping strategies and build self-efficacy which helps them to remain confident in both academic and clinical environments.
3. It is possible to strengthen educational institutions by providing support to students via mentoring by faculty, frequent well-being check-ins during clinical rotations, and preparedness, resilience, and reflective practice workshops. The aim is to make the students aware of their capabilities and maintain confidence, not to get rid of the impostor feelings completely.
4. Mental health professionals can offer student-centered counseling on campus that is based on strength-focused models that affirm the competence of students, directly challenge impostor beliefs and impart practice-oriented coping skills. Easy psychological assistance would help to avoid the development of impostor feelings and strengthen self-efficacy.
5. The social psychology research can also go beyond observing cultural norms or gender roles and concentrate on intervention-oriented, context-oriented research. Through awareness drives in college campuses, the impostor feelings will become normalized, and collective measures on how to maintain confidence among students will be encouraged.
6. Future studies can focus on the counter-intuitive nature of the phenomenon of high self-efficacy with a high frequency of impostorism, the social and cultural processes that perpetuate it. The longitudinal studies are to monitor the changes in impostor feelings during the nursing education, and assess such interventions as mentorship, resilience training, and peer support. Comparative research with non-medical programs can give more extensive information and more balanced samples on disciplines.

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