

Conference Name: International Conference on Business, Economics, Law, Language & Psychology, 20-21 March 2026, Melbourne
Conference Dates: 20-Mar- 2026 to 21-Mar- 2026
Conference Venue: Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne, 328 Flinders Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
Appears in: PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences (ISSN 2454-5899)
Publication year: 2026

Liao et al., 2026

Volume 2026, pp. 643-670

DOI- <https://doi.org/10.20319/icssh.2026.643670>

This paper can be cited as Liao, Y.-L., Yang, J.-Y. & Liu, C.-R. (2026). I Need to Work Hard!

Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout Moderated by Psychological Capital. International Conference on Business, Economics, Law, Language & Psychology, 20-21 March 2026, Melbourne.

Proceedings of Social Science and Humanities Research Association (SSHRA), 2026, 643-670

I NEED TO WORK HARD! IMPOSTOR PHENOMENON AND BURNOUT MODERATED BY PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

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Abstract

Although the study of the relationships among the impostor phenomenon, workaholism, and burnout has been widespread, most existing research has examined these variables only in pairs, while the process through which the impostor phenomenon may indirectly lead to burnout via workaholism remain understudied. Drawing on the JD-R model, this study views the impostor phenomenon as a form of personal resource depletion, while workaholism is conceptualized as a personal demand that increases strain and heightens burnout risk. Furthermore, we examine psychological capital as a boundary condition, moderating the

relationship between workaholism and burnout. Based on a sample of 112 employees in Taiwan, the results demonstrate that impostor phenomenon enhances workaholism, which subsequently increases burnout, and the moderated mediation analysis reveals that psychological capital weakens the positive relationship between workaholism and burnout. These findings help clarify critical pathways of impostor-driven burnout and offer practical guidance for supporting early-career employees' psychological well-being.

Keywords:

Phenomenon, Workaholism, Burnout, Psychological Capital

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Motivation

In today's rapidly evolving and highly competitive business environment, workplace newcomers are in a critical transition stage from campus to career. They must not only adapt to new tasks and role identities but also frequently confront psychological pressures and self-doubt (Akkermans et al., 2015). Research suggests that the Impostor Phenomenon (IP) is particularly prevalent among students and early-career populations (Bravata et al., 2020). This psychological state leads individuals to believe their success is merely due to "luck" and to fear being exposed as "frauds" despite objective achievements (Clance & Imes, 1978). According to the "Impostor Cycle" proposed by Clance (1985), when such individuals face new tasks, they engage in over-preparation driven by excessive anxiety, a behavior closely linked to compulsive working tendencies (Feenstra et al., 2020).

To compensate for internal insecurity, these employees may overinvest in their work, developing a pressure-driven compulsive tendency known as workaholism (Neurauter & Traut-Mattausch, 2016). Simultaneously, studies indicate a stable positive correlation between workaholism and Burnout, potentially leading to emotional exhaustion, insomnia, and even psychosomatic illnesses (Schaufeli et al. 2008; Maslach et al., 2001). Since impostor-prone individuals remain in a state of high hypervigilance and defensiveness, this continuous psychological burden significantly depletes self-regulatory resources, increasing the risk of psychological resource exhaustion (Kun et al., 2020).

However, existing literature mostly focuses on the pairwise relationships between IP, workaholism, and burnout. There is a lack of systematic verification regarding whether IP leads to burnout indirectly through workaholism. Furthermore, few studies have examined whether psychological protective factors exist to buffer this process.

Therefore, this study introduces Psychological Capital (PsyCap) as a moderating variable. PsyCap—comprising hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience—is a vital resource that enhances psychological adaptability (Luthans et al., 2007) and has been proven to reduce stress and negative emotions (Grover et al., 2018). This study aims to clarify whether workplace newcomers can utilize psychological resources to alleviate the compensatory overwork caused by the "fear of exposure," thereby preventing ultimate professional burnout.

1.2 Research Objectives

By verifying the causal and interactive relationships between variables, this study focuses on the following:

1. Exploring whether IP is positively related to Burnout.
2. Examining whether IP increases individual workaholism tendencies.
3. Verifying the positive correlation between workaholism and Burnout.
4. Analyzing the mediating effect of workaholism between IP and burnout.
5. Examining the moderating effect of PsyCap on the relationship between workaholism and burnout.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout

The Impostor Phenomenon was first introduced by Clance and Imes (1978). Within the framework of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, IP can be viewed as a "personal demand" because these individuals set unrealistic standards for themselves (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). When employees perceive an imbalance between their perceived competence and external success, it triggers a long-term psychological health impairment process, ultimately leading to emotional exhaustion. Recent empirical studies have shown that IP is highly correlated with burnout across various sectors, from healthcare to general corporate environments (Gullifor et al., 2024).

- H1: Impostor Phenomenon is positively associated with Burnout.

2.2 The Mediating Role of Workaholism

Workaholism stems from internal pressure and self-driven motives, encompassing "working excessively" and "working compulsively" (Schaufeli et al., 2008).

According to compensatory theory, impostor-prone individuals use overwork as a protective strategy, attempting to mask perceived "competence gaps" through exceptional performance (Vergauwe et al., 2015). However, based on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, such non-autonomous over-investment hinders psychological recovery, thereby accelerating resource depletion (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

- H2: Impostor Phenomenon is positively associated with Workaholism.
- H3: Workaholism is positively associated with Burnout.
- H4: Workaholism mediates the impact of Impostor Phenomenon on Burnout.

2.3 The Moderating Role of Psychological Capital

PsyCap is regarded as a positive state that promotes employee performance and well-being (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). When individuals possess high PsyCap, their self-efficacy and resilience allow them to view feedback more rationally, reducing anxiety triggered by the impostor mindset. Empirical evidence suggests that PsyCap can effectively moderate the impact of stressors on psychological distress (Avey et al., 2011). When workaholics face resource depletion, those with high PsyCap utilize positive attributions and hope to rebuild coping mechanisms, buffering the damage of overwork on physical and mental health.

- H5: PsyCap moderates the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout.
The positive effect of Workaholism on Burnout is stronger when PsyCap is low, and weaker when PsyCap is high.

3. Methodology

3.1 Framework and Sampling

This study employed purposive sampling targeting workers with less than three years of experience. Workplace newcomers were chosen because they are in the stage of organizational socialization, making them vulnerable to IP due to performance pressure and fear of failure. A total of 112 valid questionnaires were recovered from employees across various industries.

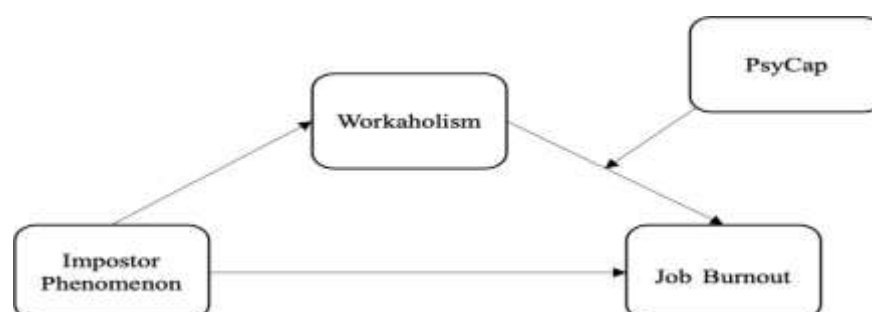


Figure 3.1: Framework

3.2 Research Instruments

The scales used in this study demonstrate high reliability:

1. Impostor Phenomenon: Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS), 20 items (original $\alpha = 0.90$).
2. Workaholism: Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS-10), measuring excessive and compulsive work.
3. Burnout: Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI), specifically the "work-related burnout" subscale, 6 items.
4. Psychological Capital: Compound Psychological Capital Scale (CPC-12R), including efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data were coded using SPSS 27. Path analysis and moderated mediation testing were performed using the PROCESS macro (Model 4 and Model 14) developed by Hayes (2022). To ensure the stability and accuracy of the statistical inference for mediation and moderation effects, 5,000 bootstrap resamples were utilized.

The measurement instruments used for the impostor phenomenon, workaholism, Burnout, and psychological capital are described as follows:

3.3.1 Impostor Phenomenon

Scale Description: This study utilized the Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS) developed by Clance (1985), translated for administration. The scale consists of 20 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). Higher scores indicate a stronger sense of self-doubt regarding achievements and higher self-negation, reflecting a more pronounced impostor tendency. The original Cronbach's α for this scale was 0.90.

3.3.2 Workaholism

Scale Description: The study employed the Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS-10) developed by Schaufeli, Taris, and Bakker (2006). This scale includes two dimensions: "Working Excessively" (items 1–5) and "Working Compulsively" (items 6–10). It contains 10 items scored on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = almost never; 4 = almost always), where higher scores indicate a stronger workaholism tendency. The original Cronbach's α was 0.82.

3.3.3 Burnout

Scale Description: This research adopted the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) developed by Kristensen et al.. The CBI categorizes burnout into personal, work-related, and client-related burnout; however, to focus on workplace stressors and ensure discriminant validity, this study only utilized the "work-related burnout" dimension.

The scale originally consisted of 7 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very mild; 5

= very severe). Following domestic research (Chang et al., 2007), item 7 was identified as a reverse-coded item that lowered internal consistency and was therefore deleted. The final analysis utilized 6 items, with an original Cronbach's α of 0.89.

3.3.4 Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

Scale Description: This study used the Compound Psychological Capital Scale-12 Revised (CPC-12R) by Dudasova et al. (2021). The scale covers four dimensions: Self-efficacy, Optimism, Hope, and Resilience, each containing 3 items for a total of 12 items. Scoring utilized a 6-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree), with higher scores representing higher levels of positive psychological resources. The original Cronbach's α was 0.93.

4. Result

This chapter conducts a statistical analysis of the 112 valid questionnaires collected and discusses the analytical results in relation to the hypotheses proposed in this study. The chapter is divided into four sections: the first section presents a descriptive overview of the sample, detailing the basic demographic information; the second section provides the descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis; the third section details the regression analysis; and the fourth section focuses on the verification of the research hypotheses.

4.1 Sample Characteristics

This study collected 112 valid questionnaires. The sample comprised a higher proportion of females (62.5%) than males (37.5%), with the majority aged 21–25 (70.3%) and holding a college or undergraduate degree (76.8%). Regarding employment, the primary sectors were financial and insurance activities (27.7%) and professional, scientific, and technical services (18.8%). Most respondents had a work tenure of 1 to less than 2 years

(58%) and held nonmanagement positions (98.2%). Table 4.1 shows the sample characteristics.

Table 4.1: *Descriptive statistics of sample characteristics*

Demographics (n = 112)	N	%
Gender		
Male	42	37.5%
Female	70	62.5%
Age		
≤ 20	2	1.8%
21–25	78	70.3%
26–30	31	27.9%
Education		
High School/Vocational Institute	1	0.9%
College/Undergraduate	86	76.8%
Postgraduate	25	22.3%
Work Tenure		
< 1 year	19	17.0%
1 to < 2 years	65	58.0%
2 to < 3 years	28	25.0%
Industry		
Manufacturing	5	4.5%
Water Supply and Remediation Activities	1	0.9%
Construction	4	3.6%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	8	7.1%
Transportation and Storage	3	2.7%

Table 4.1: *Descriptive statistics of sample characteristics (Continued)*

Demographics (n = 112)	N	%
Industry		
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	9	8%
Information and Communication	7	6.3%
Financial and Insurance Activities	31	27.7%
Real Estate Activities	8	7.1%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	21	18.8%
Support Service Activities	1	0.9%
Education	3	2.7%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	2	1.8%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1	0.9%
Other Service Activities	8	7.1%
Position		
Nonmanagement	110	98.2%
Junior Manager	2	1.8%

4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To confirm whether the items of the scales used in this study can effectively measure their underlying constructs, this study employed JASP to conduct a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Item analysis and overall model fit assessments were performed for the Impostor Phenomenon, Workaholism, Burnout, and Psychological Capital scales to evaluate the quality of the research instruments.

Hair et al. (1998) proposed that the factor loadings of a scale should exceed the threshold of .30, which serves as the criterion for determining whether the items possess convergent validity. Regarding composite reliability, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that the composite reliability (CR) value should be .60 or higher, and an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value above .36 is considered an acceptable standard. Meeting these criteria indicates that all items are significantly explained by the factor; in other words, the items converge on the factor, demonstrating that the measurement items successfully reflect their respective constructs.

4.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Impostor Phenomenon

As shown in Table 4.2 below, the construct reliability (CR) is .98, satisfying the standard of .60 or higher recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Furthermore, the Cronbach's α value is .85, meeting the generally accepted standard of .70. Both indicators demonstrate that this scale possesses excellent internal consistency.

However, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is .23, which falls short of the .36 threshold recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). This suggests that while the Impostor Phenomenon scale used in this study exhibits some degree of convergent validity, there is still room for improvement.

Item	λ
IP1	0.51
IP2	0.50
IP3	0.58
IP4	0.38
IP5	0.51
IP6	0.41
IP7	0.41
IP8	0.40
IP9	0.57
IP10	0.43
IP11	0.56
IP12	0.34
IP13	0.43
IP14	0.35
IP15	0.57
IP16	0.52
IP17	0.47
IP18	0.41
IP19	0.37

Table 4.2: *The CFA results of Impostor Phenomenon*

IP20		0.63
CR: .98	AVE: .23	Cronbach's α : .85

4.2.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Workaholism

As shown in Table 4.3 below, the construct reliability (CR) is .98, which satisfies the criterion of .60 or higher recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Additionally, the Cronbach's α value is .85, meeting the commonly accepted standard of .70. Both indicators demonstrate that this scale possesses good internal consistency.

Furthermore, the average variance extracted (AVE) is .36, which complies with the threshold of .36 or higher suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), indicating that the Workaholism scale used in this study demonstrates an acceptable level of convergent validity.

Table 4.3: *The CFA results of Workaholism*

Item	λ
WH1	0.60
WH2	0.58
WH3	0.63
WH4	0.54
WH5	0.63
WH6	0.60
WH7	0.54
WH8	0.57
WH9	0.62
WH10	0.70
CR: .98	AVE: .36
	Cronbach's α : .85

4.2.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Burnout

As shown in Table 4.4 below, the construct reliability (CR) is .97, which satisfies the criterion of .60 or higher recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Additionally, the Cronbach's α value is .82, meeting the commonly accepted standard of .70. Both indicators demonstrate that this scale possesses good internal consistency.

Furthermore, the average variance extracted (AVE) is .41, which also complies with the threshold of .36 or higher suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), indicating that the Burnout scale used in this study demonstrates an acceptable level of convergent validity.

Table 4.4: *The CFA results of Burnout*

Item	λ	
BO1	0.39	
BO2	0.50	
BO3	0.85	
BO4	0.42	
BO5	0.92	
BO6	0.67	
CR: .97	AVE: .41	Cronbach's α : .82

4.2.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Psychological Capital

As shown in Table 4.5 below, the construct reliability (CR) is .98, which satisfies the criterion of .60 or higher recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Additionally, the Cronbach's α value is .82, meeting the commonly accepted standard of .70. Both indicators demonstrate that this scale possesses good internal consistency. However, the average variance extracted (AVE) is .27, which falls short of the .36 threshold suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). This indicates that while the Psychological Capital scale used in this study demonstrates some degree of convergent validity, there is still room for improvement.

Table 4.4: *The CFA results of Psychological Capital*

Item	λ
PC1	0.44
PC2	0.58
PC3	0.47
PC4	0.49
PC5	0.55
PC6	0.43
PC7	0.61
PC8	0.53
PC9	0.46
PC10	0.51
PC11	0.61
PC12	0.53
CR: .98	AVE: .27

4.2.5 Overall Model Fit

To ensure the overall model fit of this study, the analysis results are presented in Table 4-2-5. The ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) is 1.30, which satisfies the evaluation criterion of being between 1 and 3 proposed by Hair et al. (1998). The CFI value is 0.77 and the TLI is 0.76, both of which fall short of the 0.8 to 0.9 range suggested by Bentler and Bonett (1980). The RMSEA value is 0.05; according to indices proposed by previous scholars, a value of 0.05 or less indicates a good fit (Hair et al., 1998). The SRMR is 0.08, which is less than 0.1, meeting the standard proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999). Overall, the majority of the fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 1.30$, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .08) fall within the ranges recommended in the literature, indicating that the model possesses an acceptable to moderate level of overall fit. However, the CFI and TLI remain below the recommended ranges, signifying that there is still room for improvement in the model.

Table 4.5: *The CFA results of the Overall Model*

χ^2/df	CFI	GFI	IFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA
1.30	.77	.70	.78	.76	.08	.05

4.3 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

This study utilized Pearson correlation analysis to explore and verify the correlations among the Impostor Phenomenon, Workaholism, Burnout, and Psychological Capital. The mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficient for each variable are presented in Table 4.6.

As shown in Table 4.6, the correlation coefficients among the variables in this study are all less than .75, which complies with the recommendation proposed by Ashford and Tsui (1991). This indicates that there is no high multicollinearity issue among the variables, allowing for subsequent regression analysis to test the hypotheses.◦

1. The Relationships of the Impostor Phenomenon, Workaholism, and Psychological Capital with Burnout

(1) Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout: The Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout exhibit a significant positive correlation ($r = .198$, $p < .05$), indicating that a higher level of the Impostor Phenomenon is associated with a higher level of Burnout.

(2) Impostor Phenomenon and Workaholism: The Impostor Phenomenon and Workaholism show a significant positive correlation ($r = .293$, $p < .01$), meaning that an increase in the Impostor Phenomenon corresponds to a higher tendency toward Workaholism.

(3) Impostor Phenomenon, Workaholism, and Psychological Capital: The Impostor Phenomenon is negatively but not significantly correlated with Psychological Capital ($r = -.093$, $p > .05$). Similarly, Workaholism and Psychological Capital also demonstrate a non-significant negative correlation ($r = -.132$, $p > .05$).

2. The Relationship between Workaholism and Burnout

Workaholism and Burnout have a significant positive correlation ($r = .319$, $p < .01$), indicating that higher levels of Workaholism are linked to higher levels of Burnout.

3. The Relationship between Psychological Capital and Burnout Psychological Capital and Burnout exhibit a significant negative correlation ($r = -.291, p < .01$), meaning that higher levels of Psychological Capital are associated with lower levels of Burnout.

4. The Relationship between Demographic Variables and the Impostor Phenomenon Gender and the Impostor Phenomenon show a significant positive correlation ($r = .247, p < .01$). This suggests that female employees are more likely to experience the Impostor Phenomenon than their male counterparts.

5. The Relationship between Demographic Variables and Psychological Capital Both age and work tenure are significantly and positively correlated with Psychological Capital. Older age is associated with significantly higher levels of Psychological Capital ($r = .624, p < .01$), and longer work tenure is also linked to a significant increase in Psychological Capital ($r = .713, p < .01$).

Table 4.6 Means, standard deviations and correlations

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Impostor Phenomenon	3.324	0.416	1	.293**	.198*	-0.093	.247**	-0.103	0.001
2. Workaholism	2.155	0.511	.293**	1	.319**	-0.132	-0.038	-.217*	-0.148
3. Burnout	1.025	0.112	.198*	.319**	1	-.291**	0.015	-.229*	-0.178
4. Psychological Capital	3.561	0.462	-0.093	-0.132	-.291**	1	0.044	.624**	.713**
5. Gender	1.620	0.486	.247**	-0.038	0.015	0.044	1	0.061	0.087
6. Age	1.790	0.725	-0.103	-.217*	-.229*	.624**	0.061	1	.556**
7. Work Tenure	2.220	0.719	0.001	-0.148	-0.178	.713**	0.087	.556**	1

Notes: Gender: 1 = male, 2 = female.

Age: 1 = ≤ 20 , 2 = 21–25, 3 = 26–30.

Work Tenure: 1 = < 1 year, 2 = 1 to < 2 years, 3 = 2 to < 3 years.

4.4 Regression Analysis

The purpose of this study is to examine whether significant relationships exist among the Impostor Phenomenon, Workaholism, and Burnout. Previous research has found that females are more prone to experiencing the Impostor Phenomenon than males (Li et al., 2014; Cusack et al., 2013). Age is considered a potential antecedent of Psychological Capital (Liu et al., 2012), while work tenure represents the accumulation of workplace experience, serving as an antecedent for reasons similar to those of age. Therefore, to ensure the findings are not confounded by external factors, this study includes gender, age, and work tenure as control variables. Furthermore, the study employs the PROCESS macro for SPSS Version 4.2 developed by Hayes, utilizing Model 4 to test the mediation effect and Model 14 to conduct the moderated regression analysis.

4.4.1 Regression Analysis of the Mediating Effect of Workaholism and Hypothesis Verification

This study utilizes Model 4 of the PROCESS macro for SPSS Version 4.2, developed by Hayes, to conduct a regression analysis aimed at examining the mediating effect of Workaholism between the Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout.

Table 4.7: Summary of Model 4

Variable	Workaholism		Burnout	
	β	SE	β	SE
Gender	-.1328	.1252	.0164	.1389
Age	-.1326	.0983	-.1232	.1094
Work Tenure	-.0525	.0985	-.0734	.1088
Impostor Phenomenon	.3874**	.1203	.1548	.1391
Workaholism			.2757*	.1067
	$R^2 = .1326$		$R^2 = .1427$	
	$F(4, 107) = 4.0909***$		$F(5, 106) = 3.5289***$	

(1) The Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout

Regarding whether the Impostor Phenomenon impacts Burnout, this study proposed H1: The Impostor Phenomenon has a positive effect on Burnout. According to the regression analysis of the Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout, as shown in Table 4.7, the Impostor Phenomenon does

not exhibit a significant positive relationship with Burnout ($\beta = .1548, p > .05$). Therefore, H1 is unsupported.

(2) The Impostor Phenomenon and Workaholism

Regarding whether the Impostor Phenomenon affects Workaholism, this study proposed H2: There is a positive relationship between the Impostor Phenomenon and Workaholism. Based on the regression analysis results presented in Table 4.7, a significant positive relationship indeed exists between the Impostor Phenomenon and Workaholism ($\beta = .3874, p < .01$). Thus, H2 is supported.

(3) Workaholism and Burnout

After introducing Workaholism as a mediating variable to observe the indirect effect of the Impostor Phenomenon on Burnout, this study proposed H3: There is a positive relationship between Workaholism and Burnout. According to the regression analysis results in Table 4.7, Workaholism demonstrates a positive relationship with Burnout ($\beta = .2757, p < .05$). Therefore, H3 is supported.

Table 4.8: *The Effect of the Mediation Model*

Numeric Estimands	Effect	SE	P	LICI	ULCI
Total effect	.2616	.1363	.0576	-.0086	.5318
Direct effect	.1548	.1391	.2684	-.121	.4305
Indirect effect	.1068	.0586		.0176	.2438
Workaholism	.2757*	.1067	.0111	.0642	.4873

Bootstrapping indirect effects				
	<i>M</i>	<i>BootSE</i>	<i>BootLLCI</i>	<i>BootULCI</i>
Effect	.1068	.0586	.0176	.2438

As shown in Table 4.8, the total effect of the Impostor Phenomenon on Burnout is not significant ($\beta = .2616, p > .05$, 95% CI [-.0086, .5318]), as the 95% confidence interval includes zero. Similarly, the direct effect of the Impostor Phenomenon on Burnout is not significant ($\beta = .1548, p > .05$, 95% CI [-.121, .4305]), with the 95% confidence interval also including zero. However,

the indirect effect of the Impostor Phenomenon on Burnout through Workaholism is significant ($\beta = .1068$, 95% CI [.0176, .2438]), and the 95% confidence interval does not include zero. Therefore, H4 is supported.

4.4.2 Regression Analysis of the Moderating Effect of Psychological Capital and Hypothesis Verification

This study utilizes Model 14 of the PROCESS macro for SPSS Version 4.2, developed by Hayes, to conduct a moderated regression analysis. This analysis aims to examine the moderating effect of Psychological Capital on the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout.

Table 4.9: Summary of Model 14

Variable	Workaholism		Burnout	
	β	SE	β	SE
Gender	-.1328	.1252	.0586	.1245
Age	-.1326	.0983	-.0889	.1066
Years	-.0525	.0985	.1565	.1194
Impostor Phenomenon	.3874**	.1203	.0675	.1255
Workaholism			.2772**	.0956
Psychological Capital			-.3062	.1576
Workaholism *			-.8522***	.1764
Psychological Capital				
	$R^2 = .1326$		$R^2 = .328$	
	$F(4, 107) = 4.0909***$		$F(7, 104) = 7.2532***$	

(1) The Moderating Effect of Psychological Capital

To examine the moderating effect of Psychological Capital on the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout, this study proposed H5: Psychological Capital moderates the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout. Specifically, when Psychological Capital is low, the positive impact of Workaholism on Burnout is stronger; conversely, when Psychological Capital is high, this relationship is weaker. As shown in Table 4.9, the interaction term of Workaholism and Psychological Capital has a significant effect on Burnout ($\beta = -.8522$, $p < .001$).

To further examine whether this interaction effect aligns with the expected pattern of this study, we followed the procedure outlined by Aiken and West (1991)—adding and subtracting one standard deviation—to plot the interaction effect and conduct a simple slope analysis. As illustrated in Figure 4.1, the interaction pattern is consistent with our expectations: compared to individuals with high Psychological Capital, the positive impact of Workaholism on Burnout is stronger for those with low Psychological Capital. The simple slope analysis also indicates that when Psychological Capital is low, the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout is significant (slope = .77, $p < .001$); however, when Psychological Capital is high, the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout is not significant (slope = -.21, $p > .05$). The results demonstrate that when an individual's level of Psychological Capital is lower, the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout tends to be more distinctly positive.

Given that the aforementioned results indicate the interaction between Workaholism and Psychological Capital affects Burnout, this study further examined the moderating role of Psychological Capital on the indirect effect of the Impostor Phenomenon on Burnout through Workaholism. As shown in Table 4.9, under the condition of low Psychological Capital, the conditional indirect effect of the Impostor Phenomenon on Burnout through Workaholism is significant (Effect = .297, 95% CI [.0422, .6711]). Conversely, under the condition of high Psychological Capital, the conditional indirect effect is not significant (Effect = -.0822, 95% CI [-.2429, .0067]). Furthermore, the index of moderated mediation reveals that the moderated mediation effect is statistically significant (Effect = .3301, 95% CI [-.7794, -.0341]). Therefore, H5 is supported.

Figure 4.1: *Interaction plot of Workaholism and Psychological Capital on Burnout*

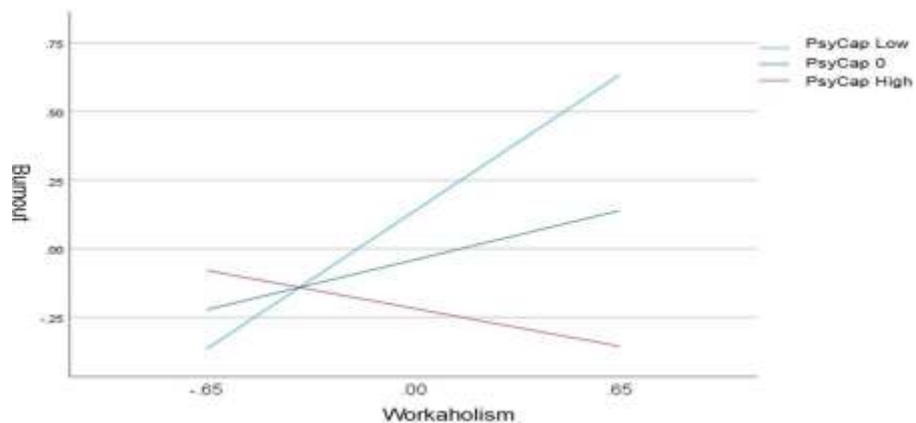


Table 4.10: *Moderated Mediation Analysis Results*

Conditional indirect effects				
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Low (-1SD)	0.297	0.1663	0.0422	0.6711
	0.1074	0.0568	0.0211	0.238
Hight (+1SD)	-0.0822	0.0679	-0.2429	0.0067
Index of moderated mediation				
Psychological Capital	-0.3301	0.1977	-0.7794	-0.0341

4.5 Summary

In conclusion, based on the comprehensive data analysis conducted in this study, the fit indices comply with the established criteria, and the various evaluation indicators have largely reached a good standard. Furthermore, the evaluation of the overall model fit almost entirely meets the expected thresholds. Table 4.11 below presents a summary of the analytical results of this study.

Table 4.11: *The summary of hypothesis testing*

Hypothesis	Statament	Result
H1	Impostor Phenomenon is positively associated with Burnout.	Unsupported
H2	Impostor Phenomenon is positively associated with Workaholism.	Supported
H3	Workaholism is positively associated with Burnout.	Supported
H4	Workaholism mediates the impact of Impostor Phenomenon on Burnout.	Supported
H5	PsyCap moderates the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout. The positive effect of Workaholism on Burnout is stronger when PsyCap is low, and weaker when PsyCap is high.	Supported

5. Discussion

This chapter discusses the statistical analysis results presented in Chapter 4 and proposes managerial implications based on the research findings.

5.1 Research Discussion

1. The Relationship Between the Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout

Regarding hypothesis H1, the analysis results indicate that the Impostor Phenomenon does not have a significant impact on Burnout ($\beta = .1548$, $p > .05$), as shown in Table 4.7; thus, H1 is unsupported. This contradicts some existing literature, possibly because the sample in this study predominantly consists of early-career newcomers who have not yet experienced long-term resource depletion. This result suggests that the impact of impostor tendencies on Burnout might occur through other mediating variables, and its underlying trajectory requires further investigation.

2. The Relationship Between the Impostor Phenomenon and Workaholism

According to the test results for hypothesis H2, the Impostor Phenomenon demonstrates a significant positive relationship with Workaholism ($\beta = .3874$, $p < .01$), also shown in Table 4.7, indicating the presence of a compensatory mechanism. Individuals with impostor tendencies tend to respond to internal insecurities through overworking, thereby developing a tendency toward Workaholism. This reflects the psychological price paid by individuals to maintain superficial achievements.

3. The Relationship Between Workaholism and Burnout

Regarding hypothesis H3, this study finds that Workaholism has a significant positive impact on Burnout ($\beta = .2757$, $p < .05$), as shown in Table 4.7. This result is consistent with the Conservation of Resources theory, highlighting that long-term over-involvement causes the depletion of psychological resources, subsequently leading to an increase in Burnout. This also serves as a reminder for organizations to be vigilant regarding the long-term psychological risks implicit in Workaholism.

4. The Mediating Effect of Workaholism

Hypothesis H4 explores whether Workaholism mediates the relationship between the Impostor Phenomenon and Burnout. The results reveal a significant mediating effect (indirect effect $\beta = .1068$, 95% CI [.0176, .2438]), as shown in Table 4.8; thus, H4 is supported. This indicates that

although individuals with impostor tendencies may not directly experience Burnout, their compensatory involvement behaviors trigger Workaholism, which in turn depletes psychological resources and induces Burnout.

5. The Moderating Effect of Psychological Capital

Finally, hypothesis H5 examines the moderating role of Psychological Capital on the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout. The analysis shows a significant interaction effect ($\beta = -0.8522$, $p < .001$), as shown in Table 4.9; thus, H5 is supported. Simple slope analysis further indicates that when Psychological Capital is low, the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout is significant; conversely, when Psychological Capital is high, there is no significant relationship. This result demonstrates that Psychological Capital serves as a crucial psychological resource, assisting individuals in mitigating the negative consequences induced by overworking.

5.2 Managerial Implications

Based on the empirical analysis of the relationships among the Impostor Phenomenon, Workaholism, Burnout, and Psychological Capital in this study, the following four managerial implications are proposed as references for corporate and human resource management practices.

1. Identify and Address the Psychological State of Employees with Impostor Tendencies

The research findings indicate that although the Impostor Phenomenon does not directly or significantly impact Burnout, it can ultimately lead to psychological exhaustion among employees through the mediating pathway of Workaholism. In response to this, organizations should heighten their sensitivity to impostor tendencies, particularly among new hires, highly educated individuals, or in work environments with high performance demands, where employees' self-doubt and the psychological pressure of fearing exposure are more likely to be concealed. Managers can assist employees in clarifying their sense of self-worth through regular feedback, non-judgmental dialogues, or mental health check-ins, preventing them from developing unhealthy work patterns driven by internal anxiety.

2. Be Vigilant that "Overworking" May Be a Sign of Workaholism

This study finds that Workaholism has a significant positive impact on Burnout, demonstrating that when employees remain in a state of over-involvement for prolonged periods, it leads to the gradual depletion of psychological resources, subsequently affecting their work performance as well as their physical and mental health. Therefore, organizations should distinguish between "active engagement" and "compulsive involvement," and remain vigilant as to whether an excessive sense of responsibility, long working hours, or the inability to disengage from work reflects internal stress or compensatory psychology. It is recommended to introduce flexible working hours and mandatory leave mechanisms, and to promote a healthy work culture, thereby reducing the negative impact of Workaholism on employee well-being.

3. Emphasize the Establishment and Enhancement of Psychological Capital

Psychological Capital has been proven in this study to moderate the relationship between Workaholism and Burnout, exerting a protective function that buffers stress. Employees equipped with high Psychological Capital can maintain greater resilience and positive thinking even when facing intense work pressure and high self-demands. Consequently, organizations can strengthen employees' development in dimensions such as "hope, self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience" through training courses, coaching, and psychological support resources, thereby enhancing their overall stress resistance and endurance.

4. Foster a Supportive and Psychologically Safe Organizational Culture

From the overall context of this study, it is evident that when employees lack psychological support, they are prone to veer toward compensatory work and a trajectory of exhaustion. Therefore, it is advised that organizations foster an environment at the institutional and cultural levels that permits learning from mistakes, affirms individual differences, and encourages open communication. Supervisors should also act as positive guides; by providing affirmation, encouragement, and timely feedback, they can alleviate employees' anxiety regarding performance and assist them in establishing a stable sense of belonging and work motivation.

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