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# Impostor Phenomenon, Perfectionism, Psychological Distress, and Burnout in Pre-Health Undergraduate Students

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## Introduction

Careers in the healthcare field are demanding, and each stage closer to attaining the career aspirations is filled with increasing amount of stress. Previous research highlighted impostor phenomenon, perfectionism, psychological distress, and burnout in graduate students; however, this study's primary focus was to investigate the relationships between these constructs in an undergraduate pre-health population. This study aimed to find whether or not impostor phenomenon, perfectionism, and psychological distress could be considered predictors of burnout and whether or not pre-health students differed from non-pre-health students in their levels of these constructs.

## Methods

There were 350 participants in this study. This study utilized the Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale, Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, Distress Questionnaire-5, and the Burnout Assessment Tool. Our survey on Qualtrics invited pre-health students and introductory psychology students to participate. Upon completion of data collection, the responses were cleaned and analyzed using Jamovi.

In pre-health students,  
**perfectionism and  
psychological distress** were  
predictors of burnout.

Pre-health place themselves  
under **higher** levels of  
**personal standards** than  
non-pre-health students.

## Results

### Multiple Regression Analysis

	Standard. Coef.	p-value
CIPS	-9.43e-4	0.986
FMPS	0.13684	0.008
DQ-5	0.75793	< 0.001
Age	-0.00897	0.842
Gender	0.03713	0.330
Race/Ethnicity	-0.07522	0.051
Year in School	0.01671	0.705
Concentrations	0.00303	0.937
Constant	—	0.062

### ANOVA Analysis

Personal Standards (FMPS Subscale)  
 $F(1, 348) = 20.2, p < 0.001$   
 Pre-Health Mean = 26.1 (SD = 5.33)  
 Non-Pre-Health Mean = 23.4 (SD = 5.69)

## Discussion

The results from this study imply that there is more to these constructs than meets the eye. There is a possibility, while impostor phenomenon is not a significant predictor of burnout, it could still be related through the moderating variable of psychological distress. The differences in personal standards of pre-health students needs further investigation, as there may more complex explanations for this than the study allows.