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Help, I am not a stereotype!  
Discrepancies in self-description and perceived gender  
norms might enhance impostor feelings

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### **Abstract**

The Imposter phenomenon as well as gender stereotypes have high impact on individuals work life. Even though there are connecting elements, there is few research combining these two topics. The aim of our study was to investigate the impact of communal self-description on impostor feelings, as well as the impact of discrepancies in self-ascribed and perceived ideal communal and agentic traits for women and men on impostor feelings. Further we wanted to explore the impact of the gender type of a job as a moderator variable. For this aim we conducted an online questionnaire and received a final sample of 525 participants.

Contrary to previous assumptions we found that lower levels of self-ascribed communion in women were connected to higher levels of impostor feelings, while no effects were found for men. Additionally, in an explorative analysis, we found that lower levels of self-ascribed agency were connected to higher levels of impostor feelings in women and men. As suspected, we could show that higher discrepancies between self-ascribed and perceived ideal traits, communal as well as agentic, were connected to higher levels of impostor feelings in both women and men. Contrary to our assumptions we could not find any moderating effect of the job type. Overall, our results indicate an influence of gender stereotypes on the impostor phenomenon and the need for further research.

*Keywords:* Impostor phenomenon, gender stereotypes, prescriptive stereotypes, discrepancies, job type.

### **Zusammenfassung**

Das Imposter Phänomen sowie Geschlechterstereotype haben einen hohen Einfluss auf das Arbeitsleben von Personen. Obwohl es verbindende Elemente zwischen den beiden gibt, gibt es bisher nur wenige Forschung, die diese beiden Themen kombiniert. Ziel unserer Studie war es, den Einfluss von selbst zugeschriebenen femininen Eigenschaften auf Impostor-Gefühle, sowie den Einfluss von Diskrepanzen in selbst zugeschriebenen und wahrgenommenen idealen femininen und maskulinen Eigenschaften für Frauen und Männer auf Impostor-Gefühle zu untersuchen. Des Weiteren wollten wir den Einfluss des Geschlechtstyps eines Jobs als Moderatorvariable untersuchen. Zu diesem Zweck haben wir einen Online-Fragebogen, mit einer finalen Stichprobe von 525 Teilnehmern, durchgeführt. Im Widerspruch zu früheren Annahmen stellten wir fest, dass ein geringeres Maß an selbst zugeschriebenen femininen Eigenschaften bei Frauen mit einem höheren Maß an Impostor-Gefühlen verbunden war. Wir konnten jedoch keine Auswirkungen auf Männer feststellen. In einer explorativen Analyse stellten wir zudem fest, dass ein geringeres Maß an selbst zugeschriebenen maskulinen Eigenschaften mit einem höheren Maß an Impostor-Gefühlen bei Frauen und Männern verbunden war. Wie vermutet, konnten wir zeigen, dass höhere Diskrepanzen zwischen selbst zugeschriebenen und wahrgenommenen idealen Eigenschaften, sowohl femininen als auch maskulinen, mit höheren Impostor-Gefühlen sowohl bei Frauen als auch bei Männern verbunden waren. Entgegen unserer Vermutung konnten wir keinen moderierenden Effekt des Jobtyps feststellen. Insgesamt deuten unsere Ergebnisse auf einen Einfluss von Geschlechterstereotypen auf das Impostor Phänomen hin, sowie die Notwendigkeit von weiter Forschung.

*Schlüsselworte:* Impostor Phänomen, Geschlechterstereotype, präskriptive Stereotype, Diskrepanzen, Jobtyp.

## Introduction

The impostor phenomenon (IP) is more relevant than ever. Briefly, the IP describes the fear of individuals to be discovered as a fraud, despite lacking objective reasons or evidence for this fear (Clance, 1985). After the first description of the phenomenon (Clance, 1972), research interest on the subject has increased dramatically, especially in the German-speaking countries. For example, a query in the database PSYINDEX, which provides German-language articles, revealed that all 13 articles found with the keyword *impostor phenomenon* were published during the last seven years (accessed on the 10.04.2019). Even in the German-language media, the impostor phenomenon has shown to be a popular topic (e.g., “Waiting for the moment, it will be discovered”, Güngör, 2018). Plenty additional newspaper articles have been published regarding this topic in the last year (e.g. Gelitz, 2018; Güngör, 2018; Holzki, 2018). Furthermore, in 2018 alone, three German-language books about the impostor phenomenon were published (Magnet, 2018; Mount & Tardnico, 2018; Rohrmann, 2018). The fear of being a fraud seems to address a broad range of people throughout all social strata and is noticeable in different aspects of the everyday life.

Nevertheless, the focus of research, articles and media regarding the impostor phenomenon so far has been primarily on women (e.g. Clance, Dingman, Reviere & Stober, 1995). This may be due to the circumstance, that a lot of constructs correlating with the IP, for example neuroticism (Bernard, Dollinger, & Ramaniah, 2002), perfectionism, and anxiety (Rohrmann, Bechtholdt & Leonardt, 2016), are more prevalent in women (Weisberg, DeYoung, & Hirsh, 2011; Raspopovic, 2015).

Although the IP was first described exclusively as a women’s issue, later studies also frequently described the phenomenon in men (e.g., Ferrari & Thompson, 2006; Lester & Moderski, 1995).

In this study, we will examine the impact of gender stereotypes, rather than the impact of gender on impostor feelings. Specifically, we will investigate how stereotypical self-descriptions (as typically female or male) and their relations to perceived ideals of femininity and masculinity impact impostor feelings. In addition, we will examine whether job type (male, female, neutral) mediates these relations.

Following, we will first present previous research on the impostor phenomenon, and gender stereotypes, then we will describe how effects of gender stereotypes and impostor feelings may be intertwined.

## **Impostor phenomenon**

The impostor phenomenon (IP) describes strong negative feelings in an individual who is regarded successful by external standards but thinks that their performance is undeserved and is therefore afraid of being exposed as fraud (Clance & Imes, 1978). Early on the impostor phenomenon was seen as a women's issue. The term was originally described by Clance and Imes (1978) in a clinical setting and was "used to designate an internal experience of intellectual phoniness which appears to be particularly prevalent and intense among a select sample of high achieving women" (Clance & Imes, 1978, p.241). Individuals with Impostor feelings often show high levels of anxiety, depression and general dissatisfaction in life.

Clance (1985) described six different components of the IP. The first component is the *Impostor Cycle*. It starts with an achievement-related task which is followed by anxiety, self-doubt or worry. There are two ways a person experiencing the IP may react - over-preparation or procrastination. With the accomplishment of the task comes a feeling of relief. When receiving positive feedback, the impostor who over-prepared will ascribe it to the effort while the imposter who procrastinated will ascribe it to luck. This means they both discount the positive feedback. Subsequently, this leads to a perceived feeling of fraudulence, increased self-doubt, depression and anxiety from which the impostor cycle starts over again. The second component is the need to feel special compared to other people, which is common among Impostors. The third component, the so-called "Superwoman/ Superman aspects" (Clance, 1985, p. 26), involves a tendency for perfection. The fourth component is a fear of failure, which often leads impostors to go to great and often costly lengths to prevent themselves from failing. The fifth component entails the denial of one's own competence and the discounting of praise from others. Impostors tend to ascribe success to external factors such as luck or hard work. Moreover, Impostors do not only deny but actively look for evidence that they do not deserve praise. The sixth component includes fear and guilt regarding their own success. Even though a lot of impostors aim for success, they often fear the consequences that come along with it at the same time (Clance, 1985).

There are different approaches to explain the development of IP, including individual differences in perfectionism, individual differences in attributional pattern, or a person's family environment (Clance, 1985). Looking at attributional patterns reveals that some individuals with impostor feelings have difficulties internalizing their success (Clance, 1985). Such attributional patterns are more common in women and girls (e.g. Dickhäuser & Meyer,



2006). However, IP also occurred in men, particular those who appear to be more in touch with their “feminine’ qualities” (Clance & Imes, 1978, p.241).

A lot of research studied the IP within the work context, as it seems to have large effects in work life and academic careers (e. g. Neureiter, 2016; Klinkhammer, 2009; Fried-Buchalter, 1997). For example, Harvey and Katz (1985) reported that people who perceived their profession as atypical for their gender tend to experience higher levels of impostor feelings.

### **Gender stereotypes**

Generally, “stereotypes are generalizations about groups that are applied to individual group members simply because they belong to that group.” (Heilman, 2012, p.114) By extension, “gender stereotypes are generalizations about the attributes of men and women” (Heilman, 2012, p.114). There are two types of gender stereotypes: descriptive and prescriptive. Descriptive gender stereotypes are characterizations, these stereotypes refer to what women and men *are* like. Prescriptive gender stereotypes are requirements, they refer to what women and men *should be* or what they should not be like (Heilman, 2012). For both types of stereotypes, we can distinguish between attributes typical for women and attributes typical for men. For the female stereotype, communality is often seen as the defining characterization (e.g., care for others, emotional sensitivity), while for the male stereotype agency is viewed as the defining characterization (e.g., achievement-orientation, rationality) (Heilman, 2012). If the displayed behavior by an individual does not meet these expectations, social norms are violated, which often results in penalizations, a phenomenon also called the *backlash effect* (Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs & Tamkins, 2004; Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Obituaries studies showed that descriptive stereotypes have changed, while prescriptive stereotypes might not have changed over time (Zehnter, Olsen & Kirchler, 2018). Consequently, there might be discrepancies in individuals between descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes today. Likely, the self-descriptions of people regarding their communal and agentic traits have changed in accordance with social changes in descriptive gender stereotypes.

Individuals likely are aware of their own female and male characteristics; at the same time, individuals are certainly aware of how women and men should conform to gender norms and how they should behave as a representative of their gender group. Discrepancies between the perceived own characteristics and perceived ideals could lead to cognitive dissonances.

According to the *cognitive dissonance theory* (Festinger, 1978) a situation involving conflicting attitudes or behavior produces a feeling of discomfort (cognitive dissonance) and individuals aspire to consistency. Therefore, individuals attempt to reduce those feelings by gathering information that supports their view, reevaluating existing thoughts and beliefs or by changing their behavior. However, a resolution of the dissonance is not guaranteed. Even though there appears to be no current literature on this topic, there could be a link to the IP, insofar as dissonance between self-description and a perceived ideal can cause discomfort. Because of that discomfort, the person might feel the desire to produce consistency. To feel like an impostor could be one way to achieve consistency. To give an example within in the context of gender stereotypes; a woman with perceived atypical traits for a woman might not be as successful in certain areas of life, as life or job, as women with perceived typical traits. If the woman sees herself as an impostor, and therefore not as successful, her discomfort regarding the dissonance to the stereotype might be reduced.

In line with the notions of dissonances and discrepancies, Heilman (1983, 2001) postulated the *Lack of Fit Model*. It describes why a person is expected to be successful or unsuccessful in a job based on gender bias. More precisely, the model describes the (lack of) fit between the perceived requirements for the job and the perceived attributes of a person. Attributes could be communal traits, which are perceived as typical for women, and agentic traits which are perceived as typical for men. So, for example, a person in a male-type job with communal attributes should be expected to be unsuccessful in this particular job.

Looking at the work-related context, there are connecting elements between the impostor phenomenon and gender stereotypes. Heilman (1983) linked perceptions of gender stereotypes to expectations of success or failure in the Lack of Fit Model. Dodson and Borders (2006) highlighted the connection between gender stereotypes and job satisfaction. Similar links have been found regarding research on the impostor phenomenon. Neureiter and Traut-Mattausch (2016a) for example showed that there are significant connections between the impostor phenomenon and career satisfaction, as well as job satisfaction and salary. Neureiter and Traut-Mattausch (2016b) also found significant correlations between the impostor phenomenon and fear of success, in addition to fear of failure and the motivation to lead.

Yet there is very little research which has studied the relationship between gender stereotypes and impostor feelings.

## Goals and Hypotheses

The aim of our study was to examine the impact of gender stereotypes, rather than the impact of gender on impostor feelings.

One goal of this study was to examine the relationship between stereotypical feminine characteristics, in the form of the self-ascribed communal traits, and impostor feelings in women and men. Such a relationship has already been proposed by Clance and Imes (1978) but has not been studied systematically.

H1: The more individuals (women and men) describe themselves with communal traits, the more impostor feelings they experience.

Next, we examined whether job-type moderated the effect of self-ascribed communality and self-ascribed agency on impostor feelings.

H2:

- a. The relation between communal self-description and levels of impostor feelings will be moderated by the job type.
- b. The relation between agentic self-description and levels of impostor feelings will be moderated by the job type.

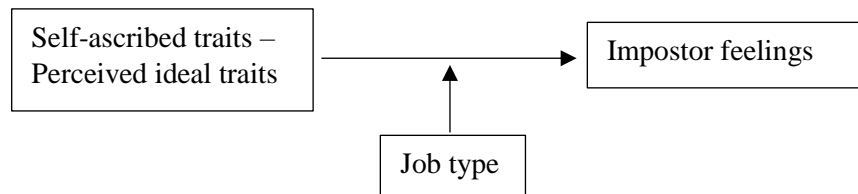
Furthermore, we examined the effect of discrepancies in self-ascribed and perceived ideal traits on impostor feelings.

H3: Higher discrepancies between self-description and perceived prescriptive gender stereotypes lead to higher levels of impostor feelings.

- a. Higher discrepancies between levels of self-ascribed communion and perceived ideal levels of communion lead to higher levels of impostor feelings.
- b. Higher discrepancies between levels self-ascribed agency and perceived ideal levels of agency lead to higher levels of impostor feelings.

Next, we examined whether job-type moderated the effect of discrepancies in self-ascribed and perceived ideal agentic and communal traits on impostor feelings (see figure 1).

H4: The levels of impostor feelings caused by discrepancies in self-description and perceived prescriptive gender stereotypes is moderated through job type.



*Figure 1.* Relations between the variables of the fourth Hypothesis.

## Methods

### Participants

Participants had to be aged 18 years or older, and they had to be German native speakers. The final sample included 525 participants. 734 participants started the questionnaire with 537 (73 %) participants going on to complete the questionnaire. The drop-out rate is in line with similar studies (e.g. Patzak, Kollmayer & Schober, 2017). Of the 537 participants, 12 participants were excluded because they were under the age of 18. The most important sociodemographic data is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

*Sociodemographic data of the sample*

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Female	253	48,2
Male	161	30,7
n.a.	111	21,1
Residence		
Austria	122	23,2
Germany	396	75,4
Other	7	1,3
Occupation <sup>a</sup>		
Student	75	14,29
Working	392	74,67
Pensioner	46	8,76
Other	43	8,19

*Note.* *N*= 525. <sup>a</sup>Multiple choices possible.

## Procedure

The study was conducted as an online questionnaire via the online platform SoSci Survey (Leiner, 2018; see Appendix). We used a convenience sample which was gathered through a combination of a snowball-sampling, personal acquaintances, friends and family. The link to the online questionnaire was sent to the participants via personal messages or email, most of them after an initial personal contact and were asked to pass the link to the study on to other acquaintances.

On the first page of the questionnaire the participants were told that the aim of the study was to investigate self-description and description of others, in the context of a master thesis.

At the beginning of the questionnaire, we asked participants to indicate their place of residence. This question allowed us to tailor the subsequent questions to the participants respective context, e.g., Austria, Germany. First, we asked participants to describe themselves in terms of several characteristics. Then we asked the participants to describe an ideal woman and an ideal man based on the same characteristics as with the self-description. The order in which the participants were asked about ideal women or ideal men was randomized. After the questions regarding ideal women and men, questions about impostor feelings were posed.

The order of the items within each scale was randomised for each participant. In the end we asked the participants for their demographic data, such as age, gender, nationality and occupation.

On the last page the participants were informed about the constructs underlying this study, as they were gender stereotypes and the impostor phenomenon.

## **Material**

### **Self-description and gender stereotypes.**

For the questions about self-description and gender stereotypes we used a list of traits based on Prentice and Carranza (2002) to create the items. To simplify this questionnaire, we selected 17 intensified prescriptive and proscriptive characteristics for women and men that were most appropriate for our study. The traits used for the self-description and the description of ideal men and women included characteristics viewed as positive as well as characteristics viewed as negative.

The positively viewed communal characteristics were: warm & kind, sensitive, friendly, cheerful, polite, expresses emotion and cooperative. The negatively viewed characteristics were: controlling and arrogant.

The positively viewed agentic characteristics were: leadership ability, self-reliant, assertive, rational, competitive, business sense and willing to take risks. The negatively viewed characteristic was: emotional.

The questions and traits used for the self-description and gender stereotypes were translated into German via forward-backward translation.

***Self-description.***

To measure self-ascribed agency and communality, we used items based on the communal and agentic characteristics mentioned before.

The question for the self-description was “how well each of the following traits describes you” (see Appendix A3). The participants then had to rate the 17 items on a 9-point Likert scale with regards to how characteristic they are for them (1=very uncharacteristic to 9=very characteristic). The Cronbach’s alpha for communal traits was .76. The Cronbach’s alpha for agentic traits was .67.

***Prescriptive gender stereotypes.***

To measure prescriptive female gender stereotypes, we asked participants to indicate the desirability of several characteristics for an ideal woman in their society. The question was tailored to the participants indicated place of residence. The question for female gender stereotypes (ideal women) was “how desirable is it for a *woman* in *German/Austrian/your* society to possess each of these characteristics” (see Appendix A4). Participants had to rate the characteristics of the 17 items for their desirability for women on a 9-point scale (1 = very undesirable to 9 = very desirable). The Cronbach’s alpha for communal traits was .80, while the Cronbach’s alpha for agentic traits was .85.

The question for male gender stereotypes (ideal men) was “how desirable is it for a *man* in *German/Austrian/your* society to possess each of these characteristics” (see Appendix A5). The scale was a 9-point Likert scale from 1 (very undesirable) to 9 (very desirable). The Cronbach’s alpha for communal traits was .88. The Cronbach’s alpha for agentic traits was .86.

***Impostor phenomenon.***

To measure the impostor phenomenon, we used the 20-item German-language Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (GCIPS; Clance, 1988), validated by Brauer and Wolf (2016). Example items include “I can give the impression that I’m more competent than I really am.” and “I’m afraid people important to me may find out that I’m not as capable as they think I am.” (see Appendix A6). Participants could respond on a 5-point Likert scale (1=never to 5=always). Originally Clance (1985) aggregated the participants’ response into four levels of impostor experience (few, moderate, frequent and intense), the higher the score, the higher the impostor experience. However, we did not apply the cut-off values in this study, instead the

values were treated as a metric scale in order to use the data more comprehensively. The Cronbach's alpha was .90.

### **Profession.**

To measure the impact of profession on the impostor phenomenon, we asked the participants who indicated to be working about their profession. We aggregated the information on profession into the categories: typical female, typical male or neutral professions. The categorization was based on the newest statistics from the German Federal Employment Agency on gender distribution in occupations (Bundesagentur für Arbeit Statistik, 2018). In accordance with other studies (e.g. Hausmann & Kleinert, 2014) occupations with >70% women were rated as typically female and occupations with <30% women were rated as typically male.

## **Results**

In the following section, we will first present the results based on the tests of the hypotheses of this study. Then, we will present additional explorative analyses.

### **Hypotheses Tests**

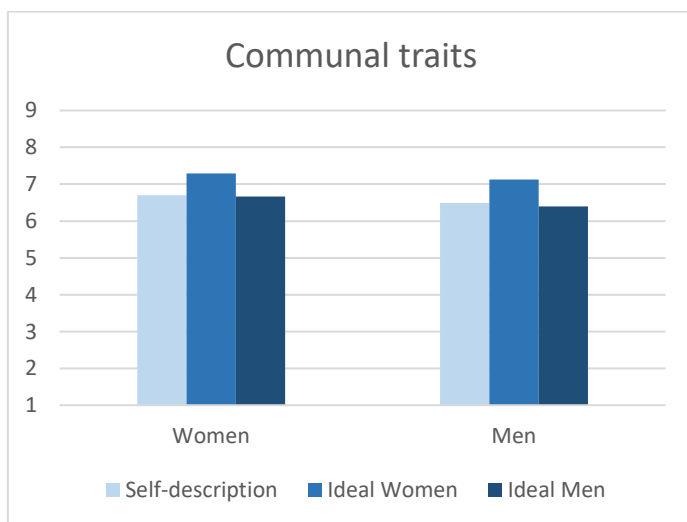
The central variables were impostor feelings, self-ascribed communion (SD communion) and agency (SD agency), perceived ideal communion and agency in women, perceived ideal communion and agency in men and job type. The mean scores of the individual variables by gender are summarized in Table 2 and 3, and Figures 2 and 3. We found three outliers in the variable self-ascribed communion, which were excluded from our analyses.



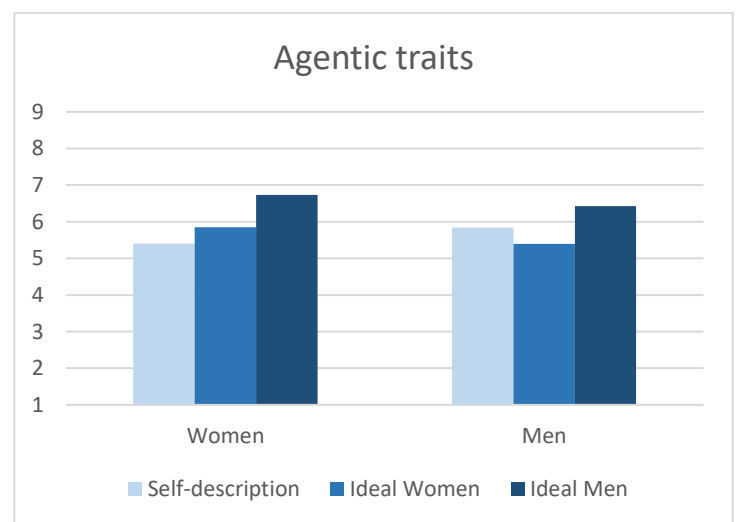
Table 2

*Mean values of the main variables*

	Women	Men
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Impostor score	52.27 (12.05)	51.42 (11.07)
SD communion	6.70 (0.86)	6.49 (0.93)
SD agency	5.41 (1.02)	5.84 (0.90)
Communion in ideal women	7.29 (0.90)	7.12 (1.01)
Agency in ideal women	5.85 (1.34)	5.40 (1.26)
Communion in ideal men	6.67 (1.31)	6.39 (1.30)
Agency in ideal men	6.74 (1.13)	6.43 (1.21)

*Notes.* Women  $n=250$ , men  $n=161$ .

*Figure 2.* Mean values of communal traits across the three questions for self-ascribed traits and perceived ideal traits for women and men, separated by gender.  $N = 411$ .



*Figure 3.* Mean values of agentic traits across the three questions for self-ascribed traits and perceived ideal traits for women and men, separated by gender.  $N = 411$ .

Table 3

*Frequencies sex type of the job*

	In total	Women	Men
Female job type	140	83	17
Male job type	127	51	50
Neutral job type	100	50	30

*Notes.*  $N=367$ , women  $n=250$ , men  $n=161$ .**Impact of communal self-description on impostor feelings.**

To investigate whether, communal self-description had an impact on impostor feelings, we conducted a simple linear regression. The assumptions of linear regressions, normal distribution of the residuals, homoscedasticity and a lack of autocorrelations were met. Communal self-description significantly predicted impostor feelings ( $b = -1.36$ ,  $SE = 0.57$ ,  $p = .018$ ) with an  $R^2 = .01$  ( $F(1, 520) = 5.59$ ,  $p = .018$ ). We explored the regression by gender and found that communal self-description had a significant impact on impostor feelings in women ( $b = -2.42$ ,  $SE = 0.88$ ,  $p = .006$ ;  $R^2 = .03$ ,  $F(1, 248) = 7.60$ ,  $p = .006$ ) but not in men ( $b = -0.94$ ,  $SE = 0.94$ ,  $p = .319$ ;  $R^2 = .01$ ,  $F(1, 159) = 0.99$ ,  $p = .319$ ). In sum, our results suggest that, contrary to our hypotheses, women who reported lower communal self-description showed higher levels of impostor feelings. However, the results only explain a small part of the variance.

**Impact of self-description on impostor feelings moderated by the job type.**

To examine whether the effect of self-description on impostor feelings was moderated by job type, we performed two multiple regression analyses. The assumptions of multiple regressions, normal distribution residuals, homoscedasticity, a lack of autocorrelations and a lack of multicollinearity were met for both.

In the first multiple regression we calculated the extent of impostor feelings based on the self-ascribed communion and the job type. The regression was calculated in two steps. In model 1 we regressed self-ascribed communion, job type, and gender on impostor feelings. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that there was no significant effect between self-ascribed communion, job type, gender, and impostor feelings ( $F(3, 197) = 1.67$ ,  $p = .174$ ,

$R^2 = .03$ ). We examined the individual predictors further and found that self-ascribed communion ( $t = -1.98, p = .049$ ) was a significant predictor in the model.

In model 2 we added the two-way interactions and the three-way interactions of these variables to the regression equation. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that there was no significant effect between those variables ( $F(7, 193) = 1.53, p = .158, R^2 = .06$ ). We examined the individual predictors further and found that self-ascribed communion ( $t = -2.99, p = .003$ ) was a significant predictor in the model. As can be seen in Table 3, no significant effect was found for the other individual predictors.

In the second multiple regression we calculated extent of impostor feelings based on the self-ascribed agency and the job type. The regression was calculated in two steps. In model 1 we regressed self-ascribed agency, job type, and gender on impostor feelings. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated a significant effect for the overall model between self-ascribed agency, job type, gender, and impostor feelings ( $F(3, 197) = 5.02, p = .002, R^2 = .07$ ). We examined the individual predictors further and found that self-ascribed agency ( $t = -3.73, p < .001$ ) was a significant predictor in the model.

In model 2 we added the two-way interactions and the three-way interactions of these variables to the regression equation. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated a significant effect for the overall model between those variables ( $F(7, 193) = 2.67, p = .012, R^2 = .09$ ). We examined the individual predictors further and found that self-ascribed agency ( $t = -3.25, p = .001$ ) was a significant predictor in the model. As can be seen in Table 4, no significant effect was found for the other individual predictors.

In sum, even though we were able to find an effect on the variables for self-ascribed communion and agency, no effect was found with job type as a moderator.

Table 4. *Multiple linear regression for self-ascribed communion, job type and impostor feelings*

	Impostor Score							
	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Intercept	63.77	5.97		<.001	79.08	9.12		<.001
SD communion	-1.74	0.88	-0.14	.049	-4.03	1.35	-0.33	.003
Job type	-1.50	1.68	-0.07	.374	-24.13	15.34	-1.08	.117
Gender	-0.49	1.79	-0.02	.784	-39.63	20.88	-1.67	.059
SD communion					3.40	2.27	1.02	.136
x job type								
SD communion					6.08	3.22	1.69	.061
x gender								
Job type					36.79	26.80	1.42	.171
x gender								
SD communion					-5.73	4.08	-1.47	.162
x gender								
x job type								
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>		.03				.05		

*Note.* *N* = 200. Two independent variables were dummy coded: gender (0 = female, 1 = male) and job type (0 = typical female job, 1 = typical male job).

Table 5. *Multiple linear regression for self-ascribed agency, job type and impostor feelings*

	Impostor Score							
	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Intercept	69.27	4.73		<.001	74.23	6.93		<.001
SD agency	-3.22	0.86	-0.27	<.001	-4.19	1.29	-0.35	.001
Job type	0.35	1.72	0.02	.838	-20.91	12.85	-0.93	.105
Gender	-0.12	1.74	-0.01	.944	-5.88	17.41	-0.25	.736
SD					3.75	2.21	1.01	.091
communion x								
job type								
SD					1.29	3.16	0.32	.684
communion x								
gender								
Job type					28.68	23.17	1.11	.217
x gender								
SD					-5.25	4.06	-1.21	.198
communion x								
gender								
x job type								
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>		.07				.09		

*Note.* *N* = 200. Two independent variables were dummy coded: gender (0 = female, 1 = male) and job type (0 = typical female job, 1 = typical male job).

### **Impact of discrepancies between self-description and prescriptive gender stereotypes on impostor feelings.**

To test for the impact of discrepancies between the self-description and perceived prescriptive stereotypes on impostor feelings, four simple linear regressions were conducted. First, four new variables were calculated to investigate the discrepancies. For this purpose, the means of the communal and agentic traits in the self-description were subtracted from the means of the communal and agentic traits for ideal women and ideal men, which resulted in four variables of positive as well as negative values. Because only absolute differences were

important, the negative values were multiplied by -1. The regressions were then conducted separately based on gender, to compare for example only women with ideal women. The assumptions of a linear regression normal distribution, residuals, homoscedasticity and no autocorrelation were met.

First, we regressed the difference between communal traits in self-description and ideal women among women on impostor feelings. The results indicated a significant impact on impostor feelings ( $b = 2.79$ ,  $SE = 0.97$ ,  $p = .004$ ,  $R^2 = .03$ ,  $F(1, 247) = 8.28$ ,  $p = .004$ ).

In our second regression we regressed the difference between communal traits in self-description and ideal men among men on impostor feelings. The results indicated a significant impact on impostor feelings ( $b = 2.07$ ,  $SE = 0.98$ ,  $p = .037$ ;  $R^2 = .03$ ,  $F(1, 159) = 4.41$ ,  $p = .037$ ).

In our third regression we regressed the difference between agentic traits in self-description and ideal women among women on impostor feelings. The results indicated a significant impact on impostor feelings ( $b = 1.99$ ,  $SE = 0.84$ ,  $p = .018$ ;  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $F(1, 247) = 5.66$ ,  $p = .018$ ).

In our fourth regression we regressed the difference between agentic traits in self-description and ideal men among men on impostor feelings. The results indicated a significant impact on impostor feelings ( $b = 2.17$ ,  $SE = 0.99$ ,  $p = .029$ ;  $R^2 = .03$ ,  $F(1, 159) = 4.84$ ,  $p = .029$ ).

In summary our results indicate that the higher the reported discrepancy the higher the level of impostor feelings.

### **Impact of discrepancies between self-description and prescriptive gender stereotypes on impostor feelings moderated by job type.**

To predict the extent of impostor feelings based on the differences between self-ascribed and ideal traits, and the job type, we performed four multiple regression analyses. The assumptions of multiple regressions, normal distribution residuals, homoscedasticity, a lack of autocorrelations and a lack of multicollinearity were met for all four.

In the first multiple regression we calculated the extent of impostor feelings based on the differences between self-ascribed communion and ideal communion for women and the job type. The regression was calculated in two steps. In model 1 we regressed differences in communion, job type, and gender on impostor feelings. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that there was no significant effect between self-ascribed communion, job type, gender, and impostor feelings ( $F(3, 197) = 1.07$ ,  $p = .361$ ,  $R^2 = .02$ ).

In model 2 we added the two-way interactions and the three-way interactions of these variables to the regression equation. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that there was no significant effect between those variables ( $F(7, 193) = 0.55, p = .793, R^2 = .02$ ). As can be seen in Table 5 no significant effect was found for the individual predictors.

In the second multiple regression we calculated the extent of impostor feelings based on the differences between self-ascribed communion and ideal communion for men and the job type. The regression was calculated in two steps. In model 1 we regressed differences in communion, job type, and gender on impostor feelings. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that there was no significant effect between self-ascribed communion, job type, gender, and impostor feelings ( $F(3, 197) = 0.65, p = .586, R^2 = .01$ ).

In model 2 we added the two-way interactions and the three-way interactions of these variables to the regression equation. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that there was no significant effect between those variables ( $F(7, 193) = 0.96, p = .466, R^2 = .03$ ). As can be seen in Table 6 no significant effect was found for the individual predictors.

In the third multiple regression we calculated the extent of impostor feelings based on the differences between self-ascribed agency and ideal agency for women and the job type. The regression was calculated in two steps. In model 1 we regressed differences in agency, job type, and gender on impostor feelings. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated there was no significant effect for the overall model between differences in agency, job type, gender, and impostor feelings ( $F(3, 197) = 1.34, p = .264, R^2 = .02$ ).

In model 2 we added the two-way interactions and the three-way interactions of these variables to the regression equation. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that there was no significant effect for the overall model between those variables ( $F(7, 193) = 0.85, p = .545, R^2 = .03$ ). As can be seen in Table 7 no significant effect was found for the individual predictors.

In the fourth multiple regression we calculated the extent of impostor feelings based on the differences between self-ascribed agency and ideal agency for men and the job type. The regression was calculated in two steps. In model 1 we regressed differences in agency, job type, and gender on impostor feelings. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated there was no significant effect for the overall model between differences in agency, job type, gender, and impostor feelings ( $F(3, 197) = 1.36, p = .257, R^2 = .02$ ).

In model 2 we added the two-way interactions and the three-way interactions of these variables to the regression equation. Results of the multiple linear regression indicated that

there was no significant effect for the overall model between those variables ( $F(7, 193) = 0.99, p = .440, R^2 = .04$ ). As can be seen in Table 8 no significant effect was found for the individual predictors as well.

In sum, we could not find any effect of differences between self-ascribed and ideal traits on impostor feeling with the job type as a moderator variable.

Table 6. *Multiple linear regression for the difference between self-ascribed communion and communion in prescriptive stereotypes for women, job type and impostor feelings*

	Impostor Score							
	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Intercept	50.84	1.47		<.001	50.61	2.09		<.001
Difference self- description and ideal women in communion	1.56	1.07	0.10	.145	1.62	1.88	0.11	.391
Job type	-1.83	1.70	-0.08	.281	-1.65	3.07	-0.07	.592
Gender	-0.13	1.79	-0.01	.941	3.35	4.90	0.14	.495
Job type x gender					-3.89	6.08	-0.15	.523
Difference self- description and ideal women in communion x job type					0.31	2.58	0.02	.904
Difference self- description and ideal women in communion x gender					-4.22	6.34	-0.23	.507
Difference self- description and ideal women in communion x gender x job type					3.99	6.92	0.21	.565
$R^2$		.02				.02		

Note.  $N = 200$ . Two independent variables were dummy coded: gender (0 = female, 1 = male) and job type (0 = typical female job, 1 = typical male job).



Table 7. *Multiple linear regression for the difference between self-ascribed communion and communion in prescriptive stereotypes for men, job type and impostor feelings*

	Impostor Score							
	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Intercept	51.30	1.52		<.001	50.23	2.13		<.001
Difference self- description and ideal men in communion	0.77	0.91	0.06	.398	1.73	1.64	0.14	.292
Job type	-1.83	1.70	-0.08	.285	1.98	3.24	0.09	.543
Gender	0.09	1.80	0.01	.962	-4.25	5.08	-0.18	.404
Job type x gender					1.21	6.11	0.05	.844
Difference self- description and ideal men in communion x job type					-3.20	2.27	-0.25	.162
Difference self- description and ideal men in communion x gender						3.92		
Difference self- description and ideal men in communion x gender					4.49		0.29	.253
Difference self- description and ideal men in communion x gender x job type								.667
$R^2$		.01				.03		

*Note.*  $N = 200$ . Two independent variables were dummy coded: gender (0 = female, 1 = male) and job type (0 = typical female job, 1 = typical male job).

Table 8. *Multiple linear regression for the difference between self-ascribed agency and agency in prescriptive stereotypes for women, job type and impostor feelings*

	Impostor Score							
	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Intercept	50.34	1.57		<.001	49.89	1.98		<.001
Difference self-description and ideal women in agency	1.44	0.84	0.12	.089	1.71	1.22	0.14	.162
Job type	-1.49	1.69	-0.07	.379	-1.99	3.41	-0.09	.561
Gender	-0.03	1.79	-0.01	.986	-1.53	4.92	-0.07	.756
Job type x gender					4.29	6.16	0.17	.487
Difference self-description and ideal women in agency x job type					0.70	2.31	0.05	.762
Difference self-description and ideal women in agency x gender					1.93	3.39	0.13	.571
Difference self-description and ideal women in agency x gender x job type					-4.70	4.26	-0.29	.272
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>		.01				.03		

*Note.* *N* = 200. Two independent variables were dummy coded: gender (0 = female, 1 = male) and job type (0 = typical female job, 1 = typical male job).

Table 9. *Multiple linear regression for the difference between self-ascribed agency and agency in prescriptive stereotypes for men, job type and impostor feelings*

	Impostor Score							
	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Intercept	50.14	1.65		<.001	50.40	1.88		<.001
Difference self- description and ideal men in agency	1.40	0.81	0.12	.086	1.15	0.99	0.10	.416
Job type	-1.16	1.70	-0.05	.498	-1.62	2.62	-0.07	.556
Gender	-0.21	1.79	-0.01	.907	-5.03	4.88	-0.21	.290
Job type x gender					6.49	5.76	0.25	.255
Difference self- description and ideal men in agency x job type					0.54	1.37	0.04	.708
Difference self- description and ideal men in agency x gender					3.63	2.61	0.26	.159
Difference self- description and ideal men in agency x gender x job type					-5.29	3.19	-0.31	.120
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>		.02				.04		

*Note.* *N* = 200. Two independent variables were dummy coded: gender (0 = female, 1 = male) and job type (0 = typical female job, 1 = typical male job).

## Explorative Tests

### Agentic Self-description and Impostor feelings.

We conducted a simple linear regression to explore the impact of agentic self-description on impostor feelings, in reference to the analyzed relationship between communal self-description and impostor feelings. The assumptions of a linear regression, normal distribution of the residuals, homoscedasticity and a lack of autocorrelations were met. Agentic self-description was found to significantly predict impostor feelings ( $b = -2.84$ ,  $SE = 0.50$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with an  $R^2 = .06$  ( $F(1,520) = 32.04$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Conducting the calculation separately for women and men showed a significant impact of agentic self-description for women ( $b = -2.99$ ,  $SE = 0.73$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $R^2 = .06$ ,  $F(1,248) = 16.95$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and for men ( $b = -4.54$ ,  $SE = 0.91$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $R^2 = .14$ ,  $F(1,159) = 24.96$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The less agentic the self-description was, the higher the levels of impostor feelings were. This effect seems much stronger in men than in women.

### Gender and Impostor feelings.

Since the topic was often addressed in the past, a Pearson correlation was conducted to investigate the relationship between gender and impostor feelings. No significant correlation was found ( $r = -.03$ ,  $p = .470$ ).

## Discussion

The goals of this study were to investigate whether (a) self-ascribed communion and agency and (b) discrepancies between self-ascribed and perceived ideal communion and self-ascribed and perceived ideal agency had an impact on the experienced levels of impostor feelings. We also investigated whether (c) these relationships were moderated by female, male or neutral job type.

Surprisingly, self-ascribed communion had a negative relationship with impostor feelings; individuals with lower self-ascribed communion experienced higher levels of impostor feelings. Explorative analyses showed that this was the case for women but not for men. These results were inconsistent with previous theorizing. Clance and Imes (1978) suggested that individuals, and especially men, which were more feminine, i.e. more communal tend to have higher levels of impostor feelings. Patzak, Kollmayer and Schober (2017) also found higher levels of impostor feelings in feminine individuals, than in masculine or androgynous individuals, regardless their gender.

An explanation could be, that based on the perceived prescriptive stereotypes women are expected to have higher levels of communion. If they describe themselves as less communal, there is a discrepancy, which in turn leads to higher levels of impostor feelings.

Additional to our analyses about the impact of self-ascribed communion on impostor feelings, we wanted to explore the impact of self-ascribed agency on impostor feelings. Our results showed that individuals with lower self-ascribed agency likewise experienced higher levels of impostor feelings, this was the case in women as well as in men. Our findings showed, that women and men described themselves as less agentic than they perceived ideal for them.

The findings that a less agentic self-description leads to higher levels of impostor feelings also may be explained by Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). One of the dimensions is masculinity, which indicates the values a country is driven by. Higher scores in masculinity mean, that agentic traits are more important in a country. Austria, as well as Germany both received higher scores in masculinity compared to the United States of America (Hofstede et al., 2010). Accordingly, low levels in agency are in discrepancy with the overall highly esteemed value of agentic traits in German and Austrian society. One consequence of this could be that individual levels of agency don't match the agentic values of these societies anymore, which may promote self-doubt in the individuals.

Moreover, more and more women have become employed (Achatz, 2008), which explains changes in women's roles and an increasing gender similarity in agentic traits and therefore, in line with the *Social Role Theory* (Eagly, 1987), might have led to changes in descriptive stereotypes. This could also be an explanation why men as well as women are more conscious of discrepancies if they describe themselves as less agentic, and therefore experience higher levels of impostor feelings.

Consistent with the previous argument the results showed that both, discrepancies in self-ascribed communion and perceived ideal communion as well as discrepancies in self-ascribed agency and perceived ideal agency, led to higher levels of impostor feelings in women and men. This is consistent with our assumption that stereotypes impact impostor feelings.

Overall, job type – male-typed, female-typed, or neutral – did not play a role in the experience of impostor feelings.

In contrast to our expectations and prior research (Harvey & Katz, 1985) we could not find any interactions between self-ascribed communal and agentic traits and impostor

feelings, or between discrepancies in self-description and gender stereotypes, and impostor feelings, with the job type as a moderator variable in our calculations.

This could be due to a number of different reasons. It could be that job type did not have enough statistical power in our study, because some of the subsample groups in the job type were quite small.

It is also possible that there are more variables important in the relationship regarding impostor feelings, since there are other work-related variables correlating with the impostor phenomenon as job satisfaction and career satisfaction (Neureiter & Traut-Mattausch, 2016b).

There could be also other constructs underlying the job type, which might play a role. For example, it is possible that the masculinity contest plays a role. Glick, Berdahl and Alonso (2018) showed that individuals, which indicated their workplace rates high on masculinity contests, reported lower well-being and lower job-satisfaction. These are in turn related to the impostor phenomenon (Neureiter & Traut-Mattausch, 2016b; September, McCarrey, Baranowsky, Parent, & Schindler, 2001).

While we controlled for the covariates of gender and age in our study, there might nevertheless be more covariates influencing the relationship between self-description in agency and communion traits, prescriptive gender stereotypes and impostor feelings. Patzak et al. (2017) for example found self-compassion as a mediator in the relationship between gender role orientation and the impostor phenomenon.

## **Limitations**

The present study has several limitations. Data collected from a convenience sample have some limitations, such as that generalizations beyond the sample are almost impossible, primarily due to the lack of independent sampling units, as well as the lack of controlled variability (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, & Nigam, 2013). For example, we gathered data from a relatively large subsample of librarians., with German university libraries especially paying attention to gender stereotypes and its influences. The Hannover Technical Information Library for example won repeated prizes for their gender equality (Technische Informationsbibliothek, 2016). Therefore, even though librarian is still a female typed job, there might be less influences from gender stereotypes.

Furthermore, most participants worked in gender-typical jobs. Despite the large sample there were only 17 (10.6%) male participants working in professions dominated by women. Thus, resulting cells for individuals working in gender atypical jobs were rather small and had low test power.

A representative randomized sample would be important. For our research a sample which is evenly distributed between the job types would be particularly advantageous, in order to achieve better comparability and should therefore be strived for in further research.

From the final sample of 525 participants a total of 111 (21,1%) did not indicate their gender, and thus could not be included in most of our analysis. This could be due to the open question format of the question assessing gender even though the approach seems to be an appropriate way of asking with regards to the discourse about how to ask for participants gender (e.g, American Psychological Association, 2016).

Despite the thorough forward-backward translation, some of the participants indicated that the questions for the prescriptive gender stereotypes were somehow unclear for them. More precisely, they were not sure if it asked for their personal opinion of women and men or for the general opinion of their society. This could be a reason for smaller effects in calculations with the prescriptive stereotypes as a variable.

## **Conclusion**

In the present study, self-ascribed communal and agentic traits as well as discrepancies in self-ascribed traits and perceived ideals enhance impostor feelings. Generally, this indicated that gender stereotypes have an impact on the impostor phenomenon.

In sum, this raises the question of whether discrepancies in self-descriptions and perceived ideal traits and values, could not only lead to higher impostor feelings but could impact other aspects of the work life and employee's well-being in further consequence, such as organizational citizenship behavior and career paths (Neureiter & Traut-Mattausch, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c). As such, the way organizations handle gender stereotypes could have far-reaching consequences on the development of a company.

## **Future Research**

Further research could investigate if there are any differences between different kinds of professions, such as creative jobs or jobs in administration, since Harvey and Katz (1985) suggested the impostor phenomenon could be more intense in creative jobs. It would also be conceivable to compare the occupational groups of students, working people and pensioners. So far, most research only focused on students, or workings individuals, while pensioners were seemingly ignored (e.g., Clance & Imes, 1978; Neureiter & Traut-Mattausch, 2016a; Patzak et al., 2017). It would be interesting to look at those occupational groups and their relationship with gender stereotypes and impostor feelings.

In our study we showed the influence of discrepancies in self-descriptions and perceived prescriptive gender stereotypes on the impostor phenomenon. Further research should investigate other possible influences of these discrepancies on individuals and how they could affect individuals' lives. A basis for this could be the study of Zehnter et al. (2018) which found changes in likability of leaders along with differences in descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes.

All in all, there is still a lot of potential for further research in this field.



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## Appendix

### Online Questionnaire

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Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

vielen Dank, dass Sie bereit sind, an dieser Studie teilzunehmen.

In der Studie geht es um die Selbst- und Fremdbeschreibung von Menschen. Diese Studie wird im Rahmen meiner Masterarbeit an der Universität Wien durchgeführt.

Der Fragebogen wird in etwa 5-10 Minuten Ihrer Zeit in Anspruch nehmen.

Selbstverständlich werden alle Angaben, die Sie machen, streng **vertraulich** behandelt und **anonym** ausgewertet. Die gewonnenen Daten dienen ausschließlich wissenschaftlichen Zwecken. Natürlich können Sie die Studie jederzeit ohne Angabe von Gründen abbrechen.

Durch das Klicken auf "Weiter" bestätigen Sie, dass Sie die vorliegende Information gelesen und verstanden haben. Sie erklären sich mit der Teilnahme an dieser Studie und der Analyse der Daten (ausschließlich wie oben angeführt) einverstanden.

Sollten Sie den Fragebogen an Ihrem Smartphone ausfüllen, verwenden Sie bitte das Querformat.

[Weiter](#)

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Figure A1. Introduction.



---

1. Wo befindet sich ihr derzeitiger Wohnort?

☐ Österreich

☐ Deutschland

☐ Sonstiges

[Weiter](#)

---

Figure A2. Place of residence.





## 2. Bitte geben Sie an, wie gut die folgenden Merkmale Sie beschreiben.

Es ist wichtig, dass Sie spontan und ohne lange nachzudenken antworten. Es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten, da es um Ihre persönlichen Einschätzungen geht.

	gar nicht charakteristisch									sehr charakteristisch	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
warmherzig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
wetteifernd	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
kontrollierend	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
freundlich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
geduldig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
einfühlsam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
bereit Risiken einzugehen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
emotional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
höflich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
fröhlich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
Führungsfähigkeit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
arrogant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
kooperativ	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
selbstständig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
Geschäftssinn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
durchsetzungsfähig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
rational	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		

Weiter

Figure A3. Self-description.



**3. Bitte geben Sie an, wie wünschenswert die folgenden Eigenschaften für eine Frau in der österreichischen Gesellschaft sind.**

Es ist wichtig, dass Sie spontan und ohne lange nachzudenken antworten.

	gar nicht wünschenswert								sehr wünschenswert	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
warmherzig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
freundlich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
wetteifernd	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
fröhlich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
emotional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
risikofreudig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
rational	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
höflich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
selbstständig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Führungsfähigkeit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
kooperativ	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
durchsetzungsfähig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Geschäftssinn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
geduldig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
einfühlsam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
arrogant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
kontrollierend	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Weiter

Figure A4. Perceived prescriptive gender stereotypes for women in Austria.



**4. Bitte geben Sie an, wie wünschenswert die folgenden Eigenschaften für einen Mann in der österreichischen Gesellschaft sind.**

Es ist wichtig, dass Sie spontan und ohne lange nachzudenken antworten.

	gar nicht wünschenswert									sehr wünschenswert	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
selbstständig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
geduldig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
durchsetzungsfähig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
kontrollierend	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
fröhlich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
rational	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
einfühlsam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
höflich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
arrogant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
freundlich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
risikofreudig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
wetteifernd	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Geschäftssinn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
kooperativ	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
emotional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Führungsfähigkeit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
warmherzig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Weiter

Figure A5. Perceived prescriptive gender stereotypes for men in Austria.



5. Bitte geben Sie für jede der folgenden Aussagen an, in wie weit diese Aussage auf Sie zutrifft.

Es ist wichtig, dass Sie spontan und ohne lange nachzudenken antworten.

	nie	selten	manchmal	oft	immer
Es fällt mir schwer, Komplimente oder Lob wegen meiner Intelligenz oder meiner Leistungen entgegenzunehmen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich fühle mich schlecht und entmutigt, wenn ich in Leistungssituationen nicht „der (oder die) Beste“ oder wenigstens „ganz besonders gut“ bin.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich vergleiche meine Fähigkeiten mit denen meiner Kollegen und stelle fest, dass die anderen vermutlich intelligenter sind als ich.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zeitweise ist mir klar, dass ich meinen Erfolg einer Art von Glück zu verdanken habe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wenn Leute mich wegen einer Leistung loben, fürchte ich, ihren Erwartungen in Zukunft nicht entsprechen zu können.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wenn ich für eine Leistung viel Lob und Anerkennung bekomme, neige ich dazu, die Wichtigkeit dessen, was ich vollbracht habe, herunterzuspielen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich mache mir Sorgen, dass mir ein Vorhaben nicht gelingt, obwohl andere beachtliches Vertrauen in mein Können setzen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wenn mir etwas gelungen ist und meine Leistung anerkannt wird, beginne ich zu zweifeln, dass ich das Erreichte wiederholen kann.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich erledige ein Vorhaben oder eine Aufgabe so gut, wie ich gerne möchte.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich habe Angst, dass Leute, die mir wichtig sind herausbekommen, dass ich nicht so fähig bin, wie sie glauben.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zeitweise bin ich enttäuscht über meine gegenwärtigen Leistungen und finde, dass ich viel mehr hätte erreichen müssen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich habe bei einer Aufgabe Erfolg gehabt, obwohl ich vorher Angst hatte zu versagen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich neige dazu, mich mehr an meine weniger guten als an meine besten Leistungen zu erinnern.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich kann den Eindruck erwecken, tüchtiger zu sein, als ich bin.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wenn möglich, vermeide ich, jemanden zu beurteilen und mir graut davor, beurteilt zu werden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manchmal spüre oder glaube ich, dass der Erfolg in meinem Leben auf einem Irrtum beruht.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manchmal denke ich, meinen momentanen Erfolg erlangt zu haben, weil ich zur richtigen Zeit am richtigen Platz war oder die richtigen Leute kannte.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wenn mir eine Art der Anerkennung bevorsteht, zögere ich darüber zu reden, bis es tatsächlich geschehen ist.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manchmal habe ich Angst, dass die anderen merken, wie wenig ich eigentlich weiß und kann.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich fürchte, bei neuen Aufgaben oder Anforderungen zu versagen, obwohl mir im Allgemeinen gelingt, was ich versuche.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Weiter

Figure A6. Impostor phenomenon, German-language Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale.



---

**6. Wie alt sind Sie?**

Ich bin  Jahre alt

**7. Welches Geschlecht haben Sie?**

**8. Welcher Nationalität gehören Sie an?**

☐ Österreich

☐ Deutschland

☐ Sonstiges

**9. Welcher Tätigkeit gehen Sie derzeit nach?**

☐ StudentIn

☐ Berufstätig

☐ PensionistIn/ RentnerIn

☐ Sonstiges

Weiter

---

Figure A7. Demographic data.



1. Welchen Job üben Sie derzeit aus?

2. Wie empfinden Sie Ihren Job?

☐ typisch weiblich

☐ typisch männlich

☐ neutral

Weiter

Figure A8. Profession.



10. Haben Sie Anmerkungen zu diesem Fragebogen?

Weiter

Figure A9. Comment section.



## Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!

Ich möchte mich herzlich bei Ihnen für Ihre Teilnahme bedanken!

In dieser Studie werden die Zusammenhänge zwischen Selbstbeschreibungen, Geschlechterstereotypen und der Bewertung der eigenen Leistung im Kontext des Impostor Phänomens untersucht.

Sollten Sie Fragen zu der Studie haben, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte unter [a1202203@unet.univie.ac.at](mailto:a1202203@unet.univie.ac.at)

**Ihre Antworten wurden gespeichert, Sie können das Browser-Fenster nun schließen.**

Figure A10. Final page: Elucidation regarding the experiment.