

Impostor syndrome among Ecuadorian women in the labour market

Síndrome del impostor en las mujeres ecuatorianas en el mercado laboral

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with the impostor syndrome in Ecuadorian women in the labour market, highlighting its impact on professional development and emotional well-being. The literature review analyses its definition, causes and manifestations, as well as its effect on decision-making and labour relations. A qualitative methodology was used for data collection, including a documentary review and interviews with experts to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. In this sense, the importance of addressing this syndrome to promote gender equality, well-being at work and productivity is highlighted.

Keywords: impostor syndrome, women, labor market, impact.

RESUMEN

El presente artículo trata sobre el síndrome del impostor en mujeres ecuatorianas en el mercado laboral, destacando su impacto en el desarrollo profesional y bienestar emocional. En la revisión de literatura se analiza definición, causas y manifestaciones, así como su efecto en la toma de decisiones y relaciones laborales. Para la toma de datos se empleó una metodología cualitativa que incluye revisión documental y entrevistas a expertos para comprender en profundidad el fenómeno. En este sentido, se resalta la importancia de abordar este síndrome para promover la igualdad de género, el bienestar laboral y la productividad.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, the labour field stands out for being highly competitive and constantly evolving (Chirinos et al., 2018). In this scenario, women face challenges that transcend professional responsibilities. One of these challenges is the impostor syndrome, a persistent feeling of not being competent enough or that success has been achieved simply by luck (Young et al., 2021). This phenomenon affects many women in the Ecuadorian labour market and constitutes an obstacle to their full professional development and emotional well-being. Over the decades, women have advanced towards gender equality in the workplace, challenging stereotypes and overcoming barriers to access leadership roles and specialisation (Montero, 2006). However, despite these advances, structural inequalities and entrenched social expectations persist and can influence women's work experience. For (Belykh, 2019) in many cases, women are under additional pressure to constantly prove their worth and competence, which can lead to feelings of insecurity and doubt about their abilities.

Impostor syndrome, first coined by psychologists Pauline Clance and Suzanne Imes in 1978, is characterised by a persistent feeling of being a fraud or not living up to one's achievements (Young et al., 2021). This psychological phenomenon can manifest itself in the form of excessive self-criticism, fear of failure and attribution of success to external factors. Although it has been observed in people of all genders, it has been particularly prominent in women, with a strong impact on their professional, personal and emotional development.

According to Vera et al., (2021) the causes of impostor syndrome are diverse and complex; for example, factors such as social and cultural expectations, perfectionism, social comparisons and gender discrimination can contribute to a distorted self-image and a lack of confidence in one's own abilities. These elements create an environment conducive to the emergence and perpetuation of impostor syndrome, which can have long-term negative consequences for women and their careers. In a context where women are playing increasingly prominent roles in a variety of work sectors, it is interesting to address impostor syndrome and its implications. If not effectively addressed, this phenomenon can limit women's potential, hinder their professional development and generate stress, anxiety and low self-esteem (Guerrero et al., 2022). Moreover, it can have negative consequences at the organisational level, affecting diversity, inclusion and overall team performance. Thus, the general objective of this article is to analyse and understand the impact of the impostor syndrome on Ecuadorian women in the labour market, as well as to propose effective strategies to help deal efficiently with this problem. To achieve this, a review of the existing literature on the subject will be carried out; then data will be collected from

interviews with experts on this issue, and based on all this information, possible solutions and best practices that help to overcome the syndrome in question will be analysed. It is worth noting that the study and understanding of the impostor syndrome in Ecuadorian women in the labour market contributes to the advancement of knowledge in organisational and gender psychology. Research in this field allows for the identification of patterns of thought and behaviour that may be limiting women's professional development, as well as providing relevant information to design interventions and policies that promote equal opportunities and well-being at work. In practical terms, addressing impostor syndrome among Ecuadorian women in the labour market has direct implications for improving the work climate, retaining talent and increasing productivity. By understanding the causes and consequences of this phenomenon, organisations can implement preventive and supportive measures that help women overcome their doubts and reach their full potential. This not only benefits individual women, but also strengthens companies by tapping into their full talent and diversity.

On the other hand, addressing impostor syndrome in Ecuadorian women is relevant for human resources, leadership and organisational development professionals because understanding how this phenomenon affects women in the workplace allows professionals to design recruitment, training and mentoring strategies that foster an inclusive and supportive work environment (Ames Guerrero, 2021). In addition, it helps leaders identify and address gender biases and create organisational cultures that promote confidence and professional growth for all individuals. Finally, addressing the impostor syndrome in Ecuadorian women in the labour market is not only important from a theoretical and practical perspective, but also from a professional perspective. By understanding and addressing this phenomenon holistically, we can work towards a more equitable, inclusive and productive work environment for all people.

Impostor syndrome is a psychological phenomenon that has gained attention in the workplace and academia in recent decades. It is defined as a persistent feeling of not being competent enough, accompanied by the fear of being discovered as a fraud, despite achievements. For Lezama (2023) this phenomenon was first coined by psychologists Pauline Clance and Suzanne Imes in 1978, who initially observed it in women with a high degree of professional achievement.

Impostor syndrome is characterised by two distinct family patterns that may lead to its development. On the one hand, some women may have grown up overshadowed by siblings designated as 'smart' family members, leading to a persistent internal struggle of self-doubt (Bogiaizian, 2018). On the other hand, other women may have been hailed as 'stars' in all aspects of life during their upbringing, but face a crisis when they encounter limitations, generating feelings of impostorism.

The literature has also identified five categories of people who may experience impostor syndrome: perfectionists, individualists, experts, natural geniuses and superhumans (M.

Vera et al., 2021). These categories reflect different ways in which people may experience the feeling of being a fraud, whether through excessive perfectionism, lack of acceptance of help, fear of being found to be dishonest, excessive self-criticism or pressure to work too hard.

Studies have shown that imposter syndrome is not limited to a specific group of people, but is a pervasive experience that can affect individuals of all genders and levels of achievement (Young et al., 2021). However, it has been found to disproportionately affect women, with prevalence ranging from 9% to 82%, depending on the criteria used to define it.

In the workplace, impostor syndrome can manifest itself in a variety of ways, but is generally characterised by a feeling of deceiving others and a fear of being found out as a fraudster (Maldonado et al., 2022). This can have negative effects on workers' confidence, performance and personal relationships, which in turn can affect mental health and general well-being.

To identify whether someone is experiencing imposter syndrome, it is important to pay attention to certain warning signs, such as reluctance to take initiative, excessive perfectionism, lack of acceptance of help and workaholism. In addition, people experiencing this phenomenon can benefit from recognising and challenging negative thoughts, tracking their achievements and establishing supportive relationships in the workplace.

In terms of organisational interventions, both human resources and company management can play an important role in preventing and addressing impostor syndrome (Ramirez Angel, 2022). This can include educating leaders about the signs of the syndrome and creating healthier work expectations, as well as fostering a work culture that values learning and personal growth. Impact of impostor syndrome on personal life

There are several additional important aspects to consider in relation to impostor syndrome and how it affects personal life. In the first instance, impostor syndrome can have serious implications for the mental health of those who experience it. Feelings of anxiety, stress and depression can be common among people who struggle with the feeling of being a fraud in their workplace (Rivera Guerrero et al., 2019). These effects can negatively affect individuals' quality of life and general well-being, as well as their ability to perform effectively in their job.

In addition, people experiencing imposter syndrome often have a distorted perception of success and failure. They may attribute their successes to external factors, such as luck or favouritism, rather than recognising their own abilities and merits (Bautista Cuello et al., 2020). Similarly, they may interpret failures as confirmations of their own incompetence, which may further perpetuate their impostor feelings. On the other hand, imposter syndrome may disproportionately affect certain demographic groups, such as women, people of colour and ethnic minorities. This may be related to factors such as gender stereotypes, racism and systemic discrimination, which can influence people's self-image and self-confidence in the workplace. Addressing

these disparities and promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace can help mitigate the effects of imposter syndrome. Furthermore, impostor syndrome can create a negative feedback loop in which individuals feel insecure about their abilities, affecting their job performance and self-esteem (ILO - ECLAC, 2018). This lack of confidence can lead to lower participation in growth and development opportunities, which in turn reinforces feelings of being a fraud. Breaking this cycle requires a holistic approach that addresses both individual and contextual factors that contribute to imposter syndrome. It is therefore important that organisations recognise and address impostor syndrome in the workplace by implementing appropriate interventions and support programmes. This may include the provision of mental health resources, training in coping skills and promoting a supportive and appreciative culture in the company (Bravo-Andrade, 2018). By providing an environment that fosters trust and personal growth, organisations can help mitigate the effects of impostor syndrome and promote the well-being of their employees.

However, people experiencing impostor syndrome may feel isolated and alone in their experience, especially if they do not feel comfortable sharing their feelings with colleagues or superiors. Fear of judgement or lack of understanding from others can lead to further social and emotional isolation, further exacerbating their discomfort. In this sense, impostor syndrome can have a significant impact on people's quality of life, as it affects their ability to enjoy and feel satisfied with their work and achievements. People who struggle with impostor syndrome may experience a constant state of dissatisfaction and discomfort, even when they achieve professional success, which can affect their overall happiness and well-being. The impact of impostor syndrome in the workplace

It is important to consider how impostor syndrome can affect people's decision-making and career advancement in the workplace. For example, people experiencing impostor syndrome may be more reluctant to take risks and make important decisions at work due to their fear of failure and of being found to be fraudulent (Young et al., 2021). This risk aversion can limit their ability to innovate and take on new responsibilities, which in turn can hinder their professional growth and development in the company. Furthermore, impostor syndrome can lead to self-sabotaging behaviours, where individuals sabotage themselves in their work to avoid being exposed as imposters. This can manifest itself in subtle ways, such as procrastinating on important tasks or underestimating the value of their contributions, which can have negative consequences on their work performance and self-perception. On the other hand, it can affect interpersonal relationships in the workplace, especially if people feel insecure or intimidated by their colleagues. They may have difficulty making meaningful connections or collaborating effectively in teams, which can affect work dynamics and the overall organisational climate. Experts say it can hinder people's professional development by limiting their willingness to seek opportunities for growth and promotion (N. Vera & Suárez, 2018). They may feel undeserving of promotions or new responsibilities, which

can stall their career progression and perpetuate their sense of being a fraud at work. However, organisational culture plays a crucial role in how impostor syndrome is addressed and managed in the workplace. Companies that promote a culture of support, recognition and continuous learning are more likely to mitigate the effects of imposter syndrome and foster an environment where all employees can reach their full potential.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the present study, a non-experimental approach was employed with a mixed research design focused on document review and expert interviews on the topic of impostor syndrome in Ecuadorian women in the labour market (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018), but also included the collection of data from a group of individuals through a survey. This approach was selected because of its suitability to explore in depth the perceptions, experiences and perspectives of the participants, as well as to understand the complexity of the phenomenon under study.

The choice of a non-experimental design was based on the nature of the study, which focused on understanding and describing the impact of impostor syndrome on Ecuadorian women in the workplace, rather than establishing causal relationships or manipulating variables. Given that the aim was to analyse and understand women's experiences of impostor syndrome, a descriptive approach was considered more appropriate in order to explore in detail the characteristics and manifestations of the phenomenon.

Qualitative research was selected for its ability to provide an in-depth understanding of the topic, as well as to capture the diversity of participants' perspectives and experiences. The desk review allowed for an exploration of the existing literature on impostor syndrome, providing a theoretical framework for the study. In addition, expert interviews provided valuable information and expert perspectives on the topic, complementing and enriching the findings obtained through the literature review. In this sense, the research technique used was the documentary review, which consisted of the search, selection and critical analysis of relevant studies, articles and resources on impostor syndrome in the work context, both nationally and internationally. This technique made it possible to compile and synthesise the available evidence on the topic, identifying trends, patterns and gaps in existing research.

On the other hand, the quantitative research was based on the application of an online survey to a group of 39 professional women registered in the LinkedIn network. In this case, the data collection was based on a questionnaire of seven closed questions, which was disseminated digitally in order to get an overview of the impact of the imposter syndrome.

RESULTS

Analysis of the Impostor Syndrome in Women according to Zoraya Bohórquez Zoraya Bohórquez addresses the impostor syndrome, highlighting its prevalence among successful and famous women. This phenomenon is characterised by a mistaken perception of unworthiness with regard to the success achieved. Affected women believe that their success is due to luck or chance and not to their own merit, generating a profound lack of self-esteem that, if it persists, can lead to anxiety. Bohórquez mentions that at least three out of four female executives have experienced these symptoms, feeling ashamed in a competitive environment that does not allow them to show weakness, especially women. Low self-esteem results in constant self-doubt about one's own potential, exacerbated by stereotypes of female fragility and weakness. Previously, the syndrome was not clearly identified in women because of these stereotypes, but it is now recognised as a significant problem.

Historically, imposter syndrome was identified in 1978 by psychologists Pauline Clance and Suzanne Imes, who observed that many students doubted their abilities and were not proud of their academic achievements. This insecurity appears to have roots in childhood, where approval-seeking and the conditioning of love and affection on performance lead to stressed attachment. Children who grow up with criticism and conditioned love develop low self-esteem that persists into adulthood. Another source of this syndrome is being labelled 'the smart one in the family'. This label creates pressure that, when not met, leads the child to doubt his or her ability. In addition, parenting that alternates punishments and rewards based on behaviour reinforces the idea that love is conditional on success, rather than unconditional. This syndrome is not limited to women; however, parenting styles and social expectations disproportionately affect women. Constant self-demand to maintain high professional and personal performance leads to a worn-out mental and physical state. Bohórquez points out that women who achieve higher positions than their partners may feel guilty, which can lead to micromachismos and tensions in the relationship. Bohórquez also points out that many women avoid opportunities that could lead to family conflict by constantly questioning the value of their achievements. This self-sabotage undermines their opportunities and conquered spaces, comparing it to doing a postgraduate degree and not finishing the thesis, or doing everything perfect except the last part.

Therefore, acceptance of the impostor syndrome is crucial to overcome it. Recognising these patterns allows us to find ways to prevent them from negatively affecting various areas of life. Self-esteem, defined as the value we place on ourselves, is affected by feelings of inadequacy, fears and expectations imposed by family, society and context. This constant pressure leads to a perpetual search for validation in multiple areas, which can lead to an obsession with meeting unrealistic standards. In conclusion, Zoraya Bohórquez highlights the importance of recognising and accepting the imposter syndrome in order to confront and overcome it. Identifying these patterns of self-

sabotage and the influence of external factors are essential steps to improve self-esteem and find a balance, preventing these feelings from impeding women's personal and professional development.

Self-Development and Female Empowerment: An Interview with Verónica Villamarín
In the interview with Verónica Villamarín, CEO of Empoderate and member of the Board of Directors of a company in Quito, Ecuador, the dimensions of self-development as a fundamental tool for female empowerment are addressed. Villamarín begins by highlighting the presence of an inner power in every woman, a power capable of transforming lives and moving mountains. In a context where strength and power are essential, self-development is presented as the key to unleashing women's full potential. Villamarín defines self-development as a process that begins with an individual's decision to engage in activities that foster personal change. She stresses that any significant change in a person's life begins with a firm decision to commit oneself. This decision involves taking deliberate and consistent action that promotes personal growth and holistic development.

In analysing the challenges faced by women in the current context, Villamarín identifies several key obstacles: **Role Overload and Disconnection:** Villamarín notes that many women, especially those in multiple roles (such as mothers, wives, professionals and athletes), often become 'machines' focused on constant doing. This frenetic pace of life prevents internalisation and meaningful connection with the important people in their lives, including connection with themselves.

Lack of Self-Awareness: Villamarín emphasises the importance of self-awareness, noting that many women are not fully aware of the changes they wish to implement in their lives and the responsibility these changes entail. Self-awareness is therefore a vital component that allows women to fill their time with self-reflection and direct their efforts towards genuine growth.

Villamarín argues that personal happiness is compromised by constant doing. Based on her personal experience, she highlights the importance of disconnecting from the daily routine and dedicating time to self-reflection. This disconnection does not necessarily involve significant investments in terms of money or travel, but rather quality moments that allow for inner connection, such as walking in a park or interacting with nature. Villamarín warns about the dangers of comparisons, especially in the age of social media, where people tend to show only positive aspects of their lives. Comparisons can be detrimental, as each individual has his or her own pace and process of growth. He emphasises that comparing oneself to others is a waste of energy that can lead to frustration, since each person lives in a unique context and has his or her own timeframe for achieving goals.

Villamarín offers several recommendations to foster self-development and personal empowerment:

Pauses for Reflection: If a woman stops enjoying her daily activities, it is crucial that she pauses to re-evaluate and restructure her life plan. This pause avoids frustration and

facilitates reflection on next steps. **Connecting Activities:** Recommend seeking out activities that promote connection within and with the environment, such as enjoying nature and spending quality time alone. **Avoid Comparisons:** It is essential to avoid comparisons with others and to understand that each person has their own process and pace of growth.

Verónica Villamarín stresses that self-development is essential for female empowerment. Recognising and harnessing the inner power that resides within each woman requires conscious decisions, self-knowledge and the ability to stop and reflect. By avoiding comparisons and focusing on one's own growth process, women can overcome challenges and reach their full potential.

Empowering Women: The Path to Inner Freedom with Ana Maria Guzman
In the interview with Ana María Guzmán, a passionate life coach with a focus on accompanying women, the impact of limiting beliefs on female empowerment and strategies to overcome them are explored. Guzman stresses that these beliefs are internal voices that make us doubt our capabilities and prevent us from reaching our potential. In Latin culture, these beliefs are often ingrained due to the intersection of cultural and social factors, teaching us from an early age to be strong, self-sacrificing and to put the needs of others before our own. While this teaching may seem noble, it also limits our aspirations and restricts our actions with messages such as 'women don't do that', 'that's for men', and 'don't be too ambitious'.

Guzman stresses that limiting beliefs often develop during childhood and are reinforced by the family, socio-cultural and educational environment. These beliefs condition the way women think and act throughout their lives. Phrases such as 'you can't' or 'you are worthless', repeated during childhood, can lead a person to internalise these messages and believe them to be true. This type of conditioning can result in problems with self-esteem and confidence in adulthood, negatively impacting women's ability to pursue their dreams and achieve their goals.

Limiting beliefs are not only formed in childhood; they can also develop and become entrenched in adulthood due to life experiences and changes. For example, beliefs such as 'we are in crisis and I won't get a job' or 'if I leave my partner, I won't find anyone else' may arise in response to difficult circumstances and contribute to a cycle of self-doubt and limitation. These beliefs, although not based on demonstrable fact, have an extraordinary power to condition our thoughts and behaviours, affecting our decisions and actions in profound ways.

To empower women and help them overcome limiting beliefs, Guzman recommends several key strategies:

- **Self-Awareness and Reflection:** Guzman emphasises the importance of identifying and recognising the limiting beliefs that affect our lives. This involves a process of self-reflection and self-analysis to understand the origin of these beliefs and how they have been internalised over time.

- **Mental Reprogramming:** Once the limiting beliefs have been identified, Guzman suggests mental reprogramming by repeating positive affirmations. Phrases such as 'I deserve the best', 'I am very useful' and 'I am going to be happy' can help change the internal narrative and replace limiting beliefs with empowering beliefs.
- **Behavioural training:** In addition to affirmations, it is crucial to train the mind through behaviours and behaviours that reinforce the new beliefs. This can include actions that demonstrate personal value and capability, thus strengthening confidence and self-esteem.
- **Gratitude and Positivity:** Practising gratitude and focusing on positive things is also a powerful tool for changing mindsets. Gratitude helps to direct attention to the positive aspects of life, promoting a more optimistic and empowered outlook.
- **Take Breaks and Rest:** Guzman also stresses the importance of taking breaks and resting without guilt. Recognising the need for rest and allowing time to restructure and rethink goals can prevent frustration and burnout.

The interview with Ana Maria Guzman reveals that female empowerment requires a deep understanding and overcoming limiting beliefs. Through self-awareness, mental reprogramming, behavioural coaching, gratitude and rest, women can break free from the inner voices that hold them back and achieve a full and meaningful life. These strategies not only promote personal growth, but also enable women to live in harmony with their deepest values and pursue their dreams with confidence and determination. The survey results show that among the factors contributing to the development of impostor syndrome in Ecuadorian women, cultural expectations and comparison with others stand out as the most significant, according to 28.2% and 41% of respondents respectively. This suggests that both ingrained cultural pressures and comparison with others may have a substantial impact on the emergence of impostor syndrome in the female work context.

In terms of impact on job performance, the overwhelming majority of participants (71.8%) perceive that impostor syndrome has a negative effect on job performance. This finding highlights the importance of addressing this problem in order to improve both productivity and well-being at work.

In relation to strategies to overcome impostor syndrome, the majority of respondents (51.3%) consider that receiving training in self-confidence skills is the most useful action. This suggests that strengthening self-confidence can be an effective strategy to overcome impostor syndrome, which could involve the implementation of training and personal development programmes in the workplace.

When it comes to creating a supportive work environment to combat impostor syndrome, the majority of respondents (43.6%) suggest that fostering a culture of constructive feedback is an effective measure. This indicates that providing a work environment where positive feedback and emotional support is provided can be crucial in helping women overcome impostor syndrome.

In terms of measures at the governmental level, respondents believe that equal pay policies (41%) and the creation of support networks for women in the workplace (43.6%) are important actions to support women facing impostor syndrome. This suggests that policies promoting gender equality and support for women in the workplace may be key to addressing this problem at a systemic level. In terms of personal experience, more than half of the respondents (51.3%) say that impostor syndrome has hindered their career progress at some point. This result underlines the prevalence of impostor syndrome in the Ecuadorian work context and suggests that it is a significant problem affecting a large part of the female workforce. Finally, in terms of seeking professional help to deal with impostor syndrome, the majority of respondents (84.6%) have not sought help. This indicates a gap between the perceived prevalence of impostor syndrome and seeking professional help to address it, which may point to the need to increase awareness of available resources and reduce the stigma associated with seeking help for mental health problems in the workplace. Through the analysis of both the literature review, survey and interview, several essential aspects and strategies for overcoming personal and social barriers can be highlighted.

1. **The Impostor Syndrome** From the interviews it is clear that the impostor syndrome is a common phenomenon among successful women who feel that they do not deserve their success and attribute their achievements to luck rather than their abilities. This syndrome originates in childhood, where love and approval are made conditional on performance, leading to low self-esteem and constant self-demand. Women, in particular, suffer disproportionately due to stereotypes and social expectations. Bohórquez stresses the importance of recognising and accepting the syndrome in order to confront and overcome it, thus avoiding self-sabotage and promoting healthy self-esteem.
2. **Self-Development and Personal Empowerment** Verónica Villamarín emphasises self-development as a fundamental tool for female empowerment. Villamarín defines self-development as a process of personal commitment to change and growth. She stresses the need for self-awareness and the importance of taking pauses for reflection. Villamarín warns against the dangers of comparisons, especially in the age of social media, and recommends focusing on one's own growth process without wasting energy on comparing oneself to others. His focus is on inner connection and disconnecting from the frenetic pace of life to find happiness and balance.
3. **Limiting Beliefs** Ana María Guzmán addresses the impact of limiting beliefs on female empowerment. These beliefs, rooted in childhood and reinforced by the cultural and social environment, condition the way women think and act. Guzman suggests several strategies to overcome these beliefs: self-knowledge, mental reprogramming, behavioural training, the practice of gratitude and positivity, and the importance of taking breaks and resting without guilt. These strategies enable women to replace limiting

beliefs with empowering beliefs, thus promoting meaningful personal growth and a fulfilling life.

- Recognition of Internal Obstacles: All interviews highlight the importance of identifying and recognising internal obstacles, whether it is imposter syndrome (Bohórquez), limiting beliefs (Guzmán), or lack of self-awareness (Villamarín). Recognising these patterns is the first step towards confronting and overcoming them.

- Importance of Self-Awareness: Villamarín and Guzmán emphasise the need for self-awareness for self-development and overcoming limiting beliefs. This self-awareness involves a process of self-reflection and self-analysis to understand the roots of problems and find ways to solve them.

- Coping Strategies: The strategies suggested by Guzman (mental reprogramming and behavioural coaching) and Villamarin (pauses for reflection and avoiding comparisons) complement each other and provide a holistic approach to female empowerment. These strategies are based on the idea that meaningful change begins with conscious decisions and deliberate actions.

- Impact of Culture and Environment: Both Bohórquez and Guzmán point out how the cultural and family environment influences the formation of limiting beliefs and imposter syndrome. This recognition is crucial to understand the context in which these problems develop and to find effective ways to overcome them.

In this sense, the triangulation of these three interviews reveals a comprehensive picture of female empowerment and the internal obstacles women face. The recognition of limiting patterns, the importance of self-awareness and the implementation of effective strategies are fundamental aspects of overcoming these challenges. By addressing these issues from different perspectives, Bohórquez, Villamarín and Guzmán provide valuable guidance for women to unlock their potential, overcome internal barriers and achieve a full and meaningful life.

CONCLUSIONS

This research provides an integrated view of impostor syndrome in women in the workplace, through the triangulation of data obtained from a survey, interviews and a literature review. The results of the survey indicate that cultural expectations and comparison with others are determining factors in the development of impostor syndrome in Ecuadorian women, findings that are supported by the literature reviewed, where the influence of gender stereotypes and systemic discrimination in this phenomenon is evident.

The literature review also highlights the impact of impostor syndrome on people's decision-making and career progression in the workplace, which coincides with the perception of the majority of respondents on its negative impact on job performance. In this context, the need to implement strategies to overcome impostor syndrome becomes evident.

The interviews provide additional perspectives on strategies to overcome impostor syndrome. Both Verónica Villamarín and Ana María Guzmán highlight the importance of self-development and self-awareness, advocating practices such as reflection, avoiding comparisons and the practice of gratitude. These strategies align with the main recommendation derived from the survey, which suggests that receiving training in self-confidence skills is crucial to address this phenomenon. In addition, the survey points to the importance of creating a supportive work environment to combat impostor syndrome, suggesting that fostering a culture of constructive feedback can be an effective measure. These recommendations are in line with the organisational intervention proposals discussed in the literature review, emphasising the key role of human resources and management in preventing and addressing this phenomenon.

Finally, the lack of seeking professional help by the majority of respondents highlights the need to increase awareness of available resources and reduce the stigma associated with seeking help for mental health problems in the workplace. Recognising and addressing impostor syndrome emerges as a priority to promote women's wellbeing and professional development in the workplace.

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