You Belong Here: Navigating Impostor Phenomenon in Psychology
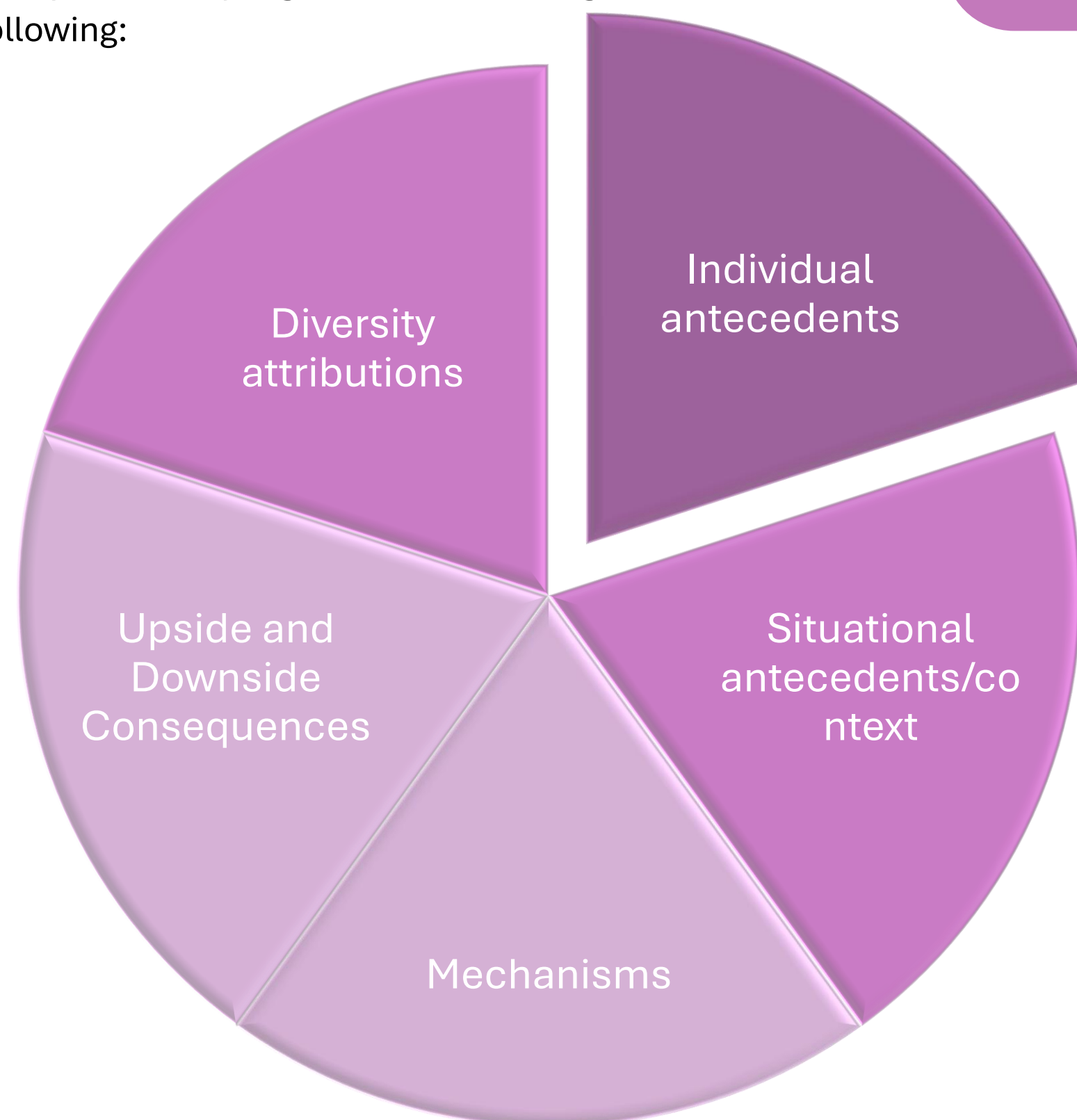
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Introduction

- Imposter Phenomenon is a term used to describe feeling like a fraud and unworthy of one's achievement, despite evidence of the contrary (Clance and Imes, 1978)
- "Among ethnically and racially minoritized individuals its etiology is closely tied to marginalizing experiences that collectively confer risk for psychological well-being." (Cokley et al., 2024)
- Building from these findings, more recent literature suggests that IP represents the internalization of negative racialized beliefs, which ultimately shapes risk for negative mental health outcomes (Cokley et al., 2024)
- Tewfik et al. (2025) summarized the existing literature in relation of how IP it has been conceptualized across disciplines. They organized their findings based on the following:

Pie chart segments: Individual antecedents; Situational antecedents/context; Mechanisms; Upside and Downside Consequences; Diversity attributions

Impostor Phenomenon Recommended Future Directions (literatura review)

- Re-centering the concept defining cognitive feature – the belief that others perceive one's abilities more favorably- to provide construct clarity. (Tewfik et al., 2025)

- Contextualizing to center the social realities and lived experiences of racially marginalized groups as central to IP experiences. (Cokley et al., 2024; Tewfik et al., 2025)

- Development of new informed measures (Cokley et al., 2024; Tewfik et al., 2025)

- Explore IP from an organizational standpoint: (Tewfik et al. 2025):
  - Relationship-oriented behaviors
  - Task-oriented behaviors
  - Change-oriented behaviors

Goals

- Develop a toolkit in Box and create a video to share lived experiences and expert perspectives
- Involve diverse voices in identifying the impact of IP and shaping supportive intervention
- Encourage shared reflection and dialogue across disciplines to address Impostor Phenomenon

Gathering Lived Experiences from the Community

- Emails were sent to a clinical supervisors and educators, trainees, training program alums, DICE committee, and across multiple sites, from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Extended an invitation to contribute by sharing: personal reflections, educational materials, and advice and coping strategies that were helpful to overcome feelings of IP from their experience.

IP Toolkit (QR code)

Outcomes

- Video:
  - Present literature defining the concept
  - Gathered a collection of reflections and experiences shared by different professionals within the Psychiatry department, who represented a range of disciplines, identities and roles
  - Share a QR at the end for easy access to the Box toolkit
- Toolkit:
  - Accessible in digital format through Box
  - Included different formats of resources such as videos, podcasts, TedTalks, articles, blogs.
  - Resources selected by themes identified as common from the literature

Future Directions

- Integrate other disciplines and/or early-career professionals
- Develop and distribute a qualitative measure to evaluate the effectiveness of the resources
- Integrate and distribute the collection of reflections shared by different professionals within the Psychiatry Department into a video

References

Clance PR, Imes SA. 1978. The impostor phenomenon in high achieving women: dynamics and therapeutic intervention. Psychother. Theory Res. Pract. 15(3):241–47. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0086006

Cokley, K. O., Bernard, D. L., Stone-Sabali, S., & Awad, G. H. (2024). Impostor phenomenon in racially/ethnically minoritized groups: Current knowledge and future directions. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 20(1), 407–430. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-081122-015724

Tewfik, B. A., Yip, J. A., & Martin, S. R. (2025). Workplace impostor thoughts, impostor feelings, and impostorism: An integrative, multidisciplinary review of research on the impostor phenomenon. *Academy of Management Annals*, 19(1), 38–73. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2023.0100