Cinderella Syndrome "Women with Fear of Independence": Developing a Scale

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Cinderella syndrome is a concept which is used to define woman who fear from being independent. Women with Cinderella syndrome are in the need of men's refuge and protection. The syndrome is like a psychological dependence for women and in this dependence, situation being patient and moral is important for being rescued by a man as a reward. In the syndrome women expect a man to come and take control of their own lives so that they can live happily. The aim of the study developing a scale into Turkish culture to determine the level of Cinderella Syndrome in females. The Cinderella Syndrome Scale is a 5-point Likert Type scale which includes 25 items. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to define construct validity and three factors were determined, called "sexist attitude", "escape from responsibility" and "quitting career". According to EFA, three factors describe 54,69 % of the variance. Results of EFA were validated by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The Cronbach's alpha was found as .94 for the total scale.

1. Introduction

Gender patterns, which form beliefs about the behavior of women and men, show themselves in particular in patriarchal societies, and in romantic relations it affects expectations about the role, duties, and responsibilities of men and women and relationship goals.

Gender patterns that are used to describe the social and cultural personality characteristics described as masculine and feminism are attributed to certain characteristics of the woman and man. Traits such as sensuality, weakness, dependence, or passive are defined as feminine; characteristics such as greed, power, aggression, or independence are seen as masculine (Eagly & Wood, 1999). In parallel, girls are grown from a small age to be female, and boys are raised to be men. From the perspective of the historical process, it is seen that this situation is more against women.

Women are encouraged to feel safe and comfortable from a small age, and hence they are trained not for freedom, but for dependence. This dependent process, expressed in feminism, causes fear of independence. The way to get rid of this fear is to have a man to protect herself (Kelley, 1994).

According to Dowling (1998), mothers' anxious or overprotective attitudes often create fear in their daughters. Mothers who teach their little girl to avoid risks, unintentionally, prevent the child from learning how to cope with fear, and girls, from early ages, doubts about their own skills, therefore they believe that in order to

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survive they should be supported and protected. Social expectations and concerns of parents restrengthen this belief.

The girl trained to become dependent is unable to get rid of this dependence she used to comfort when she grew up (Dowling, 1998) and thinks that the way to protect this "comfort" is only possible with a male savior (Saha and Safri, 2016). The concept of the Cinderella complex, used by Dowling (1998) to describe this situation as the basis of psychological dependence in women, is a psychological syndrome in which women are in the need of protection from a dominant figure (preferably male) without awareness (Saha & Safri, 2016).

The Cinderella Syndrome is named after the Story of Cinderella, waiting for the handsome prince to save herself from the evil stepmother and siblings, and was first conceptualized by Collette Dowling in the early 1980s. The Cinderella of Perrault is a good-hearted, gentleman who does not hold grudges against evil. Through this theme, a woman is said to be patient and moral in order to overcome difficulties, and be should wait for the day in which a man will come for her as a reward for her patience. In order to be perceived as virtuous, a woman should be compliant, attractive, faithful, and sexually "clean" (Saha & Safri, 2016). Cinderella is depicted as a helpless, passive victim who needs protection. "Perfect girl" is always soft, polite and cute (Shaw & Lee, 2001). Cinderella's weaknesses are contrasts with the evils of struggle. But eventually she falls in love with the prince and she marries and lives happily ever after. Cinderella's experience is an excellent example of psychological dependence in women. In modern society, these emotions may result in discrimination in the workplace or unemployment on women (Su & Xue, 2010).

Cinderella syndrome also includes the society's emphasis on youth, beauty and weakness in women. Cinderella is a good-hearted woman who doesn't bear a grudge against her own sister, and stepmother. As a result, many women accept challenges as a source of freedom. Instead of being independent, women are directed towards men for protection. Therefore, it is understandable that girls who grow by reading these tales will be a woman who passively spends their time waiting for their princes. The attractive and beautiful appearance of a girl always plays a crucial role in choosing a prince's wife. As a result, women care about beauty as the main factor in pleasing a man (Su & Xue, 2010). Today, the beauty industry is regarded as one of the areas where self-transformation through the Cinderella image is found (Miller, 2008).

This syndrome basically suggests that women are seeing themselves as "young girls in agony" and waiting to be rescued by a man. According to this, women expect a man who controls their lives and thus lives happily (Saha & Safri, 2016). These women protect their dependence, in every development phase; from kindergarten to university, professions, and marriages (Dowling, 1998). Cinderella syndrome is not only in some women, but in fact in all women and reflects a secret fear of independence (Barnes, 2009).

Dowling (1998) generally ranks the following forms of distinctive beliefs and behaviors in Cinderella syndrome: Adopt a role of "submissive" to avoid the tension that life brings; Internal belief that men should work harder and take risks; Internal or external rage against the thought that she had to take responsibility for her own life; belief that men are stronger, smarter, and resourceful than women; the extraordinary need for support when engaged in outward-oriented activities; believe that a man in marriage has the right to provide financial assurance to her; be proud of the skills of raising a child or devoting herself for housework; ignoring the symptoms of problems in the relationship, as little as possible questioning and seeing this situation as "endure".

Talented women are often reluctant to engage in the real self-sufficiency situation or have unnecessary concerns. Many prefer to be smart but unnoticed supporters of strong men (Dowling, 1998). Similar situation is seen in the career planning of these women. DiSabatino (1976) describes factors that are causing problems while career planning and decision making for women: women have a fear of failure more than man; women trust their skills less, development of independence and self-confidence is low; women often have conflicts between spouse and mother roles and their roles in the workplace (as cited Borman & Guido-DiBrito, 1986). In this syndrome, the woman is constantly working and waiting for a reward. It is a characteristic of Cinderella syndrome to constantly work and to settle for many things and to finally expect to be rewarded as a Cinderella one day at a time. It is also the most prominent characteristic of this syndrome (Gündüz, 2017).

Women must be able to give up their own accomplishments without the feeling of self-dedication. Therefore, they often suppress their own initiative, give up their aspirations, and become overly dependent on their

abilities and values with a profound sense of distrust and uncertainty (Dowling, 1998). The comfort woman, who is on the return of dependency, is forced to flee from responsibilities and become dependent again with the desire to be rescued, which becomes a vicious cycle. This desire blunts the woman's ambition, reduces her self-esteem and prevents her from being alone (Göde, 2018).

The explanations given above show that women with Cinderella syndrome are experiencing problems in both romantic and professional relationships in the context of self-esteem and dependence. There are limited studies about Cinderella syndrome in the literature; in addition, there is no measuring instrument which indicates the level at which women have this syndrome. It might be important that determining the level of possession of the Cinderella syndrome for both practical and theoretical studies. In this regard, a scale has been developed into Turkish culture, and validity and reliability studies were conducted in the current study.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

451 female individuals over 18 years of age constituted participants of this study. Random sampling was used to reaching participants. 51,4% of respondents were single (n=232), 44.1% married (n=199) and 4.5% divorced. The father and mother of 89,4% of the participants are together and parents of 82,5% of participants are alive. The ages of participants are between 18 and 59, and the mean ages are 29.79 (SD=8.19).

During the development process of the Cinderella Syndrome scale two participant groups were used. The First group includes 223 female participants and this data was used to conduct item analysis and Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA); the second group consists of 228 female participants and the data have been used to perform Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

2.2. Procedure

In the development process of the scale, firstly the "Cinderella syndrome" literature was reviewed. 26 expressions which are thought to encompass all the features of Cinderella syndrome were included in the item pool. These items were presented to the opinion of three academic staff whose profession is Psychological Counseling and Guidance. Necessary corrections have been made according to experts' feedback and 26 items 5 points Likert-type pilot scale was created (Strongly disagree to Strongly agree).

As the second step, a 26-item trial form was applied to 223 female individuals, and the item analysis and EFA was performed on the data obtained. Any item has not been extracted from the item analysis because item-total test correlation coefficients were founded above .30. Then, according to the EFA findings, one item was extracted and 25 items were attained.

As the third step, a 25-item scale was delivered to 228 female individuals, and the data was evaluated by CFA on the model. Lastly, the reliability of the scale was computed.

2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection step was conducted with female individuals over the age of 18 to face-to-face and through the internet. The scale application lasted about 10 minutes. Analysis of the data was performed with SPSS 21 and AMOS 22 programs.

Construct validity of the scale was studied with the Barlett Sphericitiy test and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient for the conformity of the data factor analysis. Appropriateness of data for factor analysis will be decided according to the significance of Barlett Sphericitiy test and value of KMO (Büyüköztürk, 2020). In the current research, the KMO sample coefficient and the Barlett Sphericitiy test χ^2 value were 0.922 and 3.174,957 (p <. 001). Accordingly, it was concluded that the data is appropriate for factor analysis.

The Factor structure of the scale was determined with Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using principal axis factoring. Principal axis factoring is suggested because it is reliable while determining the factors in the scale developed in SPSS (Field, 2013). Then, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was made with the purpose of testing the model created according to the EFA result. Mardia's multivariate normality test was performed before the CFA; results showed that the data were not normally distributed. Thus, 7 data with extreme values were extracted from the data set and a multivariate normality test was performed for a second time, and the

result showed that the data were normally distributed. The goodness of fit indices which are χ^2, RMSEA, GFI, CFI, NFI was calculated to test the suitability of the data to the model created.

3. Results

3.1. Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Factor structure and sub-dimensions of the 26-item trial scale were determined with EFA and varimax vertical rotation technique was used. Accordingly, 1 item has been extracted because it has less than .10 differences between the factor loadings in the sub-dimensions. Afterward, for the remaining 25 items EFA was has performed again. In this respect, the first factor's value is 10.432, and values of the second, third, fourth, and fifth factors are 1.90, 1.33, 1.15, and 1.02 correspondingly. When the scree plot was examined, it was seen that there might be a single factor structure. But the scale was accepted to be more suitable for the three-factor structure considering the related literature and the variance explained by the factor.

Three factors explain 54,69% of the total variance. The first factor's value was 10.43, which explains the 41,72% of the variances of the Cinderella syndrome. The second factor's value was 1.90 that explains the 7,62% of the variance and the third factor's value was 1.33 that explains the 5,34% of the variance of the Cinderella syndrome. Values for item factor load change between .37 and. 81 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Item factor load values

Item No.	1. Factor	2. Factor	3. Factor
1	.62		
6	.62		
8	.57		
9	.59		
10	.75		
12	.37		
13	.54		
14	.53		
15	.60		
20	.42		
23	.61		
3		.69	
4		.71	
5		.81	
16		.67	
17		.68	
18		.75	
25		.58	
2			.51
7			.72
11			.47
19			.47
21			.68
22			.62
24			.66
Eigenvalue	10.43	1.90	1.33
Variance	19.32%	18.99%	16.38%
Total variance: 54.69%			

3.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

228 data were again collected from female participants to test the model created according to EFA results. After the multivariate normality test conducted on the collected data, 7 data with extreme values were removed and CFA was performed with 221 data. χ^2, RMSEA, GFI, AGFI, NFI and CFI are widely preferred Goodness of fit indexes in the assessment of the conformity of the data to the model (Sumer, 2000). According

to confirmatory factor analysis; the model is within acceptable limits since p value is less than .05 (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, & Büyüköztürk, 2018), the value of χ^2/df is less than 5 (Kline, 2005), the value of RMSEA is less than .10 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2020), the value of GFI is higher than .90 (Hooper, Caughlan, & Mullen, 2008), the values of CFI and NFI are higher than .90 (Sumer, 2000). Also the model is within perfect limit since p value is higher than .05 (Çokluk et al., 2018), the value of χ^2/df is less than 3 (Kline, 2005), RMSEA value is less than .05 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993), the value of GFI is higher than .95 (Hooper et al., 2008), the values of CFI and NFI are higher than .95 (Sumer, 2000).

χ^2/df was used to test the statistical conformity of the model and it was found to be smaller than 3 (χ^2/df=1.14). Additionally, p value is .07. Because the p-value is greater than. 05, it can be said that the model fits well. For the model the goodness of fit index values are RMSEA=. 02, GFI=. 91, NFI=. 91 and CFI=. 98. The goodness of fit index outcomes showed that the model might be considered to be within a good fit and acceptable fit limits. With the CFA the three-factor structure model has been confirmed, it can be seen in Figure 1.
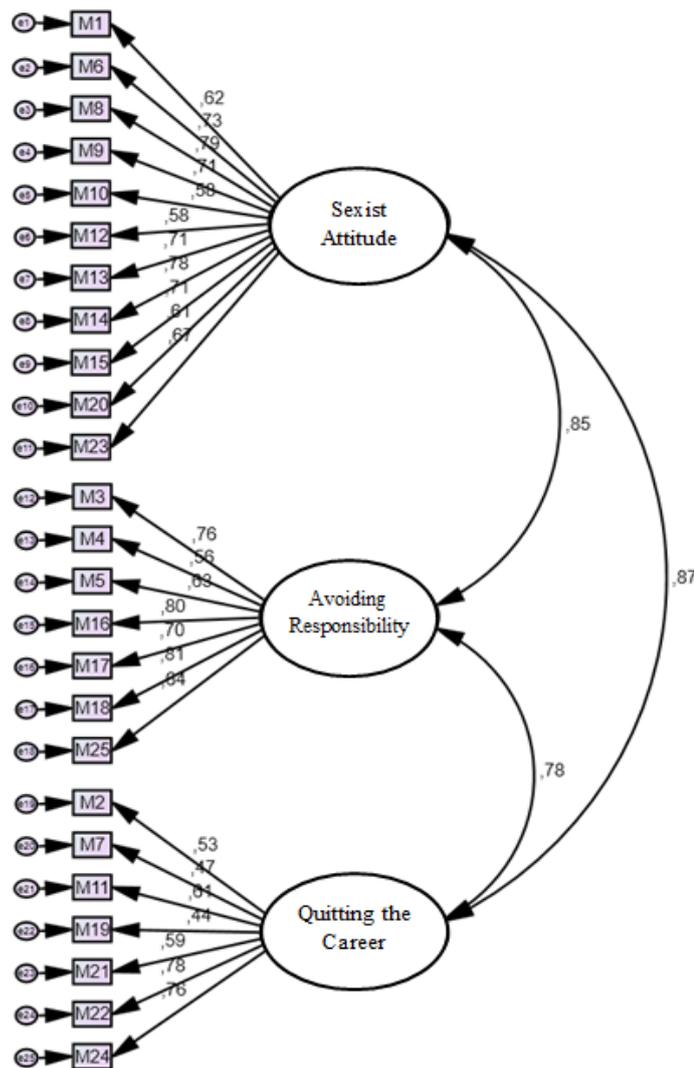

Figure 1. Three-factor Model of the Cinderella syndrome scale

As a final point, with respect to the related literature and items included in factors, the name of the first factor is determined as "sexist attitude", the name of the second factor is "avoiding responsibility" and the third factor is called "quitting the career". 11 items are included in the first factor, 7 items are included within the second factor and 7 items are included in the third factor. There is no reverse item on the scale. The lowest and highest scores that can be obtained from the scale are 25 and 125, respectively. Accordingly, the level of Cinderella syndrome is high when the total score taken from the scale is high.

3.3. Item-Total Correlation Values and Subscales Correlation Values

In table 3 the item-total test correlations of trial scale are given. The item-total test correlation coefficient is higher than .30 meaning that the item is adequately discriminatory, which means, it may measure the expected property to be measured with the whole scale (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç-Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2020). As seen from Table 2, in the present study item-total test correlations range between .39 and .76. Therefore, it may be considered that in the scale all of the items are adequate to discriminate the property to be measured.

Table 2. Item-total test correlations

Item No	Item-Total Test Correlations
1	.58
2	.42
3	.66
4	.55
5	.55
6	.71
7	.42
8	.76
9	.69
10	.55
11	.54
12	.53
13	.66
14	.73
15	.66
16	.67
17	.66
18	.68
19	.39
20	.58
21	.52
22	.71
23	.64
24	.65
25	.65

The correlation coefficients of the sexist attitude, avoiding responsibility, and quitting the career subscales were found as .77, .72 and .65 respectively (p<.01) (See in Table 3). Thus, it can be said that subscales are significantly correlated with each other.

Table 3. Correlations coefficients between subscales

	1	2	3
Sexist Attitude (1)	-	.77*	.72*
Avoiding Responsibility (2)	-	-	.65*
Quitting the Career (3)	-	-	-

*p<.01

3.4. Findings on the Reliability of the Scale

Reliability of the scale have been computed with the Cronbach alpha and the split-half reliability coefficient. Accordingly, Cronbach alpha was found as .94 and the split-half reliability coefficient was founded .87 and .90 for the first half and second half, respectively. With respect to the results, the reliability of the Cinderella syndrome scale is adequate.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed to develop a scale to determine the level of Cinderella syndrome in women into Turkish culture. Cinderella syndrome is used to describe women who is in need of men's asylum and protection and therefore fear of independence.

The Cinderella syndrome scale is a 25 item five-point Likert-type scale. Construct validity of the scale was determined by EFA and results indicated that three factors describing 54,69% of the variance. The Result of the CFA showed that the goodness of fit index values has been determined to be in acceptable interval limits. That is to say, EFA was used to create the three-factor model and the factor structure confirmed by the CFA.

The Reliability of the scale was determined with Cronbach alpha and split-half reliability. For the total scale Cronbach alpha is .94, and split half reliability coefficient are .87 and .90 for the first half and second half, respectively. The results signify that the reliability of the Cinderella complex scale is sufficient.

The first factor called "sexist attitude" includes 11 items; the second factor called "escape from responsibility" includes 7 and the third factor called "quitting career" includes 7 items. The scale does not contain reverse items. The highest and lowest score to be obtained from the scale is 125 and 25.

The scale was developed into Turkish culture with the female participants who are older than the age of 18 regardless of relationship status. For future research, it might be recommended that the Cinderella syndrome be studied according to women's relationship status, parents' relationship status, age of their parents lost. The scale has valid and reliable psychometric properties and in this way it might be an appropriate tool to evaluate the level of Cinderella syndrome in women clients both individual and double counseling/ psychotherapies.

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