



Prevalence of Society stimulated dependency among working and non-working women across three socio economic groups

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Abstract: Cinderella Complex is a psychological syndrome that states women are unconsciously driven to be dependent on a dominant figure (preferably male). Cinderella Complex has the power to infiltrate many different aspects of a woman's lives. This affects how women think, act and speak. It is less likely for a woman to actively participate when there is someone else who can help. Women are more wary of their actions rather than confident in their decisions. They depend more on others for feedback to build their self-esteem. Society perpetuates women to think they need a man to make their life better and without whom they should feel afraid and unprotected. Even today, women might be enjoying success in their career, may be richer but deep down in their psyche they fear they can't survive alone. These women may be at the peak of their career ladder and earning more than men but when it comes to relationships men still hold the trump card. It is important to conduct a research on issues regarding women dependency as women empowerment in a true sense can be achieved only when the women psyche is understood. Apart from this very few researches have been conducted in this area so far.

Key Words: Cinderella Complex, women, psychological syndrome, man and dependency.

1. INTRODUCTION :

Women's dependency has been a widely debated topic globally. In the olden times women's work was limited to household chores as well as child rearing. They were financially dependent on men and women's dependency was considerably high. With the drive for women empowerment lot of emphasis was given on women education in order to make them independent educationally, economically, socially and politically. Women today have joined the work force, they enjoy more rights, social as well as legal and have greater freedom to voice their opinion and participate more freely. But, women have been encouraged since they were children to be dependent. Cinderella Complex is a psychological syndrome that states women are unconsciously driven to be dependent on a dominant figure (preferably



male). Society has huge impact on woman’s psyche through the norms, values and moral expectations. Such impact has been categorized in this dimension of the scale.

Cinderella Complex has the power to infiltrate many different aspects of a woman’s lives. This affects how women think, act and speak. It is less likely for a woman to actively participate when there is someone else who can help. Women are more wary of their actions rather than confident in their decisions. They depend more on others for feedback to build their self-esteem. Society perpetuates women to think they need a man to make their life better and without whom they should feel afraid and unprotected. Cinderella Complex can also be seen as an escape from responsibilities wherein a woman can easily shun off from all types of responsibilities financially, emotionally and physically thinking that a man will take care of all their needs. In simple terms, women are programmed to feel dependent on men. Even today, women might be enjoying success in their career, may be richer but deep down in their psyche they fear they can't survive alone. These women may be at the peak of their career ladder and earning more than men but when it comes to relationships men still hold the trump card.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS :

Prayagraj was purposively selected for the study. Married working and Non- working women were selected from three socio economic status i.e. lower, middle and upper using stratified random sampling technique. Married working and Non – working women in the age group of 25-45 years belonging to lower, middle and upper socio-economic groups were selected to study the prevalence of Cinderella complex. A total sample of 180 married women (90 working and 90 Non-working) comprising of 30 women each from lower, middle and upper socio-economic groups were selected for the present study. Survey method was used for data collection.

The Socio Economic Status was ascertained using **Kuppuswamy’s (1962)** revised by **Wani (2019)** three factor index of socio economic status which used the occupational, educational and economical levels of parents in each household. **Cinderella Complex scale** (A measurement of women’s dependence syndrome) developed by **Saha and Safri (2017)** was used to study the prevalence of Cinderella Complex among women.

Society Stimulated Dependency: When scoring high in this dimension suggest traditional upbringing and inclination towards traditional roles of womanhood. These women are likely to comply the gender roles of the society and find and comfort in society oriented relationships.

Table 1. Interpretation of Society Stimulated Dependency

Scores	Interpretation
9-12	High Level of dependency
5-8	Moderate Level of dependency
0-4	Low Level of dependency

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION :

Table 2. Prevalence of society stimulated dependency among working women across three socio economic groups

EXTENT OF SOCIETY STIMULATED DEPENDENCY	LOWER SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP (n= 30)		MIDDLE SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP (n= 30)		UPPER SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP (n= 30)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
HIGH (9-12)	6	20.00	7	23.33	7	23.33
MODERATE (5-8)	23	76.66	19	63.33	22	73.33
LOW (0-4)	1	3.33	4	13.33	1	3.33

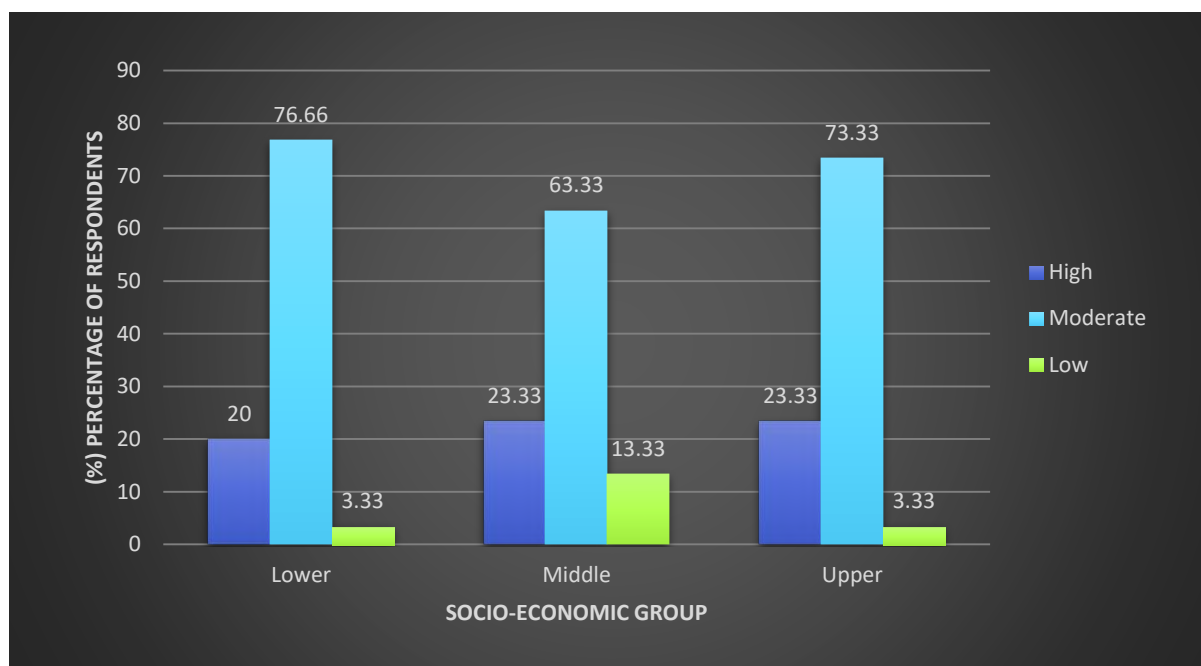


Figure 1. Society stimulated dependency among working women across three socio - economic groups.

Figure 1. shows the prevalence of society stimulated dependency among working women across three socio-economic groups. It is evident from the figure that majority of the working women from lower socio-economic group i.e. 76.66 per cent had moderate level of society stimulated dependence. High level of dependence was seen among 20 per cent and low level of dependency was witnessed among 3.33 per cent of working women belonging to lower socio-economic strata.

The figure also highlights the same trend among working women belonging to middle socio-economic group wherein 63.33 per cent women had moderate level, 23.33 per cent had high and 13.33 per cent possessed lower level of society stimulated dependency.

It is witnessed from the figure that 73.33 per cent working women belonging to upper socio economic group also displayed moderate level of society stimulated dependency. High level of dependency stimulated by the society was projected by 23.33 per cent whereas 3.33 per cent working women from upper socio -economic group showed low level of dependency.

Hence it is clear from the above table that irrespective of the socio- economic group, working women tend to display a moderate level of society stimulated dependency. Despite being economically self-reliant, women in the Indian society still have the feeling of dependency. Owing to their dependent upbringing, girls from a very young age idolize about getting a perfect partner which gives rise to unhealthy relationship goals and expectations. In Indian society, the person responsible for the household is in a subordinate position within it, and, most often, women and girls are responsible for all household tasks, even if they work outside the home which flares their tendency of dependency on men. Being deeply influenced by the gender stereotypes, these females with the Cinderella complex believe that their feminine behaviors, such as being nurturer, concerning more over personal relationship, and being caregivers for children and household would help them win their prince. Hence, they are satisfied with being a sweet, conforming, and dependent little girl instead of being a strong, assertive, and independent girl (Hitchcock and Tompkins, 1987).

Table 3. Prevalence of society stimulated dependency among non-working women across three socio- economic groups

EXTENT OF SOCIETY	LOWER SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP (n=30)	MIDDLE SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP (n=30)	UPPER SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP (n=30)
High	20	23.33	23.33
Moderate	76.66	63.33	73.33
Low	3.33	13.33	3.33



STIMULATED DEPENDENCY	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
HIGH (9-12)	15	50.00	6	20.00	6	20.00
MODERATE (5-8)	14	46.66	19	63.33	16	53.33
LOW (0-4)	1	3.33	5	16.66	8	26.66

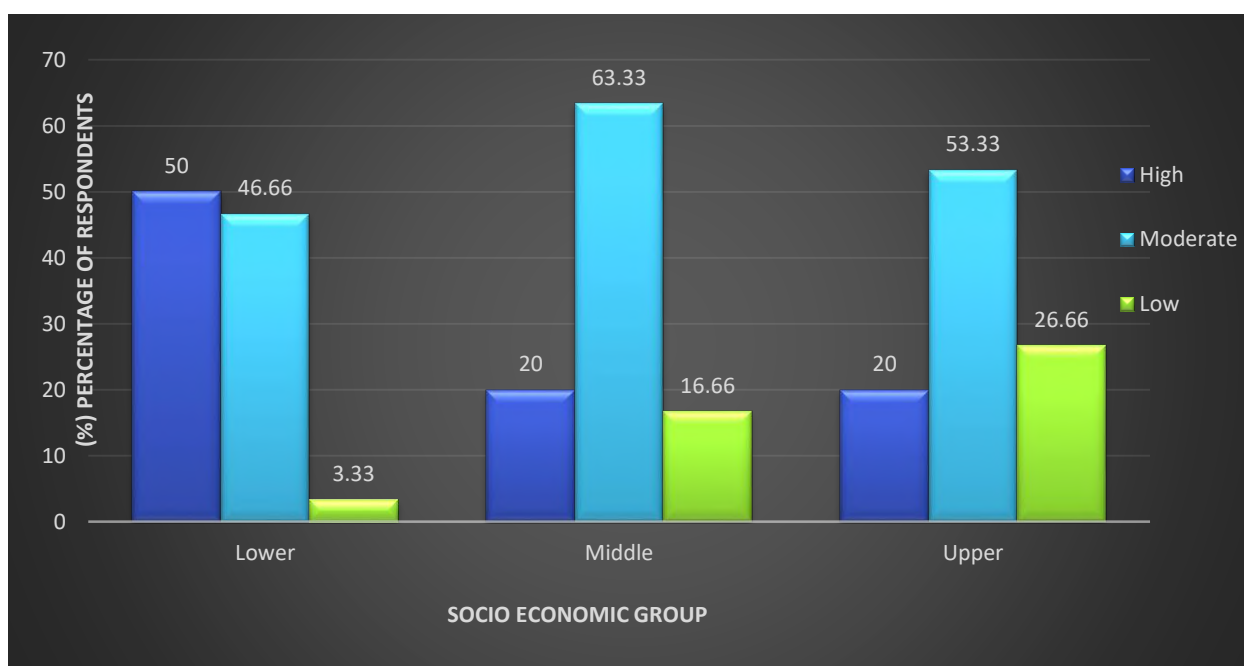


Figure 2. Society stimulated dependency among non-working women across three socio economic groups

Table and figure 2 reveals the prevalence of society stimulated dependency among non-working women across three socio economic groups i.e. lower, middle and upper socio economic strata of the society. It is evident from the table that 50 per cent non-working women belonging to lower socio economic group possess high level of society stimulated dependency closely followed by 46.66 percent having moderate level and only 3.33 percent women exhibited low level of society stimulated dependency which is quite alarming. The upbringing of girls especially in the lower socio economic strata is subjected to a lot of gender bias attitude owing to which they frequently drop out of school and fail to develop career aspirations which results in the their becoming a

homemaker and satisfy her suitor by taking caring of children and fulfilling the needs of the family members. Hence they are more likely to develop an urge for a male dependency that can take care of her and protect her from all odds within her environment. Women generally hold an unconscious desire to be constantly protected and taken care of while giving up their own interests and goals. This can be due to social or religious pressures.

The figure further shows that 63.33 percent non-working women from middle socio economic group displayed moderate level of society stimulated dependence whereas 20 percent showed high and 16.66 per cent manifested low level of society stimulated dependence.

Among the upper socio economic group it is evident that 53.33 percent non-working women displayed moderate level of society stimulated dependence and 26.66 percent showed low followed by 20 percent women who exhibited high level of society stimulated dependency.



The data represented in the data unfolds the fact that as the socio economic status of the non-working women improve, the dependency on a male member reduces. Girls are generally raised by educated parents in both middle and upper socio economic group who lay emphasis on educating and empowering their girl child which makes them more confident, independent and self-sufficient as compared to their counterparts from lower socio economic background. **Schober et al. (2004)** also highlighted that girls and women lack the self-confidence necessary for taking uncertain tasks and roles owing to cultural underachievement which hinders girls and women to choose to develop their talents or select their career domains based on achievement but rather on cultural and social imbedded gender constructions.

Table 4. Comparison of society stimulated dependency among working and non-working women belonging to three socio-economic status

Socio- economic status	Working women n=30		Non-working women n=30		t value	P value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Lower socio - economic	7.1	1.98	8.13	2.13	1.94	0.057
middle socio -economic	7.00	2.20	6.60	2.07	0.725	0.471
upper socio- economic	7.24	2.01	6.34	2.08	1.70	0.094

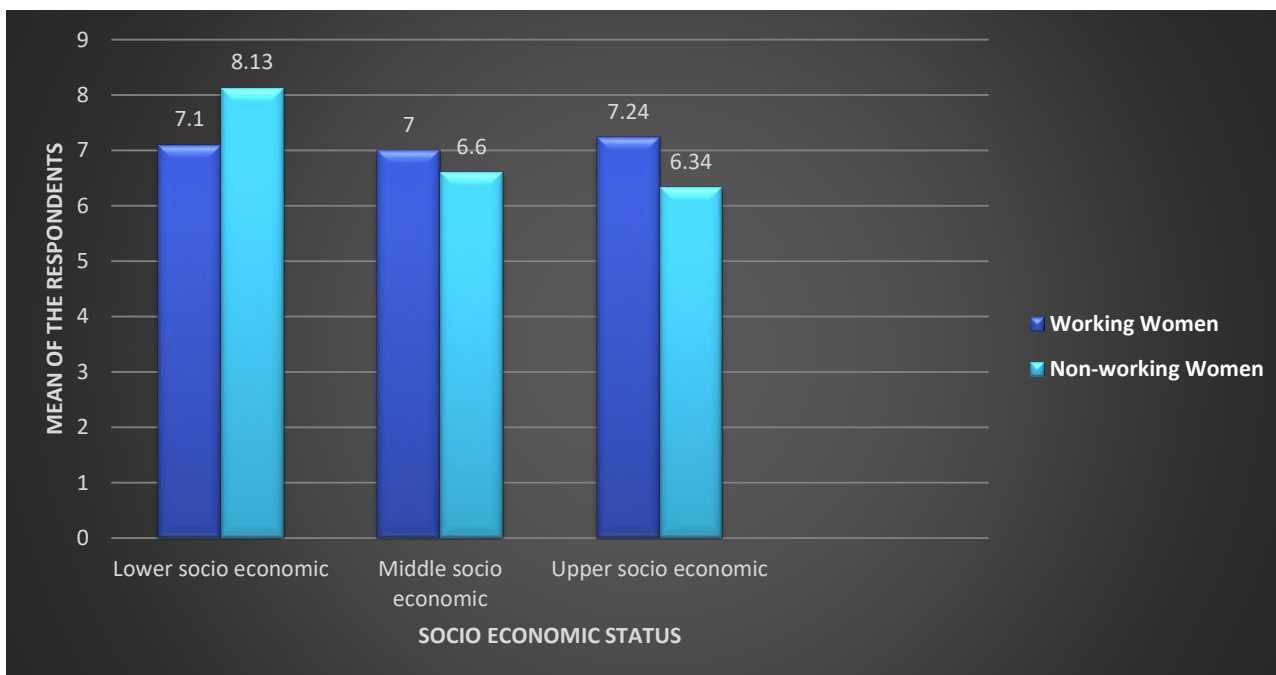


Figure 3. Society stimulated dependency among working and non-working women belonging to three socio economic status.

Table and figure 3 shows the comparison of Cinderella Complex among working and non-working women belonging to lower socio-economic status. It is evident from the table that t value for society stimulated dependency is found to be 1.94 and p value is found to be 0.057 which shows a non- significant difference between working and non-working women with regard to society stimulated dependency. Results indicate that irrespective of whether women are working or not society stimulated dependency on a male member is strong among women belonging to lower socio economic status.

The table clearly shows a non-significant difference between working and non-working women belonging to middle socio-economic status as the t value was found to be 0.725 and p value 0.471 respectively for society stimulated dependency. The results of the study are in sync with the study carried out by **Padma (2007)** concludes that the Cinderella Complex tendency in married working women is lower than married women who do not work. This is because



work provides many benefits for participants such as earning their own income, filling in their spare time, and wanting to increase knowledge / achievement.

The table reveals a non-significant difference in working and non-working women on aspect of society stimulated dependency as the t value is found to be 1.70 and p value is found to be 0.094. This might be due to the fact that as women goes out to work she also feels the need to keep the ego of the men in the house inflated which reminds the men of his superiority and grandiosity. This at times becomes necessary for marital happiness. Even when women are going out for work their position is recognized as secondary breadwinners, thus sustaining the economic dependence of women upon their spouses. Women also tend to interrupt their employment after giving birth (**Budig and England 2001**); sometimes they “scale back” and move from full-time to part-time employment or change their career plans when the family demands more of their time (**Becker and Moen 1999, Stier 1998**). Consequently, career interruptions affect women’s market rewards (**Budig and England 2001**) which make them psychologically, economically and socially dependent upon men.

4. CONCLUSION:

The term “Cinderella Complex” means that people who are affected by Cinderella fairy tales have an unconscious desire to be taken care by other people and they seem to be dependent on others usually a male member. The term “dependency” despite its universality comes off as a synonym when gender oriented definitions are presented for “a woman”. Dependency is a universal phenomenon where everyone is dependent on something or the other. The basic developmental task of both male and female is to achieve a healthy integration of passive dependency and autonomous strivings. Still women are thought to be programmed to depend on men, economically, socially, personally as well as emotionally. It is believed that it is because of their primeval urge to hang on to a male provider is very strong. A non-significant difference between working and non-working women belonging to middle socio economic on all dimensions of Cinderella complex was observed in the present study.

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