

# Self Silencing in Young Women

## Genç Kadınlarda Kendini Susturma

Meva Demir Kaya<sup>1</sup>, Figen Çok<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

The concept of self silencing which has been taken attention mainly in the cross cultural contexts has been investigated for a while. Self silencing mainly experienced by women refers to the fact that women care more about the wishes, expectations and needs of others in their close relationships. Avoiding conflict, maintaining the relationship and obtaining a sense of trust seem to be the underlying factors. Additionally it is also proposed that women who suppress their own voices and put the voices of others to the fore, view themselves as sacrifices in relationships and have an externalized and divided self perception. In this study, the characteristics of self-silencing, the two-dimensional autobiographical model which is frequently mentioned in recent years, and self-silencing in the cultural and feminist context are reviewed. Relationship between self silencing and identity development, and gender roles in women are reviewed in this paper.

**Keywords:** Self silencing, identity development, gender roles

### Öz

Kültürlerarası bağlamda dikkat çeken kendini susturma kavramı, bir süredir incelenmektedir. Kendini susturma daha çok kadınların yakın ilişkilerinde başkalarının istek, beklenti ve ihtiyaçlarını kendininkinin önünde tutmasını ve kendi istekleri karşısında sessiz kalmalarını ifade etmektedir. Bu duruşun gerisinde çatışmadan kaçınma, ilişkiyi sürdürme çabası ve güven duygusu kazanma gibi amaçlar yer almaktadır. Bununla beraber kendi sesini bastıran ve başkalarının sesliliğini ya da beklentilerini ön plana alan kadınların kendilerini ilişkilerde kurban olarak gördüğü, dışsallaştırılmış ve bölünmüş bir benlik algısına sahip olduğu vurgulanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada kendini susturmaya ilişkin özellikler, son yıllarda sıklıkla karşılaşılan iki boyutlu otobiyografik model sunulmakta ve kendini susturmaya ilişkin kültürel ve feminist bağlam ele alınmaktadır. Ayrıca kadınlarda kendini susturma ile kimlik gelişimi arasındaki ilişkiler ve kadınlarda kendini susturma ile toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri arasındaki ilişkiler gözden geçirilmektedir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Kendini susturma, kimlik gelişimi, toplumsal cinsiyet

<sup>1</sup>Atatürk University, Erzurum, Turkey

<sup>2</sup>Başkent University, Ankara, Turkey

✉ Meva Demir Kaya, Atatürk University Faculty of Literature, Department of Psychology, Erzurum, Turkey  
meva.dkaya@gmail.com | 0000-0002-1174-6305

Received: 22.09.2020 | Accepted: 24.11.2020 | Published online: 03.06.2021

**SELF** silencing conceptualized by Jack (1991), is based on the clinically depressed women's experiences. The experiences of women refer to put the needs, desires, expectations of others ahead of one's own in relationships (Jack 2003). The concept of silencing has been frequently mentioned in women's studies and various disciplines (Kurtiş 2010). Silencing, which aims to provide psychological or physical sense of safe, maintaining any relationship, and avoid conflict, is a relational process rather than an individual trait or a personality style (Jack and Ali 2010). According to studies focusing on this concept, self silencing occurs in intimate relationships (Jack 1991, Jack and Dill 1992).

Studies of self silencing in Turkey are quite limited and there have been only a few studies (Kurtiş 2010, Demir Kaya 2019). Given the importance of self silencing in a cultural context, it is critical to address variables associated with self silencing. This study aimed to examine the characteristics of self silencing, the two-dimensional autobiographical model which is frequently mentioned in recent years, and self-silencing in the cultural and feminist context. Besides, self silencing in women which is the starting point of silencing, the relationships self silencing, identity development, and gender roles are reviewed in this paper.

## Characteristics of self silencing

Self silencing is a concept that highlights the way people think about themselves and interact in their intimate relationships, specifically around the themes of voice and silence (Jack and Ali 2010). In other words, self-silencing is shaped according to the criteria of voice or silence in intimate relationships. Silence in general is examined in the context of individual or collective silence. Collective silence draws attention in intergroup relations. In collective silence, which is common in groups that exert pressure on other groups, individuals don't argue, because of deciding in line with the norms set by the group, and their strength to withstand objections is weak. Individual silence has seen as silencing oneself (Le Bon 2009).

Individuals who silence themselves care about the wishes and needs of others more than their own (Jack 2003). In this case, it is in question self renunciation. According to moral socialization based on irrational values, Rand argues that the main reason for an individual's existence is to sacrifice himself and serve for others (Can 2019). Therefore, in this concept, the individual cares more the needs of others ahead of the needs of the self (care as self sacrifice), women judge themselves with a strict attitude as the beauty criteria conveyed from the media cause unrealistic standards (externalized self perception), the separation of the ego with the tendency to alienate emotions (divided self) and inhibition of self-expression (self silencing) are emphasized (Jack and Dill 1992). In this respect, there are four dimensions of self-silencing, including behavioral and phenomenological perspectives.

In the dimension of care as self sacrifice, it is a matter the extent to which relationships are secured by putting the needs of others ahead of the needs of the self. In this process in which the greatest responsibility in intimate relationships is seen as the happiness of the other, keeping the desires and needs of the other at the same level is seen as a self accusing act for the individual. When the individual prioritizes themselves, an intense anger is experienced,

and then a moral ground is formed to suppress this situation. In this way, it is possible to maintain intimate relationships or to avoid any conflict by sacrificing self (Jack 1991).

In another dimension, externalized self perception, the individual's self evaluation with external standards is emphasized. These standards are culture and gender specific. Individuals concerned about how they look by others have the thought of not reaching the established standards. In addition, in this dimension, the individual considers the other's thoughts and opinions more valuable when deciding (Jack and Dill 1992).

In the divided self, there is a split between the external false self and the inner self. The reason for this situation is that hiding certain feelings and thoughts in an intimate relationship. False self in women is characterized by prioritizing the wishes of the partner (Jack 1991). In this case, women may experience angry and rage inside.

Self silencing refers to the tendency to inhibit self expression and action in order to secure relationships and to avoid conflict, retaliation, and loss. In cases where the demands and needs are seen as unfulfilled, the individual gives up them quite easily. Finally, in this dimension, it is the case that the individual prefers silence instead of expressing feelings in intimate relationships (Jack 2003). In this way, it can be said that the individual prefers to have a passive attitude.

## Two dimensional autobiographical model

It is seen that in the studies dealing with the importance of self silencing, Fivush's (2002) Social Constructionist Model is basically addressed. Studies of self silencing have focused on silence and voice in feminist and developmental perspectives (Fivush 2002, Gilligan 2017). In this context, Fivush (2002) suggested that voice and silence must be seen as a dynamic and relational process. In this process, the development of autobiographical life story has been seen as crucial. In this model, voice and silence and self and other conceptualized as dimensions rather than categories. These dimensions can be crossed as having 4 quadrants as displayed in Figure 1.

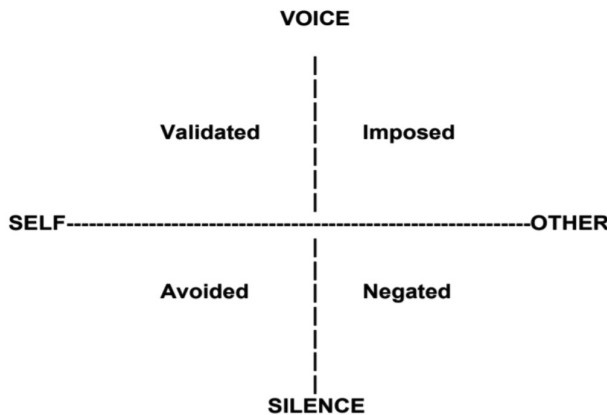


Figure 1. Two dimensional autobiographical model (Fivush 2002)

According to the two-dimensional autobiographical model, individuals have elements of both voice and silence by both self and other. Narratives determines the presence in any dimension in this process. The category realized by the two-dimensional autobiographical model in the “self-voice” is that “validated”. Experiences that are voiced provides a sense of validation. The individual’s self-expression evokes a real experience of life. In this model, another category that the individual realizes in his “self-silence” context is that “avoided”. Experiences that are silenced lead to a sense of existential despair; and cause an “avoidant” attitude in the individual (Fivush 2002). In this dimension, self silencing is seen. This process is accompanied by a loss of meaning and self in life (Jack and Ali 2010). In addition to a negative self-experience, difficulties may be experienced in the attachment process. For example, the individual perceives an unwanted separation experience as a major threat. In addition, impairment in self-regulation skills may accompany this process (Laurent and Powers 2007). As stated above, the categories in which the two-dimensional autobiographical model is discussed in the context of the “self” are classified as “validated” and “avoided”.

It can be said that the effect of culture is very important in cases considered in the ‘other’ category. Culture is based on transferring events, facts and narratives in social life in an expected way. There are cultural norms about how life should be or how to react to certain situations. This situation, which culture imposes on individuals, is located in the voice of the other. In this process, the individual is exposed to the wishes and expectations of others. Similarly, some emotions, thoughts and perspectives may not be accepted by the culture in some situations. In this case, the “negated” category draws attention. In this category, there is the silencing of others (Fivush 2002). In this context, on which dimension the individual would be taken is affected by the culture as well as their attitudes.

## **Self silencing in a cultural and feminist context**

In the studies on the narratives of women, attention is drawn to feelings such as anger, shame, and despair, with emphasis on the fact that self silencing causes a sense of loss in relation to life and the self. In these studies, it is seen that especially women are under pressure to comply with the norms and feminine ideals determined by the culture (Jack and Dill 1992, Jack and Ali 2010). Therefore, it can be said that cultural and feminist perspectives are generally in the foreground in studies on self-silencing (Jack and Ali 2010, Kurtiş 2010, Mauthner 2010, Worell 2010).

Many narratives and meanings of self silencing have been studied in various cultures (Jack and Dill 1992, Witte and Sherman 2002, Kurtiş et al.2017). Relational schemes of self silencing can be easily encountered in many cultures. These schemes generally involve a woman being firmly attached to a relationship for economic security (Jack and Ali 2010). However, such attitudes may differ according to the types of self in a particular culture.

Complying with the desires and expectations of the other and maintaining commitment are generally seen in the “relational self” structure addressed in intercultural psychology. Especially in traditional societies, the basic thing in this self structure is to adapt to relationships and to be a part of these relationships (Kağıtçıbaşı 2010). In cultures where the

relational self structure is common, it can be said that the adolescence period, which includes processes such as individuation and separation, is not usually experienced by individuals. Since they have not been able to experience this period encounter some problems in their relationships, they cannot break up their partnership in which they are unhappy because they could not experience separation after the negative situations that they experienced with their parents during adolescence. These individuals who experience a high sense of collectivism strive to live for the other and make the other happy (Hasanoğlu 2013). Therefore, in this process, personal needs and opinions are hindered (Kurtiş 2010).

In addition to qualities such as making decisions and realizing goals in the autonomous self structure, self expression is emphasized (Adams and Plaut 2003, Kağıtçıbaşı 2010). The way for individuals to feel as they are is related to taking part in a culture where they can express themselves (Jack and Ali 2010). Accordingly, it can be said that in cultures where the “autonomous self” structure is dominant, self-silencing is less.

In the feminist approach, it is seen that many models of self silencing have been developed (Jack 1991, Fivush 2002, Dainow 2014, Gilligan 2017). Gilligan’s (2017) work is one of the most striking of these. Gilligan argues that studies that are analyzed from a feminist point of view attach great importance to relationships. Relational theory deals with the adaptation process of women to relationships and emphasizes that the sense of self is structured together with close relationships in this process (Gilligan 2017).

According to Gilligan (2017), women start to hide their expressive features during adolescence. Women stay away from a real experience of life. In this process that results in alienation from the real self, a self that includes the “ideal woman” image and gender roles is structured. However, in the process of self and identity construction, it is also known that women have less of a moratorium identity with the advent of feminism (Marcia 1996).

Although the starting point of self silencing consists of womes’s discourses, when the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that men sometimes silence themselves as well (Smolak 2010). While women prefer to silence themselves to maintain their relationships, men may resort to this in order to protect their autonomy, to bring interactions under control in their relationships, and to keep their distance. Therefore, it can be said that self silencing has negative consequences for both women and men. However, research on self silencing in women outnumbered men. The related literature also supports the view that self silencing is generally a concept specific to women (Jack and Ali 2010).

## **Self silencing in women**

Self silencing which is observed especially among women is considered as a concept related to gender inequality. Gender inequality effects the structuring process of daily interactions and creates a reflection of self silencing in women. For example, the traditional feminine gender characteristic expresses that it is normal for a woman to predict that others prefer what they want to do, even if she doesn’t want it, and that men’s needs are ahead of wome’s. Such thoughts also highlight the difficulties associated with the behavioral patterns of women in order to maintain their relationships (Jack and Dill 1992).

In a culture where masculine gender traits are dominant, women face norms of who they should be or who they are. In such societies, self silencing is the values, norms, and images that impose self-sacrifice, tolerance and is full of love for women (Jack and Ali 2010). As a result, women often silence themselves in their intimate relationships (Zoellner and Hedlund 2010). This situation is affected by the fear of ending the relationship as well as the characteristics of gender (Jack 1991). The threat of exclusion calls for feelings of loneliness. Women who resort to silence themselves to cope with negativity related to loneliness may face the negativity brought about by silencing themselves this time. In this situation, it is common for women to feel stuck and under pressure. Such that, loneliness and self silencing caused by the end of relationships is unpleasant for the individual (Jordan 2010).

Another noticeable concept related to self silencing is loneliness. It is known that there is a relationship between self silencing and loneliness, and these concepts cause depression (Thompson 1995, Besser et al. 2003, Besser et al. 2010). However, in some cultures, intimate relationships aren't seen as the only factor in preventing loneliness. In these cultures, the correlation between depression and self silencing is lower (Sikka et al. 2010).

The Silencing the Self model integrates aspects of relational theories, cognitive theories, and attachment theory of depression to explain women's vulnerability to depression. At this point, the relational theory draws attention. Relational theory formulated from a feminist perspective include "feminine attachment behaviors" that are socially accepted. Feminine attachment behaviors are characterized by compulsive caretaking, pleasing others, and avoiding conflict by self silencing. At the same time, behaviors such as concern about securing the relationship and focusing on the partner resemble anxious attachment. As relational schemas cause women to suppress their own expressions and anger, act in line with the expectations of others, and evaluate themselves in the idealized image of an "ideal/perfect/good woman" defined in the cultural context, they pave the way for depression. (Jack 1991, Jack and Dill 1992, Jack and Ali 2010).

The idealized image of a "good woman" gives the message women that they are responsible for intimate relationships. For this reason, women silence themselves by giving up their desire to be equal in order to show themselves coherent with others. In this process, the requirements created by women regarding their inner feelings and behaviors tend to silence themselves to maintain their relationships. A divided self arises as a result of this situation (Jack and Ali 2010).

Women's intimate relationships determine their feelings about who they are and their self (Jordan 2010). In other words, women can experience a sense of identity and isolation in relationships at the same time. Women can postpone gaining a sense of identity for a intimate relationship. This situation leads to the simultaneous experience of intimacy and a sense of identity (Erikson 1994, Gilligan 2017).

With the information provided so far, it can be said that women silence themselves in order to maintain their relationships and that the sense of identity in women can be experienced simultaneously with the sense of isolation in intimate relationships. According

to relevant literature, it can be said that self silencing is based on identity theory (Jack and Ali 2010) and identity development is related to self silencing (Fossum 1996, Silva 2002, Gayed 2003, Russell 2015, Kurtiş et al. 2017, Maji and Dixit 2019). In this context, it can be said that it is useful to talk about the relationship between self silencing and identity development in women.

## Self silencing and identity development

Identity development is thought to begin in adolescence and complete in the late twenties (Arnett 2000, Morsunbul et al. 2016). In Erikson's (1994) Psychosocial Development Theory, role confusion versus sense of identity takes place in adolescence (fifth stage), and isolation versus intimacy in young adulthood (sixth stage). However, according to Erikson, this ranking can sometimes change for women. Such that the fifth and sixth phases can be experienced at the same time as identity in women is shaped in line with the relationships created with the other. In Gilligan's (2017) relational theory, it is seen that intimate relationships are at the center of identity development in women. Similarly, some approaches, such as the feminist approach, claim that intimate relationships are at the core of identity development in women, and it is necessary to maintain these relationships in identity development (Brazaitis 1997, Jordan 1997). Maintaining any intimate relationship is the basis for self silencing. Considering the importance of these relationships in identity development in women, the relationship between self silencing and identity development draws attention.

Narrative Identity Approach can be considered as an approach to talk about the relationship between self silencing and identity development. According to this approach, the meaning and themes formed by the individual affect mental health (Schwartz et al.2015). Considering that self silencing is also based on women's narratives, it can be said that more than one factor is effective in mental health. When the development process of narrative identity and self silencing is considered, similar periods are encountered. Miller (1996) suggests that self silencing begins to occur in early childhood and intensifies in youth, in line with cultural norms. McLean and Syed (2017), on the other hand, mention that the ability of an individual to express life events, that is, to transform them into a narrative, begins in childhood, and develops in adolescence and emerging adulthood. In this direction, it is seen that self silencing and the narrative identity approach emerged in similar life periods and based on the expressions of the individual.

Another model that emphasizes the relationship between self silencing and identity development is Waterman's Identity Status Model. This model focuses on the exploration and commitment as well as the personal expressiveness variable (Waterman 1995). The basis of self-expression is the concept of well being (Waterman 1990). With this variable, the individual has an evaluation process regarding the selection of identity patterns. Considering the role of expressiveness in forming identity, the relationship between identity development and self silencing draws attention. The concept of personal expressiveness is at the other end of self silencing in the Two Dimensional Autobiographical Model developed

by Fivush (2002). Therefore, it can be said that self silencing and identity development are interrelated, since expressiveness is in the focus.

Another model to be given as an example of the relationship between self silencing and identity development is the Identity Functions Model. The identity function model associated with positive mental health characteristics was developed by Adams and Marshall (1996). According to this model, the concept of well being in identity development resembles the functions of identity. When the literature on the concept of well being is reviewed, it is seen that self silencing is also studied quite frequently (Astbury 2010, Gordon 2010, Jordan 2010, Kurtiş 2010, Trimble et al.2010, Maji and Dixit 2019).

It is seen that identity is structured passive or active in identity functions model. There are identification, imitation and obedience in the passive construction of identity. Autonomy, free will and self expression draw attention in active construction (Serafini and Adams 2002). Therefore, the individual's expression instead of silencing can make a significant contribution to the active construction process of identity. Hence it can be said that self silencing is a major obstacle to the active construction. For example, women who obey others and imitate their lives can't reach an active structured identity by getting ahead of their own voices. Similarly, it can be thought that expressiveness decreases with the passive structuring of identity leads increasing self silencing, and there is a relationship between self silencing and identity confusion.

When the relationship between identity and self silencing is examined in the context of identity statuses, Marcia's (2014) intimacy status draws attention. Individuals evaluate available criteria conditions for exploration and commitment life cycle such as gender roles and sexuality for intimate relationships. In this process, there are types of intimacy that reflect the commitment and depth of relationships. Ranking of these from the most successful; intimate, preintimate, pseudointimate, stereotyped, isolated (Marcia and Josselson 2013, Marcia 2014). "Stereotyped intimacy" status draws attention in terms of acting according to social norms, perceptions and stereotypes and having shallow judgments regarding genders. So much so that in cases where relational schemas are defined according to social norms, perceptions and patterns, the individuals can sometimes silence themselves. In cultures where self silencing is common, women in particular secure their relationships by hindering their desires and needs and by bonding to social norms (Zoellner and Hedlund 2010). Therefore, it can be said that social norms, cultural pressures and stereotypes related to gender support the relationship between self silencing and stereotyped intimacy status.

When the studies on self silencing and identity development are evaluated in general, it is seen that these two concepts are interrelated (Miller 1996, Barclay 2004, Reyes 2014). For example, in the study by Neves and Nogueira (2010), self silencing is seen as a tool that protects the identity structure of women. According to Miller (1996), self silencing is learned in women's relationships and identity is structured through these relational struggles. Jack (1991) claims that female identity is the basis of women's relationships. Jack and Ali (2010), on the other hand, mention that societies that do not allow women to answer the question of "who am I" direct women to self silencing behavior.



What has been cited so far shows that self silencing is addressed in an intercultural context based on identity theories and that self silencing is an important factor in inquiry about who a woman is.

## **Self silencing and gender roles**

Gender is seen as the gender-related division of labor and a cultural interpretation of gender, beyond the biological difference between the sexes (Zerzan 2010). Reflecting the intercultural difference, the concept of gender draws attention to the impact of the sociocultural environment on the individual. The fact that culture determines gender resemble the concept of self silencing, which is seen as important in cross-cultural psychology. In other words, given the influence of the cultural context, it can be said that culture is an intersection of gender and self silencing.

According to Smolak (2010), the relationship between expressiveness, which is at the other end of self silencing, and gender roles differs in various ethnic groups and cultures. Some cultural values and social norms lead women to self silencing. In particular, patriarchal social values and traditional gender characteristics approve the roles in line with their expectations, leading to a submissive attitude in women (Jack 1991). In other words, women who format their identity in the context of traditional gender role silence themselves to maintain their interpersonal and romantic relationships (Harper and Welsh 2007). Feminine and masculine gender roles are considered within the context of traditional roles (Woodhill and Samuels 2004). These roles differ in terms of having or not having qualities such as leadership, autonomy, and assertiveness (Horwitz and White 1987, Özmen and Sümer 2011).

Self silencing happens in different ways in feminine and masculine gender roles (Smolak 2010). The masculine gender role emphasizes being assertive, independent and strong. Women, on the other hand, try to maintain their relationships by silencing themselves or investing in their appearance. In this respect, self silencing represents a gender role in which features such as fear, kindness, dependency, vulnerability and passivity in women (Horwitz and White 1987, Smolak 2010). Therefore, in the role of feminine gender, externalized self perception, care as self sacrifice, silencing the self, divided self may be encountered. In this context, it can be said that those who have feminine gender roles have higher self silencing.

Having both masculine and feminine characteristics qualifies as androgyny. When individuals in the androgynous group define themselves, instead of listing feminine or masculine characteristics, they focus on their own perceptions as individuals. This attitude functions to prevent self silencing (Witte and Sherman 2002). Therefore, it can be thought that androgen women are less self silencing.

When self silencing and gender roles are generally evaluated, it can be said that both concepts are shaped based on culture, feminine and masculine characteristics evaluated in patriarchal societies and the context of traditional roles increase self silencing, whereas the androgynous gender feature prevents self silencing.

## Conclusion

It can be said that self silencing is an important concept in a cultural context. From a relational perspective, women generally have goals of avoiding conflict, maintaining a intimate relationship and thus securing the relationship.

The two dimensional autobiographical model of self silencing has provided us with more information in terms of silence and expressiveness. This model refers to the possible situations encountered in the context of individuals being silenced by themselves or the other and reaching expressiveness by themselves or the other (Fivush 2002). However, the concepts in this model have not been evaluated separately for both genders. Although it is stated in the relevant literature that self silencing is a concept specific to women, it is stated that men can also experience the same. Therefore, a detailed model presentation for both genders can greatly contribute to understanding the basis of self silencing.

Individuals with the relational self structure, which is generally common in collectivist cultures, accept the roles determined by the society as they are. In the autonomous self structure; it is known that individuals put their own goals, thoughts and expressions in the foreground instead of social norms (Adams and Plaut 2003, Kağıtçıbaşı 2010). Considering the impact of the cultural environment on the individual's expressions, it can be said that self silencing is shaped by the social and cultural context of individuals' lives. Cross sectional research on self silencing of women in different societies and cultures to address the impact of culture on self silencing in more detail may provide us with more information on this situation.

Studies on self silencing show that maintaining relationships, avoiding conflict, reaching the ideal woman image and thus feeling safe are the main objectives of self silencing in women. However, in the relevant literature, there is no rich information on men's silencing themselves. In particular, there are no studies in the literature about the self silencing in men in Turkey. In this respect, it is open to discussion to review self silencing in the context of 'individual' in general.

Examining the relationship between self silencing and identity development, it can be said that individuals who silence themselves form their identities negatively. Individuals who silence themselves have an identity diffusion because of not actively explore who they are and because they construct their identity passively. Considering that the concept of self silencing emerged with the narratives of women who were diagnosed with depression and who were in the clinical setting (Jack 1991), it will be an important contribution to the process if experts working in this field dealt with identity-related patterns in detail. On the other hand, it can be said that individuals with high levels of expressiveness have successfully formed their identities as they actively search for identity-related options and make commitments.

Considering the relationship between self silencing and gender roles, it is seen that traditional gender roles that include feminine and masculine gender characteristics increase self silencing. Individuals who form gender roles in line with the norms determined by

the society act in line with the wishes, expectations and needs of the culture they live in. Therefore, they suppress their own wishes, expectations and needs. On the other hand, individuals who have high and the same level of both masculine and feminine gender characteristics, namely androgens, have their own preferences, not social norms. Since they are not limited by feminine or masculine characteristics, they express their wishes, expectations and needs by displaying a flexible attitude as required by their situation.

Although the contents of the studies on self silencing are rich, their number is quite limited. There are limited studies about self silencing in the Turkish literature (Kurtiş 2010, Demir Kaya 2019). Therefore, it will be helpful to increase the number of studies on self silencing and to study cross culturally comparisons, to use the longitudinal methods, and to refer to narratives in qualitative studies.

Further investigation on this concept and collecting relevant data will not only contribute to a better understanding of women, but also shed light on preventive studies to be conducted.

## References

- Adams G, Plaut VC (2003) The cultural grounding of personal relationship: Friendship in North American and West African worlds. *Pers Relationsh*, 10:333-347.
- Adams GR, Marshall SK (1996) A developmental social psychology of identity: Understanding the person-in-context. *J Adolesc*, 19:429-442.
- Arnett JJ (2000) Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *Am Psychol*, 55:469-480.
- Astbury J (2010) The social causes of Women's depression: A question of right violated? In *Silencing the self across cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):19-45. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Barclay LL (2004) The relationship of collectivist values orientation and psychological abuse from male partners to women's self-silencing and personality style (Doctoral dissertation). Cincinnati, OH, The Union Institute & University.
- Besser A, Flett GL, Davis RA (2003) Self-criticism, dependency, silencing the self, and loneliness: A test of a mediational model. *Pers Individ Dif*, 35:1735-1752.
- Besser A, Flett GL, Hewitt PL (2010) Silencing the self and personality vulnerabilities associated with depression. In *Silencing the Self Across Cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):285-312. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Brazaitis SJ (1997) White racial identity attitudes as moderators of self-silencing in white women (Doctoral Dissertation). New York, Columbia University.
- Can M (2019) Rasyonel Bencilik Ahlakı. Ankara, Elis Yayınları.
- Dainow A (2014) The influence of feminism on self-silencing and friendship quality in women's same-sex friendships (Master thesis). Guelph, Canada, The University of Guelph.
- Demir Kaya M (2019) Genç kadınlarda kendini susturma ve toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin kimlik işlevleri üzerindeki etkisi (Doktora tezi). İstanbul, Maltepe Üniversitesi.
- Erikson EH (1994) *Identity, Youth and Crisis*. New York, Norton.
- Fivush R (2002) Voice and silence: A feminist model of autobiographical memory. In *The Mediated Mind: Essays in Honor of Katherine Nelson*. (Eds J Lucariello, JA Hudson, R Fivush, PJ Bauer):1-38. Mahwah, Erlbaum.
- Fossum JL (1996) A correlational study of feminist/womenist identity development and depression in women (Doctoral dissertation). Los Angeles, CA,, University of Southern California.
- Gayed EK (2003) Gender conceptualizations of the divine as related to women's self-esteem and feminist identity (Doctoral dissertation). Los Angeles, CA, Alliant International University.
- Gilligan C (2017) Kadının Farklı Sesi (Çeviri D Dinçer, F Arısan, M Elma). İstanbul, Pinhan Yayıncılık.
- Gordon RA (2010) Drugs don't talk: Do medication and biological psychiatry contribute to silencing the self? In *Silencing the Self Across Cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):47-72. New York, Oxford University Press.

- Harper MS, Welsh DP (2007) Keeping quiet: Self-silencing and its association with relational and individual functioning among adolescent romantic couples. *J Soc Pers Relat*, 24:99-116.
- Hasanoğlu A (2013) *İlişkilerin Günlük Hayatı*. İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi.
- Horwitz A, White H (1987) Gender role orientations and styles of pathology among adolescents. *J Health Soc Behav*, 28:158-170.
- Jack DC (1991) *Silencing the Self: Women and Depression*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press.
- Jack DC (2003) The anger of hope and the anger of despair: How anger relates to women's depression. In *Situating Sadness: Women and Depression in Social Context*. (Eds J Stoppard, L McMullen):62-87. New York, New York University Press.
- Jack DC, Ali A (2010) Introduction: Culture, self-silencing, and depression: A contextual-relational perspective. In *Silencing the Self Across Cultures*. (Eds. DC Jack, A Ali):3-17. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Jack DC, Dill D (1992) The silencing the self scale: Schemas of intimacy associated with depression in women. *Psychol Women Q*, 16:97-106.
- Jordan J (1997) A relational perspective for understanding women's development. In *Women's Growth in Diversity: Writings from the Stone Center*. (Ed JV Jordan):9-24. New York, Guilford.
- Jordan J (2010) On the critical importance of relationships for women's well-being. In *Silencing the self across cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):99-106. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Kağıtçıbaşı Ç (2010) *Günümüzde İnsan ve İnsanlar*. İstanbul, Evrim Yayınevi.
- Kurtiş T (2010) *Self-silencing and well -being among turkish women (Doktora tezi)*. İstanbul, Koç Üniversitesi.
- Kurtiş T, Soyulu Yalçınkaya N, Adams G (2017) Silence in official representations of history: Implications for national identity and intergroup relations. *J Soc Polit Psychol*, 5:608-629.
- Laurent H, Powers S (2007) Emotion regulation in emerging adult couples: Temperament, attachment, and HPA response to conflict. *Biol Psychol*, 76:61-71.
- Le Bon G (2009) *Kitleler Psikolojisi (Çeviri Y Ender)*. İstanbul, Hayat Yayınları.
- Maji S, Dixit S (2019) Self-silencing and women's health: A review. *Int J Soc Psychiatry*, 65:3-13.
- Marcia JE (1996) The importance of conflict for adolescent and lifespan development. In L. Verhofstadt-Dene' ve Conflict and development in adolescence. (Eds I Kienhorst, C Braet): 13-19. Leiden, DSWO Press.
- Marcia JE (2014) From industry to integrity. *Identity (Mahwah, N J)*, 14:165-176.
- Marcia JE, Josselson R (2013) Eriksonian personality research and its implications for psychotherapy. *J Pers*, 81:617-629.
- Mauthner NS (2010) "I wasn't being true to myself": Women's narratives of postpartum depression. In *Silencing the self across cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):459-484. New York, Oxford University Press.
- McLean KC, Syed M (2017) Narrative identity. In *Encyclopedia of Child and Adolescent Development*. (Eds S Hupp, J Jewell). New York, Wiley-Blackwell.
- Miller LT (1996) *The self-silencing process in late adolescence: The relationship with depression and mother/douughter relationship (Doctoral dissertation)*. Cincinnati, OH, University of Cincinnati.
- Morsunbul U, Crocetti E, Cok F, Meeus W (2016) Identity statuses and psychosocial functioning in Turkish youth: A person-centered approach. *J Adolesc*, 47:145-155.
- Neves S, Nogueira C (2010) Deconstructing gendered discourses of love, power, and violence in intimate relationships: Portuguese women's experiences. In *Silencing the Self Across Cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):241-259. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Özmen O, Sümer ZH (2011) Predictors of risk-taking behaviors among Turkish adolescents. *Pers Individ Dif*, 50:4-9.
- Reyes DY (2014) *Ethnic differences in self-silencing and traditional Latino gender roles in Latina women (Doctoral dissertation)*. Minneapolis, Walden University.
- Russell EJ (2015) *An exploration of the relationship of college women's feminist identity development and their perceptions of their male romantic partners' conformity to masculine norms (Doctoral dissertation)*. Akron, OH, University of Akron.
- Schwartz SJ, Luyckx K, Crocetti E (2015) What have we learned since Schwartz (2001)? A reappraisal of the field of identity development. In *The Oxford Handbook of Identity Development* (Eds KC McLean, M Syed):539-561. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Serafini TE, Adams GR (2002) Functions of identity: Scale construction and validation. *Identity (Mahwah, N J)*, 2:363-391.
- Sikka A, Vaden Goad LG, Waldner LK (2010) Authentic self-expression: Gender, ethnicity, and culture. In *Silencing the self across cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):261-284. New York, Oxford University Press.

- Silva DD (2002) A study of Latino and Latina university students gender role expectations: Gender role conflict, acculturation, ethnic identity, and worldview (Doctoral dissertation). New Mexico, New Mexico State University.
- Smolak L (2010) Gender as culture: The meanings of self-silencing in women and men. In *Silencing the Self Across Cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):129-146. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Thompson JM (1995) Silencing the self: Depressive symptomatology and close relationships. *Psychol Women Q*, 19:337-353.
- Trimble JE, Scharron del Rio MR, Bernal G (2010) The itinerant researcher: Ethical and methodological issues in conducting cross-cultural mental health research. In *Silencing the Self Across Cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):73-95. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Waterman AS (1990) Personal expressiveness: philosophical and psychological foundations. *The Journal of Mind and Behavior*, 11:47-73.
- Waterman AS (1995) Identity development from adolescence to adulthood: An extension of theory and a review of research. *Dev Psychol*, 18:341-358.
- Witte TH, Sherman MF (2002) Silencing the self and feminist identity development. *Psychol Rep*, 90:1075-1083.
- Woodhill BM, Samuels CA (2004) Desirable and undesirable androgyny: A prescription for the twenty-first century. *J Gend Stud*, 13:15-42.
- Worell J (2010) Foreword: Silence no more. In *Silencing the Self Across Cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):xxiii-xxvii. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Zerzan J (2010) Ataerkillik, uygarlık ve toplumsal cinsiyetin kökenleri. In *Felsefelogos-Cinsiyetçilik*, 49. İstanbul, Fesatoder Yayınları.
- Zoellner T, Hedlund S (2010) Women's self-silencing and depression in the socio-cultural context of Germany. In *Silencing The Self Across Cultures*. (Eds DC Jack, A Ali):107-127. New York, Oxford University Press.

**Authors Contributions:** The authors attest that they have made an important scientific contribution to the study and have assisted with the drafting or revising of the manuscript.

**Peer-review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

**Financial Disclosure:** The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.