



Investigating the Underlying Cultural Contexts of Cosmetic Surgery in Maladaptive Schema of Self-Management in Women

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Abstract

The aim of the present study was to investigate the underlying cultural contexts of cosmetic surgery in the maladaptive schemas of self-management in women. The statistical population included all women (18 to 40 years old) in Ahvaz city. The sample embraced 27 women from the mentioned population who were selected through purposive sampling. The qualitative research method was phenomenological. In-depth and semi-structured interviews were implemented to collect data. The findings showed that 11 primary themes were extracted based on common concepts, which included men's appearance-friendly tendencies, women's appearance-friendly tendencies, inequality created by appearance, social de-ugliness of cosmetic procedures, easy access to cosmetic procedures, women's self-ugliness, escape from everyday life, becoming liked and getting married, competitiveness in beauty, perfectionism in beauty, and gender stereotypes about beauty. The consequences of cosmetic surgery for women included increased self-esteem, social facilitation, social capital instability, and body objectification. The results also showed that the maladaptive schema of self-management had the greatest impact on the tendency to undergo cosmetic surgery. Women who sought surgery had maladaptive schemas such as instability, distrust, emotional deprivation, deficiency and shame, social isolation and alienation, rejection, impaired self-management, non-territorial limitations, dependence, and inhibition. Some women who sought surgery surrendered to the schema and accepted that it is justified and never tried to fight or avoid the schema, but rather accept that the schemas are truthful. Therefore, to prevent further increasing in such social and cultural issue, it could be necessary to provide specialized psychological counseling to women seeking cosmetic surgery to reduce maladaptive schemas.



Extended abstract

Introduction: In recent decades, new perceptions of beauty have become popular, and beauty has been defined as a set of components of fitness, makeup, clothing, attractiveness, and perfection. Ideals of body beauty are transmitted through cultural channels and become institutionalized and culturally mandated by individuals in society, and then affect body satisfaction. According to cognitive-behavioral theories, people's evaluation of their appearance depends on their schemas regarding appearance. Maladaptive schemas arise due to the failure to satisfy basic emotional needs in childhood, such as the need for secure attachment, self-management, adequacy, identity, freedom to express healthy needs and emotions, spontaneity, fun, realistic limitations, and self-control (Khabazthabet et al., 2021). Therefore, psychological factors are closely linked to social and cultural factors, simultaneously involved in managerial behavior and body modification (Saleh Ahmadi & Rafiei, 2012). The aim of the present study was to investigate the cultural underpinnings of cosmetic surgery with self-management maladaptive schemas in women. Based on previous studies in the field of cosmetic surgery, the aim of the present study was to investigate the underlying cultural contexts of cosmetic surgery in the maladaptive schemas of self-management in women.

Method: The statistical population included all women (18 to 40 years old) in Ahvaz city. The sample embraced 27 women from the mentioned population who were selected through purposive sampling. The qualitative research method was phenomenological. In-depth and semi-structured interviews were implemented to collect data.

Results: The findings showed that 11 primary themes were extracted based on common concepts, which included men's appearance-friendly tendencies, women's appearance-friendly tendencies, inequality created by appearance, social de-ugliness of cosmetic procedures, easy access to cosmetic procedures, women's self-ugliness, escape from everyday life, becoming liked and getting married, competitiveness in beauty, perfectionism in beauty, and gender stereotypes about beauty. The consequences of cosmetic surgery for women included increased self-esteem, social facilitation, social capital instability, and body objectification. The results also showed that the maladaptive schema of self-management had the greatest impact on the tendency to undergo cosmetic surgery. Women who sought surgery had maladaptive schemas such as instability, distrust, emotional deprivation, deficiency and shame, social isolation and alienation, rejection, impaired self-management, non-territorial limitations, dependence, and inhibition. Some women who sought surgery surrendered to the schema and accepted that it is justified and never tried to fight or avoid the schema, but rather accept that the schemas are truthful.

Conclusion: According to the findings of the study, the “maladaptive self-management schema” had the greatest impact on the tendency to undergo cosmetic surgery. Maladaptive schemas are deep psychological patterns or themes that are composed of memories, emotions, cognitions, and bodily sensations, and are formed during childhood or adolescence and persist throughout life. After that, the most influential factors on the tendency to undergo cosmetic procedures were, in order, social de-ugliness of cosmetic procedures, inequality created by appearance, self-ugliness (negative perception and image of the body), being liked and married, gender stereotypes, and body management.



Therefore, according to the results of this research, to prevent further increasing in such social and cultural issue, it should be necessary to provide specialized psychological counseling to women seeking cosmetic surgery to reduce maladaptive schemas.

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