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Relationship between Cosmetic Surgery and Psychological Variables

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The main aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between cosmetic surgery and psychological variables such as self-esteem and marital satisfaction along with its components in Iran. **Methods:** The study had an ex-post facto, pre-post-test design. Using purposive sampling method, a total of 30 married women, who had referred for cosmetic surgery to clinics in Tehran, were incorporated during a six-month period. Data collection instruments included Enrich Marital Satisfaction Scale and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. The obtained data were analyzed using inferential statistics (analysis of variance for repeated measures, related sample test, and Pearson correlation coefficient). **Results:** According to the results of this study, some components of marital satisfaction (such as marital relations, financial management, leisure, and sex) and self-esteem of women before and after cosmetic surgery is statistically significant also there is a relationship between marital satisfaction and self-esteem, as self-esteem increases, marital satisfaction rises too. **Conclusion:** Performance of such surgeries always presents risks, and advice should be sought before making any decision about the surgery.

Key words: Married women, Cosmetic surgery, psychological variables, Marital satisfaction, Self-esteem demands of their spouses

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INTRODUCTION

Fed by excessive emphasis on beauty and images presented in the press, the cinema, and other media, concern for appearance has taken prominence to an extreme extent, especially among women.¹ Applications for surgery and cosmetic procedures have increased sharply in recent years so that every year millions of people volunteer for cosmetic surgeries.² The literature indicates that in 2009 cosmetic surgeries were performed in the United States irrespective of income levels or the need for surgery. The incidence rate is increased as much as 77% from 2000 to 2009 (American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, 2010). In 2014, about 15.6 million cosmetic procedures were performed in the United States, which shows a 3 percent increase compared to the year 2013 (American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, 2015).

Similarly, there has been an increasing tendency to cosmetic surgery in Iran in recent years. Nonetheless, discussions in this regard are mainly based on estimations and minimal statistics.³ However, among the different surgeries bordering on cosmetic surgery, e.g., eyelid drooping, facial con-

touring, neck and face lift, hair transplantation, liposuction, breast and nose implants, Iran was ranked first in (2010) at least in cosmetic surgery of the nose.⁴

According to previous research, women hold a bigger share than men in this regard, which represents the deeply genderized nature of cosmetic surgery.⁵ Trends as such motivated this research endeavor to enquire into the status of matrimonial satisfaction and self-esteem as two psychological factors affected by these surgeries.

Today, the body has gained an important role in the formation of social relationships among people, and people try to present, in appearance, an impeccable personality that is compatible with social values.⁶ The mediator between the individual and outside world, the body has increasingly turned into a socio-cultural entity with symbols and meanings embedded in it. Affected by society and the media, individuals get oriented to situations to which they were previously unfamiliar. They have got the chance to interfere in a body that is of potentially unlimited strength for transformation. As it was already mentioned, women invest a lot of value in appearance and its beauty as compared with men. At least 16 million

dollars are annually spent in Iran on cosmetic surgery. Nonetheless, a total of 52 women lose their lives due to liposuction each year.⁷ Cosmetic surgery is infused with risks and complications. Nevertheless, it has turned into a social value. Given the time required for recovery (from at least one week to three months) and the heavy expenses required, it is thoughtfully interesting that over 10,000 Iranian women have annual requests for cosmetic surgery.⁸

Mirsadi *et al* (2010) showed that 24.2 percent of the volunteers for cosmetic surgery are married housewives whose main motivation is to fulfill the demands of their spouses.⁹ Tavasoli *et al* (2013) demonstrated that the main motivation for women towards cosmetic surgery is to obtain beauty as contributor to increased confidence and improved quality of the relationship with their husbands. The main objective of this paper is to examine the relationship between cosmetic surgery and psychological variables such as self-esteem and marital satisfaction along with its components.

METHODS

The study had an ex-post facto, pre-post-test design. Using purposive sampling method, a total of 30 married women, aged from 18 to 35 years, who had referred for cosmetic surgery to clinics in Tehran, were incorporated during a six-month period. Data collection instruments included Enrich Marital Satisfaction Scale and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, which were completed two times with a six-month interval. The obtained data were analyzed using inferential statistics (analysis of variance for repeated measures, related sample test, and Pearson correlation coefficient).

RESULTS

Cosmetic surgery affects marital satisfaction and marital satisfaction changes before and after cosmetic surgery.

To test the first hypothesis, repeatable test measurement was used. Table 1 indicates the average marital satisfaction before and after the surgery. Table 2 shows the results of analysis of variance for repeated measures for marital satisfaction score differences before and after the surgery. Results from Table 2 show that the difference in marital satisfaction scores is not significant before and after cosmetic surgery ($p < 0.05$). In reverse, there is a -1.13% decline in marital satisfaction scores after surgery.

Table 3 shows the comparison of mean scores of marital satisfaction dimensions before and after surgery. Comparison of the related means was used to compare pre-test and post-test scores. The table shows that the difference before and after cosmetic surgery was statistically significant in marital satisfaction dimensions (marital relations, financial management, leisure, and sex) in is ($P < 0.01$) and ($P < 0.05$). In other words, the difference has increased in terms of sexual relations but decreased in terms of marital relations, financial management, and leisure. Neither is the difference significant between before and after cosmetic surgery in terms of marital dimensions (marriage and children, relatives and friends, religious orientation, personal problems, and conflict resolution) ($P > 0.05$). In other words, such parameters remained somewhat similar before surgery and after surgery.

Cosmetic surgery affects self-esteem, and self-esteem changes before and after cosmetic surgery.

To test the second hypothesis test, repeated tests measurement was used. Table 4 shows the means of self-esteem mean scores before and after cosmetic surgery. Table 5 shows the results of analysis of variance for repeated measures of self-esteem

Table 1: The average marital satisfaction before and after the surgery

After		Before	
SD	Mean	SD	Mean
19/31	128/80	20/07	130/27

SD: Standard deviation

Table 2: The results of analysis of variance for repeated measures for marital satisfaction score differences before and after the surgery

Variables	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	Level of significance	Percent change
marital satisfaction	32/267	1	32/267	2.208	0.148	-1.13
error	423/733	29	14/611			

Df: degree of freedom

mean score differences before and after surgery. Results of Table 5 show that the difference in the means of self-esteem mean scores before and after cosmetic surgery is statistically significant ($P < 0.01$). There is 33% increase in the means of self-esteem after surgery than before surgery.

There is correlation between Self-esteem and marital satisfaction

In order to test the third hypothesis, Pearson correlation test was used. Table 6 shows the correlation between marital satisfaction and self-esteem of the participants. Table 6 indicates

Table 3: The comparison of mean scores of marital satisfaction dimensions before and after surgery

components of Marital satisfaction	cosmetic surgery	M	SD	t	d.f	P
Marriage and children	before	13/80	2/809		29	/0843
	after	13/70	3/229			
Relatives and friends	before	13/97	3/358	-1/464	29	/0154
	after	14/87	3/711			
Religious orientation	before	15/13	2/161	1/941	29	/0062
	after	14/70	2/562			
Personal problems	before	13/57	3/126	/0599	29	/0554
	after	13/27	2/947			
Marital relations	before	13/17	2/949	3/870	29	**0.001
	after	11/73	2/690			
Conflict resolution	before	12/13	3/026	1/175	29	/0249
	after	11/63	2/553			
Financial management	before	15/30	2/395	5/086	29	**0.001
	after	14/20	2/657			
Leisure	before	14/63	3/662	-2/604	29	**0.014
	after	15/67	3/594			
Sex	before	16/00	2/948	-8/393	29	**0.001
	after	18/57	3/540			

SD: Standard deviation, **: - significance level at 0.01%, & * - significance level at 0.05%, D.F: Degree of freedom

Table 4: The means of self-esteem mean scores before and after cosmetic surgery

after cosmetic surgery		before cosmetic surgery	
SD	Mean	SD	Mean
7.75	34.27	6.06	25.77

SD: Standard deviation

Table 5: The difference in the means of self-esteem mean scores before and after cosmetic surgery

Variables	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	Level of significance	Percent change
marital satisfaction	1083/750	1	1083/750	112.749	**0.001	33
error	278/750	29	9/612			

Df: degree of freedom, **: - significance level at 0.01%

Table 6: The correlation between marital satisfaction and self-esteem

Variables	Correlation Coefficient
marital satisfaction and self-esteem	0.52
Df	0.003(**)

Df: degree of freedom, **: - significance level at 0.01%

that the correlation between marital satisfaction and self-esteem of women is statistically significant ($P < 0.01$). Also, the correlation coefficient between marital satisfaction and self-esteem of the women was 0.52. That is, as self-esteem increases, marital satisfaction rises too.

DISCUSSION

It can be said, on the basis of the obtained results, that in case the surgery is successfully performed, it can affect the relations between human beings and at times the social situations in which people are involved. As mentioned, one such situation is the marital interaction and the relationship between spouses. Additionally, marital satisfaction and self-esteem were found to correlate such that in dimensions such as sexual relations and self-esteem, there was enhancement, or rather, improvement.

Overall, according to the interview taken before and after cosmetic surgery, many of the married women who underwent cosmetic surgery with an aim to increase satisfaction and attention of their spouses failed to fulfill the purpose after surgery. On the other hand, however, the operation led to enhanced self-esteem of the women which is understandable in line with previous studies in this regard.

The more important point is that increased self-esteem correlates positively with increased sexual satisfaction. This can be significant for couple therapy and counseling offered before marriage to couples. Woolf and Chapex argue that cosmetic industries, including surgeries, enjoy the reduced self-esteem of women and that women are transformed into beings who would undergo financial burdens and pain in search of beauty. The obtained results of the current study are consistent with the results of some investigations such as Gavanji *et al* (2015)¹⁰ and Noghani *et al.* (2010).¹¹ In other cases, these surgeries have reduced marital relations, financial management, and leisure.

What was described above are true with regard to successfully performed surgeries. However, unsuccessful surgeries also occur constantly about which concrete statistics are not available. Therefore, performance of such surgeries always presents risks, and advice should be sought before making any decision about the surgery.

A research as such is always faced with several limitations the most important of which is doubtful honesty of the participants and attrition of the participants because of the time interval between pre- and post-tests.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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3. A comparative study of Early Maladaptive Schemas in women with marital infidelity experience and those who didn't have such an experience in Iran
4. The place of social participation of children in the family.

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