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Psychosocial Motives regarding Plastic Surgery among Medical Students

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Cosmetic surgical procedures nowadays are like an epidemic among all ages and sexes, especially among female teenagers. The consequences of such operations are still unassessed. Many of these surgeries can threaten life, studying the impression and what the thoughts are to perform such surgeries is crucial. This study aims to clarify the psychological and social motives of students, as well as the impressions that may lead to the consideration of plastic surgery in Al-Hilla city, Babylon Province, Iraq.

Methods and Materials: A cross-sectional design, convenience sampling, was conducted at the University of Babylon, involving medical colleges and including 225 students. A questionnaire was used as a study tool for collecting data.

Findings: 51.6% of the sample was within the age group of 18-20 years old. 56.9% of them are female. 71.6% of the sample consists of singles. 34.6% of the sample are Nursing students. Overall, students have a negative impression of such surgeries.

Conclusion: The Current study concludes that students have a negative impression of conducting plastic operations in addition to psychological and social motivations toward cosmetic procedures.

Keywords: Impressions, Motives, Plastic Surgery, Psychological, Social.

Introduction

The aim of conducting plastic surgery is to change a person's face or other parts of the body in a way that is consistent with the desire to improve appearance (Campana et al., 2012). Cosmetic surgery has become widely accepted across various societies (Fayi et al., 2018; Frederick et al., 2007).

Socially, when comparing men and women in terms of performing cosmetic surgeries, it is noted that women pay close attention to performing various plastic surgeries based on their cultural and social orientations (Barnes et al., 2020; Pearlman et al., 2022). While females who are dissatisfied with their bodies and external appearance, men's desire to change their bodies has led them to resort to harmful and unhealthy habits that have led to dire consequences (Barnes et al., 2020; Turel et al., 2018). According to Bandura's theory, a person's self-efficacy is the essence that links their behavior within a particular society, as it is closely tied to self-confidence and a belief in personal abilities for success, and is often characterized by a positive outlook (Abd Al-Kareem et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2022). The widespread use of media, travel, and exposure to diverse cultures of other peoples played a significant role in changing certain cultural norms in society, which in turn influenced women's decisions to undergo cosmetic procedures (Searing & Zeilig, 2017; Swami & Tovée, 2007). Such operations that alter body image may have a negative impact on quality of life and well-being (Abbas & Karadavut, 2017; Krywuczky & Kleijnen, 2024).

In the Middle East region, the demand for cosmetic interventions is increasing significantly (Amiri et al., 2021; BioSpace, 2020; Elbishbishy, 2022).

In Iraq, the increase in cosmetic surgeries was initially mandatory as a result of injuries sustained by people due

to terrorist acts, murders, and sabotage; therefore, the goal of these surgeries is therapeutic (Al-Qahtani & Rowan, 2023; Saadoon et al., 2023).

Methods and Materials

A cross-sectional study design was conducted in Babylon Province, specifically in Al-Hilla City, Iraq. The researchers obtained official approval from the University of Babylon's Faculty of Nursing to conduct this study. The study involved 225 healthy students from four schools: the colleges of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and dentistry. The study will take place from June to December 2024.

A non-probability convenience sampling technique. Use and utilization of questionnaires as a tool for collecting data voluntarily. The self-report method was adopted. The study questionnaire consisted of four parts, including demographic data, impressions about cosmetic surgeries, and psychological and social motivations. It was relied upon as a tool for this study after reviewing previous studies (Al-Qahtani & Rowan, 2023) and making several adjustments to it by the research team to suit the study's objectives.

The statistical analysis, which is helpful in this study, involves both inferential and descriptive statistics parameters, applied through version 24 of the SPSS program.

Findings and Results

Table 1 presents the demographic data of the sample, specifically regarding age. 51.6% of the sample is in the age group (18-20), and 56.9% are female students. 79.1% of them are living in urban regions, 71.6% are single in marital status, and 34.6% are nursing students. 62.7% of the sample have not undergone plastic surgery.

Table 1

Demographical Characteristics of Study Sample

Demographical data	Rating and intervals	Frequency	Percent
Age \ Year	18 - 20	116	51.6
	21 - 23	92	40.9
	24 and more	17	7.5
	<i>(Mean± SD= 21.70+1.253)</i>		
Sex	Total	225	100.0
	Male	97	43.1
	Female	128	56.9
Residency	Total	225	100.0
	Urban	178	79.1
	Rural	47	20.9
	Total	225	100.0

Marital Status	Married	64	28.4
	Single	161	71.6
	Total	225	100.0
Monthly Income	Sufficient	81	36.0
	Sufficient to some extent	97	43.1
	Insufficient	47	20.9
	Total	225	100.0
College	Nursing	78	34.6
	Medicine	43	19.1
	Dentistry	39	17.4
	Pharmacy	65	28.9
	Total	225	100.0
Have you had plastic surgery	Yes	84	37.3
	No	141	62.7
	Total	225	100.0

Table 2 presents the students' impressions of plastic surgery. The results show that the students' overall impressions are negative, with a mean score of 1.52.

Table 2

Overall Impression of the Study Sample regarding Plastic Surgeries.

Impression Domains	Scale	F	%	S.d.	M.S.	Assessment
Overall, the student's impression	Positive	48	21.3	1.857	1.52	Negative
	Neutral	53	23.6			
	Negative	124	55.1			
	Total	225	100			

F Frequency, %= Percentage, S.d. Standard deviation, M.S. Mean of score " Cut off point (0.66), Negative (mean of score 1-1.66), Neutral (mean of score 1.67-2.33), Positive (mean of score 2.34-3)".

Figure 1

Overall Impression of the Study Sample regarding Plastic Surgeries.

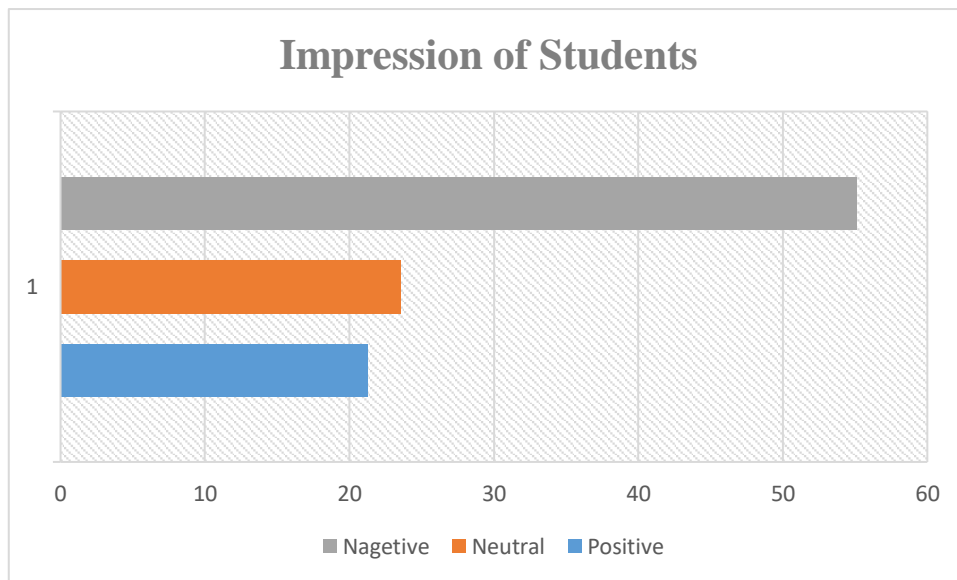


Table 3 demonstrates that the motives from the psychological aspect are high, with an overall assessment based on a mean score of 2.214. The social

aspect also receives a high overall assessment, with a mean score of 2.89.

Table 3

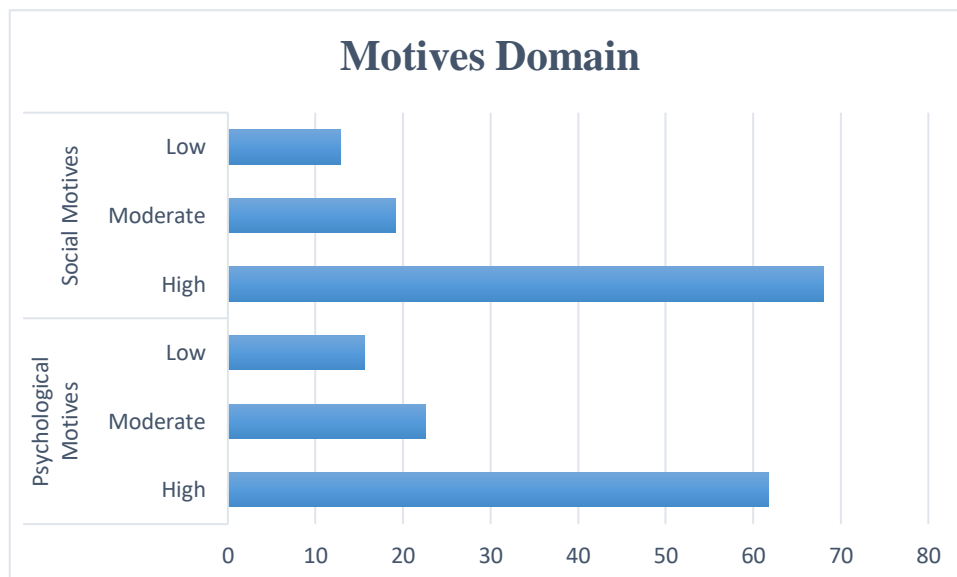
Overall, the Psychological and Social Motives Leading to Plastic Surgeries.

Overall Domains	Scale	F	%	S.d.	M.S.	Assessment
Psychological Motives	High	139	61.8	1.857	2.67	High
	Moderate	51	22.6			
	Low	35	15.6			
Social Motives	High	153	68.0	1.968	2.89	High
	Moderate	43	19.1			
	Low	29	12.9			
	Total	225	100.0			

F Frequency, %= Percentage, S.d. Standard deviation, M.S. Mean of score " Cut off point (0.66), Low (mean of score 1-1.66), Moderate (mean of score 1.67-2.33), High (mean of score 2.34-3)".

Figure 2

Overall, the Psychological and Social Motives Leading to Plastic Surgeries.



Discussion and Conclusion

The results in Table 1 pertain to the demographic data of the sample, which indicates that the largest age group was between eighteen and twenty years old. This result is consistent with a study by Golshani et al. (2016 in Iran). Regarding the sex of participants, it reveals that females comprise the highest percentage of the sample. This finding is consistent with the results of a study conducted in Iran by Niya et al. (2018).

Related to the residency, the results show that most of the sample lives in urban areas; this finding is consistent with the study's findings (Kadhim et al., 2024) conducted in Iraq and Holy Karbala, which assessed women's

knowledge, attitudes, and practices of facial cosmetic procedures. Regarding marital status, the statistical results showed that the majority of the student participants in the study were single, which is consistent with the researchers' conclusion (Alzuhair, 2023). Regarding the monthly income, the results show that the highest percentage of the study sample was from those with an average income that is sufficient to some extent. This is similar to a study (Al Hindi et al., 2022) conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia between 2019 and 2020, which evaluated the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of cosmetic procedures among the residents of that city.

The findings indicate that the highest proportion of students are nursing students; this disagrees with the results of a study (Alshami & Alsaati, 2023) performed in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, which indicated that the highest

percentage was among medical students. Finally, the majority of the study sample had not had any plastic surgery.

In Table 2, the students' impressions regarding the tendency to undergo various cosmetic surgeries are presented. The results show that the highest percentage of them have a negative tendency. This result is consistent with the findings of a study (Gathariki et al., 2020) conducted in Kenya at the University of Nairobi, which aimed to assess medical students' knowledge and attitudes towards plastic surgeries. The results of this study indicated that medical students' attitudes towards plastic surgery are generally poor.

This may be interpreted as these procedures and interventions have a worrying aspect due to their rapid spread in society, which has led to health problems affecting people due to the excessive use of cosmetic retouching and interventions.

Table 3 shows that psychological and social motives are very high, leading people to desire cosmetic interventions. For social reasons, people desire to appear attractive to others, both in society and among family and friends. Currently, in Iraq, there is a trend towards cosmetic surgeries in order to change the body image.

This study concludes that the highest percentage of participating students are females, and the majority of students have not experienced any cosmetic interventions. The sample reports a negative impression towards cosmetic surgeries, and the psychological and social motives are high, as it affected the people's desire towards cosmetic interventions. Current studies suggest that further investigations are needed to examine satisfaction among individuals who have undergone plastic surgery; furthermore, longitudinal studies are required to identify the long-term consequences of these surgeries on individuals' health.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants. Ethical considerations in this study were that participation was entirely optional. The Research Ethics Committee in the University of Babylon/ College of Nursing, which is working following administrative order (NO. 4334 on 19 April 2024), has reviewed and discussed the documents. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contribute to this study.

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