

Cosmetic Surgery and Body Image in Adolescents: A Psycho-Sociological Analysis of the Causes and Effects

Assist. Prof, Dr. Merah Souad, Assist Prof, Dr. Tahraoui Randane, Tahraoui Ghada & Dr. Mariya Semin Khan



Introduction

Body image is usually defined as “the mental image of one’s own body”. The image is shaped by perception, emotions and physical sensations, as well as all the physiological and emotional changes an individual goes through during the processes of growth and socialization.



Introduction

Over-concern with body image can lead adolescents to look for means to enhance their physical appearance, and to conform to dominating trends portrayed by many social agencies, particularly, media outlets.

One of the extreme alternatives is to opt for cosmetic surgery, a procedure attributed by many researchers to the absence of proper education and guidance.



Objectives

This presentation will;

1. Establish correlation between the body image and the surge of cosmetic surgery procedures.
2. Explain the social, economic, psychological and clinical factors which contribute to individuals' choice to go under the knife.
3. Discuss health & physcho-social impacts



What is “body image”?

- The concept of “body image” was first formulated by the German writer *Schilder* as an important and integral phenomenon in 1935.
- Recent literature, greatly shaped by applied clinical concerns, elaborated on this idea by explaining that ‘body image’ has been greatly influenced by specific “neurological disorders” in which patients exhibit a faulty perception of their own body image, body image distortion (BID) and delusional misperception.


What is “cosmetic surgery”?

- Cosmetic surgery refers to “the ability of surgeons to reshape the appearance of the human body parts through special techniques in order to improve their appearance.”

- Plastic surgery has two branches:
 - a. Cosmetic surgery, which aims to improve the aesthetic appearance of a person
 - b. Reconstructive plastic surgery, which aims to improve the function; however, it may also involve trying to approximate normal appearance, but that is not its primary function. (*Christian Nordqvist 2014*)



Who opts for Cosmetic Surgery?

- According to most empirical researches both women and men regardless of age, race and culture (with some reservations) are attracted to cosmetic surgery procedures to improve body looks for either the reconstruction or the enhancement of their physical appearance.
 - Teenagers are not exempted from this trend.
- 



Adolescents and Cosmetic Surgery

- According to *Michael A. Bernet* (2005) “teens are often uncomfortable with their evolving bodies.
- Distortions in body appearance can lower self-confidence and disrupt social acceptance.”




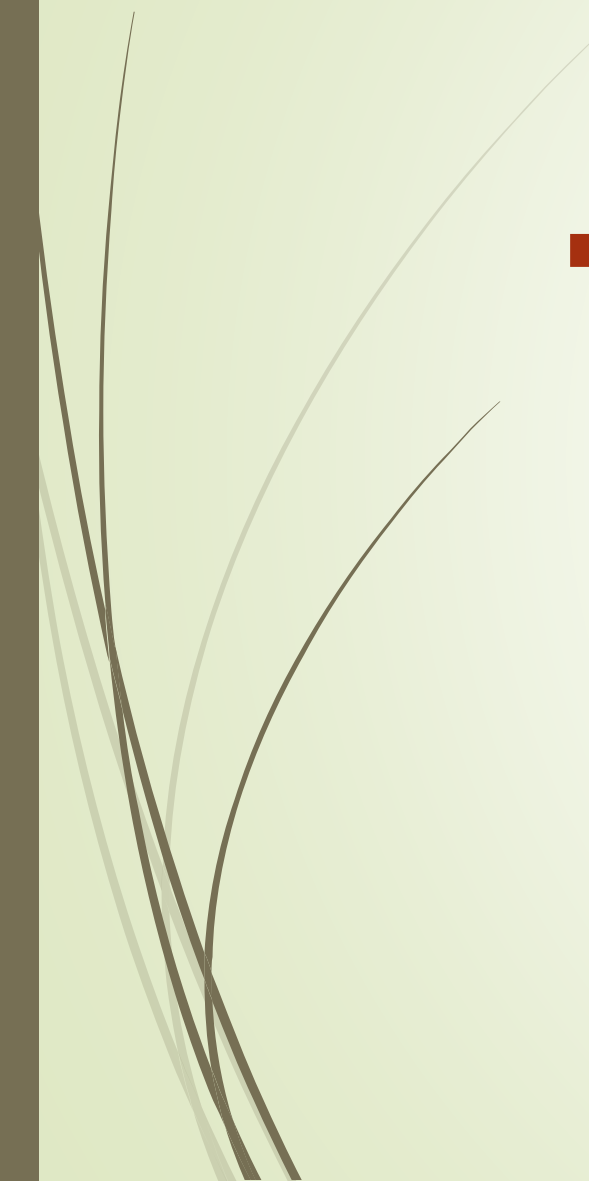
Adolescents and Cosmetic Surgery

- Going through puberty can give rise to amplified body concerns.
- The divide between the sexes can be appreciated when we consider that puberty for boys involves them gaining characteristics typically admired by society, such as height, broadness, and strength. Puberty for girls brings with it changes that are usually less desirable, such as gaining curves and increased body fat.
- These changes may propagate increased body dissatisfaction among adolescent girls.



Adolescents and Cosmetic Surgery

- There are conflicting reports about the appeal of Plastic Surgery procedures among teens.
- According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons published data, the number of cosmetic surgery done for the teens has actually decreased progressively over the years, in contrast to the media reports suggesting otherwise.

- 
- 
- ASPS reported: There were 220,077 procedures in 2002 representing 3.2% of the total; there were 178,041 procedures in 2006 representing 1.6% of the total; there were 131,877 procedures in 2011 representing 1.4% of the total; there were 130,502 procedures in 2012 representing 1.3% of the total.

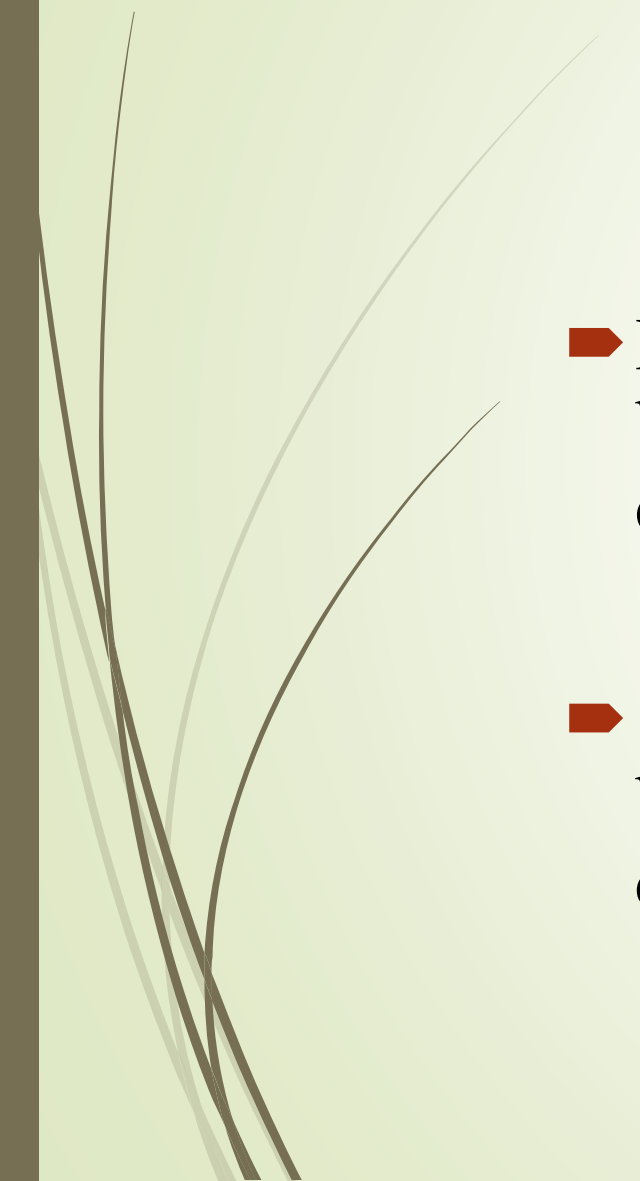


Adolescents and Cosmetic Surgery

- It is worth mentioning that there is a lack of empirical evidence vis a vis Adolescents opting for cosmetic surgery.
- However, In other countries cosmetic surgery is becoming a trend. For example, In South Korea Cosmetic Surgery is not a taboo, it is considered “natural and harmless”. *LAUREN McMAH (2015)* “So many people have surgery, it’s just like wearing make-up,” a young Korean man told Al Jazeera in its new expose of South Korea’s plastic surgery boom.
- “During school holidays, half the class would come in and get surgery done and when they go back to school, their friends would see that they’ve become prettier so in the next break you would have the other half of the class coming in.” Al Jazeera was told. *LAUREN McMAH (2015)*



Reasons of Plastic Surgery procedures

- Historically, seeking a beautiful appearance has always been a preoccupation for both men and women across the different cultures in different parts of the world.
 - It has often been said that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but it also has a lot to do with the beholder's cultural standards.
- 





Reasons of Plastic Surgery procedures

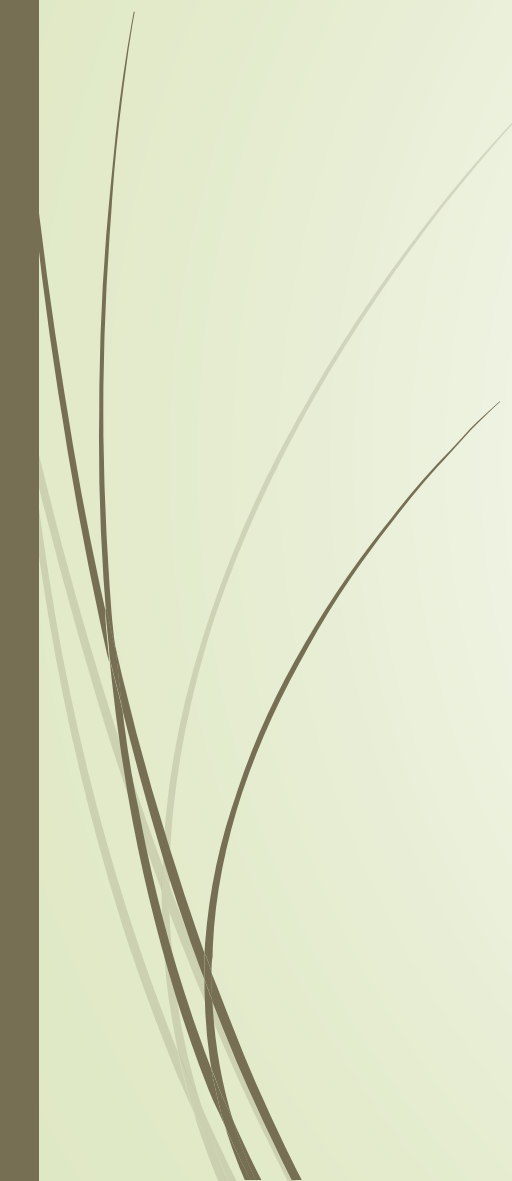
1. Social Reasons

- Charles Horton Cooley in 1902 (*McIntyre 2006*) coined the concept of the “looking –glass”, in which he claims that the development of one's self and of one's identity is materialized through one's interpersonal interactions within the context of society.



Reasons of Plastic Surgery procedures

The social aspect comprises of the following:

1. Culture and the social depiction of beauty.
 2. Media.
 3. New gods.
 4. Globalized & westernized stereotype of beauty.
- 



Reasons of Plastic Surgery procedures

2. Economic reasons

- Capitalism
- Consumerism

Reasons of Plastic Surgery procedures

3. Clinical reasons

- Recent literature, which is greatly shaped by applied clinical concerns explained that “body image” has been greatly influenced by specific “neurological disorders” in which patients exhibit a faulty perception of their own body image, body image distortion (BID) and delusional misperception. (*Peter David Slade 1993*)



Ethnic Differences and Types of Cosmetic Surgery


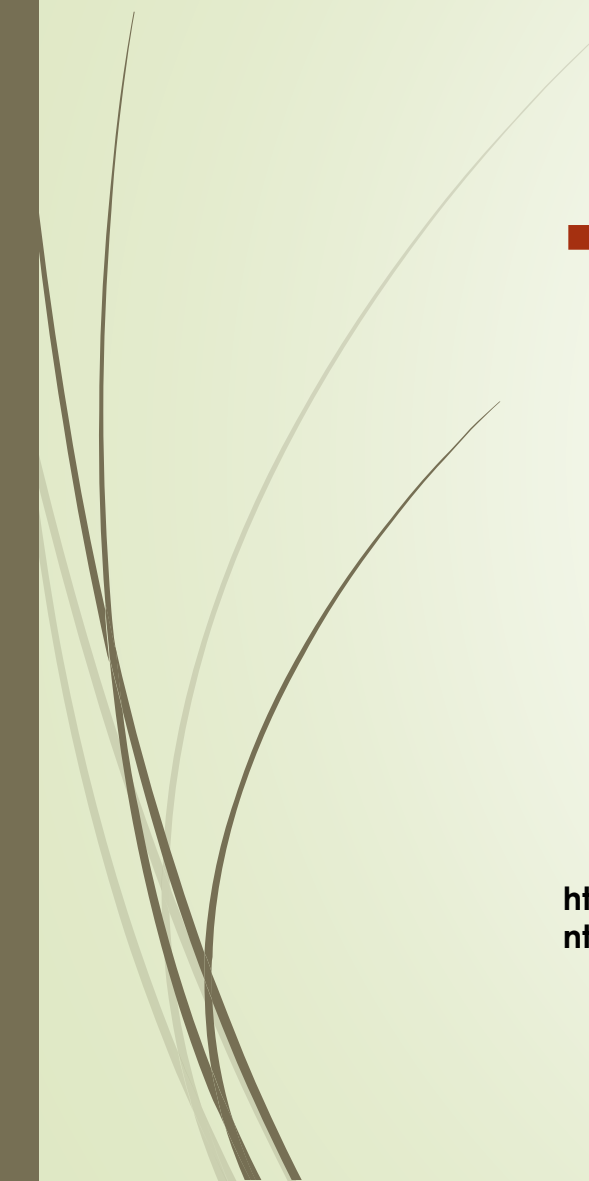
Dr. Kaveh Alizadeh, a famous American cosmetic surgeon and the president of Long Island Plastic Surgical Group, explains that; “When a patient comes in from a certain ethnic background and of a certain age, we know what they are going to be looking for” This is a testimony on how the ethnical background is correlated to cosmetic surgery choices.

.

Ethnic Differences and Types of Cosmetic Surgery

In the same context, Dr. Alizadeh and other doctors who work with ethnic communities (in New York city) say they can scan their appointment books and spot unmistakable trends:

- Many Egyptians are getting face lifts.
- Italians are reshaping their knees.
- Iranians favor nose reshaping.
- Asian (especially Korean and Japanese) usually go for eyelids interventions and jawline slimming procedure meanwhile Latinos prefer silhouettes (curves) enhancement. *Dr. Jeffrey S. Yager (1997)*
- On the other side Russians prefer Breast enhancement
- *Dr. Ocher*; another famous American plastic surgeon affirms that Arabs usually prefer to go for face modification, as exposing other body parts is still regarded as a taboo.
- Meanwhile, Caucasians go for Lifting and Buttocks filling.


- 
- 
- ▶ The following are among the most common surgical procedures performed on those 18 years of age and younger, according to ASAPS statistics: Otoplasty (correcting the defects of ears), Rhinoplasty (nose reshaping) , Breast reduction, Correction of breast asymmetry and Gynecomastia (breast enlargement in man). FDA (2006) approved use of silicone implants only in women above 22 years, whereas above 18 years of age saline-filled implants can be used.

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/ImplantsandProsthetics/BreastImplants/ucm064453.pdf>



Health & Pyscho-social Impact

- The question of whether undergoing cosmetic procedures improves body image and satisfaction in adolescents or not is still being debated. As of now, specific studies exploring the relationship between the two have not yet been carried out.
- According to *Anisha Abraham et. al (2011)* “there is no scientific evidence that surgery improves self-esteem or confidence in the long term”



- 
- There are psychological studies which have reported a reduced psychological burden in teens undergoing cosmetic surgery, most significantly in the breast surgery group, suggesting that burden related to appearance-related issues particularly breasts, was significantly decreased after surgery. Authors concluded that surgery in this group may actually improve physical, psychological and emotional burden and improve condition of teenagers and attain bodily satisfaction, both for aesthetic and reconstructive issues.

Simis KJ, Hovius SE, de Beaufort ID, Verhulst FC, Koot HM. After plastic surgery: Adolescent-reported appearance ratings and appearance-related burdens in patient and general population groups. *Plast Reconstr Surg.* 2002;109:9–17.



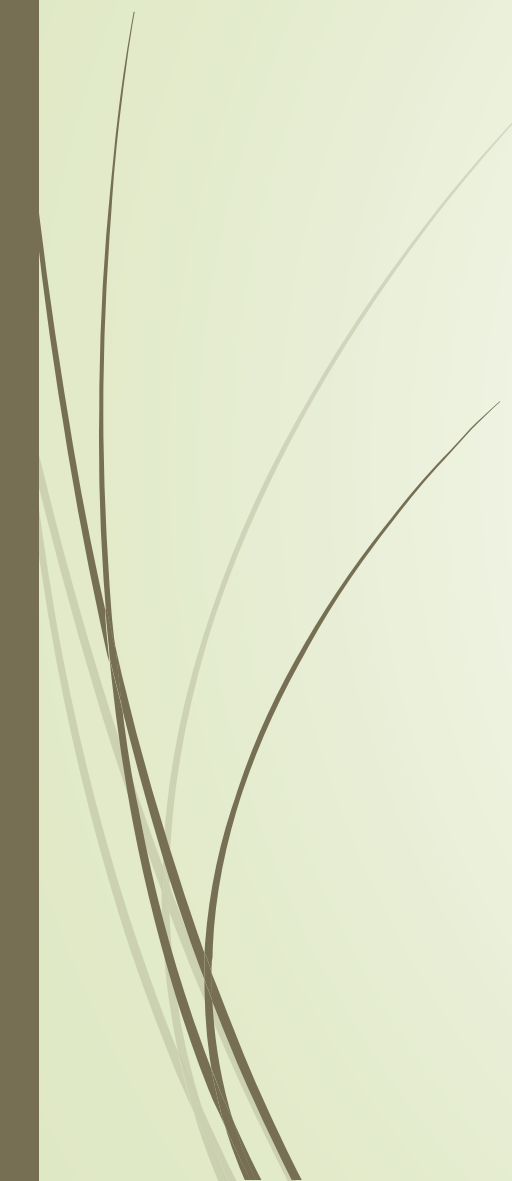
Health & Psycho-social Impact

- Similarly, there are no conclusive studies indicating that cosmetic surgery improves overall body image or quality of life for adolescents or adults” (Anisha Abraham M.D., M.P.H. and Diana Zuckerman)

- 
- 
- The complications are those that arise due to cosmetic surgery in any age and are not specific to adolescents, such as botched lip fillers, burst and misplaced breast implants, and scarring post-liposuction. Diana Zuckerman (2008), Ibid



Conclusion

- ▶ Body image is subject to all kinds of distortion from internal elements (emotions, moods, early experiences, or parents' attitudes, and much more.
 - ▶ Cosmetic surgery procedures are more complex for adolescents than for adults because there are more factors affecting patient satisfaction, especially the psychological factors.
- 



Conclusion

- Only, very essential surgery should be done for teenagers.
- Not every teenager seeking plastic surgery is well suited for an operation. Teens must demonstrate emotional maturity and an understanding of the limitations of plastic surgery.
- Parental supervision is crucially needed.
- If a problem is severe enough to cause psychological problems, a psychologist can help in arriving at a decision.
- The role of education.



Thank you