

Human Behavior towards Well-Being through Aesthetics

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ABSTRACT: This article addresses the impact of aesthetic procedures on self-esteem, focusing on women's behavior in relation to the beauty standards established by society. The search for an ideal body image has driven the search for aesthetic interventions, both facial and body, as a way to improve self-confidence and emotional well-being. The study also analyzes how these procedures, widely publicized by the media, have an impact on women's self-image, promoting significant psychological benefits when expectations are realistic and professional monitoring is adequate. In addition, the importance of integrating physical and emotional aspects in aesthetic care is highlighted, aiming to promote not only physical transformation, but also psychological strengthening. The article concludes that aesthetic procedures can contribute to improving self-esteem and quality of life, as long as they are performed consciously and with professional support.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Aesthetic procedures play a fundamental role in increasing self-esteem, especially among women. The search for an idealized body image, often encouraged by beauty standards established by society, has led many women to opt for aesthetic interventions with the aim of improving their appearance and, consequently, their self-confidence. These procedures, which range from facial treatments, such as botulinum toxin and dermal fillers, to body interventions, have shown positive results not only in physical appearance, but also in the emotional well-

being of patients. Thus, aesthetics goes beyond simple physical transformation, directly influencing personal perception and social interaction¹.

The psychological benefits of aesthetic procedures are evident in several studies, which indicate significant improvements in patients' self-esteem and quality of life. Women who undergo aesthetic treatments report a sense of well-being that goes beyond satisfaction with their physical appearance, also encompassing emotional and social aspects. Improved self-image often results in greater confidence and assertiveness in social and professional interactions, which can be considered a direct reflection of improved self-esteem. These factors contribute to the perception that aesthetic procedures are an effective tool not only for aesthetic transformation, but also for emotional and psychological strengthening².

The general objective of this study is to analyze how behavior is related to the aesthetic procedures performed. The specific objectives are: to address aesthetics and its growth in the social field; to describe the relationship between image and aesthetic procedures; and to analyze how the search for aesthetic procedures relates to human behavior.

The intersection between aesthetic procedures and mental health highlights the importance of considering both physical and emotional aspects when choosing these interventions. Aesthetics, by improving external appearance, can also promote lasting psychological benefits, as long as patients have realistic expectations about the results and are monitored by trained professionals. Thus, aesthetic procedures should be seen as part of a comprehensive approach to well-being, where physical appearance and emotional health are interconnected.

II. METHODOLOGY

One of the main processes within qualitative research refers to the collection of information or data, something that better supports the content presented throughout the research. In general, interviews, questionnaires and other methods are used to search for accurate information aligned with the reality addressed throughout the research³.

In the case of the research presented, a bibliographic survey was carried out, highlighting the views of renowned authors and researchers on human behavior in relation to aesthetic procedures, as well as an assessment of how aesthetic routines are being applied to individuals in the Brazilian social environment.

To develop the research presented, a bibliographic survey on aesthetics and human behavior was carried out over the years. After all the necessary information was collected, a description of all studies related to the topic addressed was carried out, as well as an understanding of the main data collected.

It is worth mentioning that in the literary field, books, articles and dissertations were selected through searches in the following databases: Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), Google Scholar, CAPES Portal Periodicals, among others available online. To carry it out, works carried out between 2014-2023 were taken into consideration, with themes that were limited to the theme, therefore, works published in the last 9 years (except for classic books), with the languages defined as Portuguese and English.

III. ROLE OF AESTHETICS IN THE SOCIAL FIELD

Today's society has high aesthetic standards, and an increasing number of men and especially women want to "fit" into these standards of the famous "dictatorship of beauty". This reality ends up becoming a great business opportunity for beauty professionals, whose services are increasingly sought after¹.

In view of this reality, the number of aesthetic centers has grown throughout the country, especially in large cities, offering body and facial treatment and beautification services to serve those seeking aesthetic and health improvements through appropriate cosmetics and equipment.

In light of this reality, the number of aesthetic centers has grown throughout the country, especially in large cities, offering body and facial treatment and beautification services to serve those seeking aesthetic and health improvements through appropriate cosmetics and equipment.

Aesthetic procedures have become increasingly popular in recent decades and the characteristics of the "ideal" face have been widely described. A substantial and rapid change characterizes the field of facial aesthetics and rejuvenation as physicians and patients continue their search for minimally invasive, yet highly effective and safe approaches to minimize signs of facial aging².

As a consequence of the complex age-related changes in various tissues, including skin, muscle, fat and bone structures, aesthetic procedures require a multidimensional approach⁴. Injectable fillers can be combined with neurotoxins to resolve superficial wrinkles and restore facial volume. There is a clear trend towards a global and three-dimensional approach to facial rejuvenation that has been driven by advances in injection techniques and available products.

In the independent healthcare sector, cosmetic surgery has increased in popularity, reflecting increased consumer demand. Many see cosmetic surgery as a panacea for their personal and relationship difficulties. The active and aggressive media, which was largely absent 50 years ago, has made our society aspirational and globalized the perception of what is attractive, desirable and sexy⁵. In addition, our lifestyles have changed with the rapid growth in the range of leisure activities on offer. This may reflect a culture obsessed with more popular and fashionable images, but it may also be due to deep-rooted insecurities. In general, competent adults have the right to decide whether or not to undergo a surgical procedure. Patients' wishes and therefore their right to an informed decision must be respected, provided that they have been given sufficient information⁶. The information should include the risks of surgery together with alternative options. These principles apply even more to cosmetic surgery, where patients do not suffer from any 'disease'. Elective aesthetic treatments, which can lead to long-term adverse effects on the body's function and health, involve serious ethical concerns.

Aesthetic procedures, both invasive and non-invasive, have gained prominence in the current context due to the growing concern with self-image and the search for improved self-esteem. Aesthetics, as a tool to change or enhance the perception of beauty, presents itself as a practical and accessible method, attracting a large number of individuals who aim to improve their physical appearance. However, performing these procedures requires adequate preparation, which includes considering psychological aspects, clearly defining expectations and assessing the possible risks involved. Among the most cited benefits are increased confidence and personal satisfaction, aspects that are closely linked to social acceptance and improved quality of life⁷.

On the other hand, invasive interventions, such as microneedling and facial fillers, provide more lasting results, but also present a greater chance of complications, such as infections and adverse reactions. Therefore, the choice of procedure must be carefully discussed between the professional and the patient, taking into account individual needs and expectations, as well as potential risks. Clear communication about these factors is essential to avoid frustration and ensure that the procedure meets the desired objectives⁸.

3.1 The search for plastic surgery

Plastic surgery comprises two branches of surgery, different in their objectives but complementary in their procedures. One of them is restorative surgery, which works on sick individuals, aiming to correct defects resulting from trauma, congenital malformations, burn sequelae and correction of defects resulting from the removal of tissue as occurs in oncological surgery⁹. The other is cosmetic surgery, which, working on healthy individuals, aims to correct imperfections that may be more or less visible, or that cause psychological impairment to the patient.

Plastic surgery includes reconstructive and cosmetic surgery. They are different in their objectives, but similar in the procedures they use. Reconstructive surgery works with normal structures of the body that undergo changes such as defects resulting from trauma, congenital malformations, burn sequelae, tumors or other diseases⁶. Cosmetic surgery aims to restore shape or correct imperfections, and works on normal patients. Serious surgical and postoperative errors, complications, wrong-site surgery, and medication errors can occur in any type of surgical procedure and in any surgical setting. ¹⁰ Although cosmetic surgery has an excellent safety record, we must be constantly vigilant to avoid deficiencies in addressing patient safety issues. Decisions about surgery in situations where there appears to be a higher risk of morbidity and mortality, such as large-volume lipoclasia and certain combinations of procedures, should be made with the utmost care to maximize safety. Unfortunately, disagreements persist about how best to reduce medical errors and who is responsible for improving the quality of care. As patient advocates, cosmetic surgeons have always promoted a culture of safety to help minimize errors and improve outcomes. ⁷ The value of the individual practitioner's contribution to reducing the incidence

of errors is significant. Accrediting agencies for office-based surgery (e.g., the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities) are on the right track with the development of documentation materials and policies designed to promote safe outcomes. 11 Proper surgical planning and patient assessment are essential. Patient information sheets, including detailed information on allergies, drug reactions, smoking, and use of medications, herbs, and aspirin/nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, are helpful in identifying situations that may lead to complications. Complications in cosmetic plastic surgery are uncommon because they are elective procedures. However, when they do occur, they can be not only frustrating but also compromise the patient's survival. This makes it a priority to develop a rigorous and comprehensive safety protocol, applied at all stages of the surgical procedure, such as pre-, intra-, and post-operatively, with the main objective of reducing morbidity and mortality¹².

3.2 Aesthetic pressure and self-image

The concept of aesthetic pressure is widely discussed in relation to its impact on the self-image of women of different ages. The search for the ideal aesthetic, imposed by society, has caused significant impacts on the way women perceive themselves. Current beauty standards promote a pattern that values thinness, youth, and specific physical characteristics, which are often unattainable. This constant comparison with an idealized model of beauty causes psychological pressure that can lead to dissatisfaction with one's own body and the need to resort to aesthetic procedures to fit these standards, as observed by Rocha et. al.¹³.

Aesthetic pressure is also intrinsically linked to the media and its role in disseminating a universal standard of beauty. Women of all ages are bombarded with images of perfect bodies that have often been digitally enhanced. The appreciation of body aesthetics is not limited to the upper social classes; the desire to meet these standards also affects women from working classes, demonstrating the global impact of beauty culture. As a result, these women's self-image is distorted, which can trigger psychological disorders associated with low self-esteem and dissatisfaction with physical appearance. ¹⁴ Self-image, in turn, is a direct reflection of women's interaction with their social environment and the beauty standards that this environment imposes. For many, the difficulty in meeting these expectations creates a vicious cycle of low self-esteem, where physical appearance becomes the predominant criterion for self-worth. This is especially evident in younger women, who feel greater pressure to achieve the ideal appearance, but it also affects women in older age groups, who face the issue of aging as one of the main reasons for aesthetic dissatisfaction. ¹⁵ Therefore, it is clear that the aesthetic pressure imposed by society directly impacts the self-image and psychological well-being of women at all ages. The incessant search to meet an unattainable standard can lead to serious psychological disorders, such as anxiety, depression, and eating disorders, as discussed by Rocha et al. ¹³. Thus, aesthetic pressure should be considered a public health problem, with effects that go beyond the individual sphere and reflect an urgent need to reevaluate the aesthetic standards imposed by society and the media.

Injectable aesthetic procedures play a crucial role in the field of mental health and aesthetics, involving a series of psychological and neurochemical factors that influence the well-being of patients. The search for these procedures, such as botulinum toxin and dermal fillers, has grown significantly in recent years, especially due to the social valorization of physical appearance.

These procedures are mainly used to combat signs of aging and improve self-esteem. The need to adhere to the aesthetic standards imposed by the media and society is also a motivating factor for the search for these treatments. Lima et al.¹⁶ highlight the importance of considering the emotional and psychological state of patients before performing any aesthetic intervention.

Aesthetic professionals, therefore, must be aware of the emotional aspects that involve patients. A detailed anamnesis, which includes the patient's psychiatric and aesthetic history, is essential to avoid complications and frustrations after the procedure. In addition, the regulation of neurotransmitters, such as GABA and norepinephrine, plays a crucial role in maintaining the emotional balance of patients, directly impacting the perception of the success of aesthetic procedures. Trindade et. al.¹⁷ emphasize that, when these aspects are properly managed, the chances of dissatisfaction and psychological complications are significantly reduced.

The integration between aesthetics and psychology offers a holistic approach to patient health care. Continuous evaluation and monitoring, both aesthetic and psychological, are essential to ensure that procedures meet

patients' expectations in a safe and efficient manner. In this way, the aesthetic professional acts not only on physical transformation, but also on emotional well-being and mental health, providing a positive aesthetic experience that contributes to improving self-esteem and quality of life¹².

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The relentless pursuit of aesthetic standards has intensified in contemporary society, leading individuals to seek out aesthetic procedures as a way to adapt their appearance to the beauty standards established by the media and society. This search, which affects both men and women, is often motivated by social pressure and the need for acceptance, directly impacting self-esteem and self-perception. Aesthetic procedures, whether invasive or non-invasive, play an important role in improving individuals' quality of life, providing not only a physical transformation, but also a psychological one, by promoting greater self-confidence and personal satisfaction¹⁸.

The relationship between aesthetics and mental health is evident, since many individuals seek these treatments as a way to resolve emotional issues and improve their self-esteem. However, unrealistic expectations regarding aesthetic perfection can lead to frustration when the results do not reach the expected ideal. In addition, there is a risk of psychological complications, such as anxiety and depression, especially in patients who already have a history of mental disorders. Therefore, prior assessment of patients' emotional state and clear communication about possible results are essential to ensure the safety and well-being of those undergoing these procedures¹⁷.

Women often undergo these procedures in search of social acceptance and to achieve the idealized body, as dictated by the fashion and cosmetics industries. Studies show that this incessant search for aesthetic perfection can have severe consequences for mental health, with the growing need for psychological support to deal with the emotional impacts of these procedures¹⁹.

The influence of the media goes beyond just dictating beauty trends; it establishes an often unattainable ideal, exacerbating the feeling of inadequacy among women. The constant display of slender bodies and youthful faces as synonymous with success and happiness generates constant comparison, leading women to believe that their social and personal acceptance depends on conforming to these standards. In addition, the dissemination of retouched and unrealistic images intensifies the perception that natural appearance is not enough, which can aggravate feelings of inferiority²⁰.

This process, fueled by social media and other platforms, drives the demand for aesthetic procedures as a quick solution to achieve this ideal, often without considering the risks involved and the repercussions on mental health. As a result, many women end up entering a vicious cycle of dissatisfaction and incessant search for aesthetic transformations, which can culminate in serious emotional and psychological disorders¹⁸.

The risks to the mental health of women who undergo aesthetic procedures go beyond the physical results. Dissatisfaction with the result or unrealistic expectations of perfection can trigger significant psychological disorders. Self-esteem, which is directly linked to body perception, can be deeply affected when the expected result is not achieved, leading to frustration and aggravating problems such as anxiety and depression. Therefore, the presence of psychological support during the decision-making process and after undergoing aesthetic procedures becomes crucial to ensure that expectations are realistic and that the mental health of patients is preserved¹⁹.

According to Leite et. al.²², it is essential that aesthetic procedures are performed responsibly and with the support of qualified professionals from various areas, including psychology. The integration of care aimed at the physical and mental well-being of women is essential to minimize risks to mental health.

Aesthetic procedures, especially facial and body procedures, have a significant impact on people's self-esteem and well-being, especially in the contemporary scenario, in which beauty standards are largely influenced by the media. The pressure to conform to these aesthetic standards directly affects the way people see themselves and interact socially. Women and men increasingly seek aesthetic procedures not only to correct imperfections, but also to achieve personal satisfaction, which is often associated with social and professional acceptance. Studies indicate that the increase in self-esteem after these procedures is directly related to the perception of a body image closer to socially valued standards¹⁰.

The media plays a decisive role in promoting unattainable standards of beauty, which aggravates body dissatisfaction among individuals. Social networks and digital influencers reinforce this ideal, generating a

growing demand for aesthetic treatments that promise to improve appearance and, consequently, self-esteem. However, this relentless pursuit of perfection can lead to ongoing dissatisfaction, with negative impacts on mental health, since the expectations created by the images disseminated by the media are often unrealistic. Thus, the connection between aesthetics and emotional well-being becomes increasingly evident in today's society¹⁵.

Thus, it can be seen that aesthetic procedures play a fundamental role in promoting physical and mental well-being. They not only correct physical imperfections, but are also essential tools for raising self-esteem and improving individuals' quality of life. The search for these treatments, driven by beauty standards promoted by the media, must be approached responsibly, ensuring that the aesthetic results are realistic and aligned with the emotional health of patients.

The search for aesthetic perfection has intensified exponentially in recent years, strongly driven by the influence of social networks and the constant promotion of beauty standards that are often unattainable and unrealistic. These standards, widely disseminated by celebrities and digital influencers, exert significant pressure on individuals, creating the need to conform to aesthetic expectations that do not always correspond to reality or to each person's health conditions²¹.

However, this popularization has exposed a critical problem: the lack of adequate regulation in some regions and the performance of professionals without the appropriate qualifications, which significantly increases the risk of serious complications for patients' health. The lack of strict control over who can perform such procedures increases the likelihood of technical errors, misuse of materials, as well as the inappropriate administration of substances, resulting in adverse reactions, infections and even permanent damage⁶.

Aesthetic procedures, when performed responsibly, can bring considerable benefits, such as improved self-esteem, greater confidence and quality of life. However, it is necessary to recognize that addiction to aesthetic interventions, motivated by the incessant search for perfection, can lead to severe psychological damage. Individuals who repeatedly undergo these procedures can develop a cycle of constant dissatisfaction, resulting in low self-esteem and anxiety. Therefore, it is crucial that aesthetic professionals, especially aesthetic biomedical professionals, are prepared to identify signs of dependency and advise their patients on the limits and risks involved in treatments²¹.

The use of high-quality products and the application of appropriate techniques are fundamental elements to ensure not only safety, but also satisfaction with the results obtained. Products of dubious origin, non-sterilized materials or poorly executed techniques can cause complications such as severe allergic reactions, aesthetic deformities and, in extreme cases, fatal complications.

V. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this study, it became clear that aesthetic procedures do not only modify physical appearance, but also have a profound impact on the mental and emotional health of patients, especially women, who are often the main consumers of these services. The search for a body image that aligns with the beauty standards established by society and reinforced by the media generates a cycle of dissatisfaction and anxiety, often leading to the need for aesthetic interventions.

The importance of psychological monitoring before and after aesthetic procedures is undeniable, since the decision to undergo such interventions is often linked to deeper emotional issues, such as low self-esteem and social pressure. The support of qualified professionals is essential to ensure that the patient does not seek aesthetics as a solution to emotional problems, which can be aggravated if the results do not meet idealized expectations.

The study highlights the need to rethink the beauty standards propagated by the media and society, which are often unattainable and have a negative impact on people's self-image. The pressure to conform to these standards affects not only physical health, but also mental health, leading to the development of disorders such as anxiety, depression and eating disorders. Therefore, it is essential that both aesthetic and mental health

professionals work in an integrated manner, offering holistic care that prioritizes the well-being of the patient as a whole.

The conclusion of this work emphasizes that, although aesthetic procedures can be a powerful tool for improving self-esteem and quality of life, their effectiveness depends on a responsible and balanced approach that takes into account not only the physical transformation, but also the emotional impact. Promoting healthy aesthetics, based on realistic standards and more inclusive body acceptance, should be an objective of both aesthetic professionals and society in general, seeking to reduce aesthetic pressure and promote the integral well-being of individuals.

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