Acceptance of Cosmetic Surgery and Self-esteem among University Students

การยอมรับการศัลยกรรมความงามและการเห็นคุณค่าในตนเองของนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัย

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Abstract

The objective of this research were 1) to compare the acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self-esteem between university students who have different genders and academic years and 2) to study the predictor variables affecting the acceptance of cosmetic surgery from 4 variables; self-esteem, age, grade point average and a monthly expense. The participants are 391 university students. The research instruments were acceptance of cosmetic surgery scale (ACSS) and state self-esteem scale (SSES). All items are answered using five-point scale. The statistics used for data analysis are t-test, one-way ANOVA followed with multiple comparison test by Scheffé's method and stepwise multiple regression analysis. The research's result found that 1) students with different genders and academic years have a statistically significant difference only in self-esteem (F=17.44/F=13.57) but not difference in the acceptance of cosmetic surgery and 2) self-esteem is the only predictor variable that has negative regression coefficient $(\beta = -0.208)$ with statistical significance at the .01 level. The variance of the acceptance of cosmetic surgery is 4.30 percent.

Keywords: Acceptance of Cosmetic Surgery, Self-esteem, University Students

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ 1) เพื่อเปรียบเทียบการยอมรับศัลยกรรมความงามและการเห็นคุณค่าในตนเองของนักศึกษาระหว่างเพศและชั้นปี ที่แตกต่างกัน 2) เพื่อศึกษาตัวแปรพยากรณ์ที่มีผลต่อการยอมรับการศัลยกรรมความงาม จำนวน 4 ตัวแปร ได้แก่ การเห็นคุณค่าในตนเอง อายุ เกรดเฉลี่ย และค่าใช้จ่ายต่อเดือน ของนักศึกษาระดับปริญญาตรี จำนวน 391 คน เครื่องมือวิจัยคือ แบบสอบถามการยอมรับการศัลยกรรมความงาม และแบบสอบถามการเห็นคุณค่าในตนเอง ซึ่งแบบสอบถามเป็นชนิดมาตรประมาณค่า 5 ระดับ สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลคือ การทดสอบค่าที (t-test) การวิเคราะห์ความแปรปรวนทางเดียวโดยการเปรียบเทียบด้วยวิธี scheffé และการวิเคราะห์สมการถดถอยพหุคูณด้วยวิธี Stepwise ผลการวิจัยพบว่า 1) เพศและชั้นปีมีความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติเฉพาะการเห็นคุณค่าในตนเอง (F=17.44/F=13.57) แต่การยอมรับการศัลยกรรมความงามไม่แตกต่างกัน และ 2) การเห็นคุณค่าในตัวเองเป็นตัวแปรพยากรณ์เพียงตัวเดียวที่มีค่าสัมประสิทธิ์การถดถอย ($\beta = -0.208$) เป็นลบอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ .01 โดยอธิบายความแปรปรวนของตัวแปรตามได้ร้อยละ 4.30

คำสำคัญ : การยอมรับการศัลยกรรมความงาม การเห็นคุณค่าในตนเอง นักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัย

Introduction

In the past decade the use of cosmetic surgery to enhance one's appearance has been steadily gaining in popularity. It has become increasingly more important for many people and the frequency of these procedures has increased dramatically over this period. In 2015 the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) reported that cosmetic procedures increased by 111% from 2000-2014. In 2014 the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ISAPS) published findings that there was an 84% increase in cosmetic procedures undertaken by its members in South Korea from 2010-2014 (International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, 2014). During those years the attitudes of many people changed towards cosmetic surgery and research revealed that much of the population in the West now accepted cosmetic surgery as normal (Henderson-King & Henderson-King 2005; Swami et al. 2009; Swami et al. 2011). As the incidence of these procedures has increased among teenagers in the United States, they have developed a good attitude towards cosmetic surgery. Now, almost 20% of all cosmetic surgery are performed on teenagers and people under 34 years of age (American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, 2015a). In Asia, approximately half of South Korean women 20 years of age have undergone some form of cosmetic surgery (Scanlon, 2005), and about 35% of all South Korean men over the age of 20 have undergone cosmetic surgery (Kwon, 2009).

Thailand has become one of the most popular countries for cosmetic surgery. Currently, Thailand is ranked 21st in all of the countries in the world for cosmetic surgery. In Thailand the most frequent surgery is the eyelid, followed by breast augmentation and then the nose (International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, 2016). According to a survey of 5,000 young people aged 10 to 25 years regarding attitudes towards facial plastic surgery, it was found that 57.7% were interested in having some form of cosmetic surgery. Of this survey population, 68.8 % of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 22 years. Of these, 59.8 % felt confident in the safety of plastic surgery (Noilert, 2013). From the survey data, it is indicated that these teenagers tend to feel it is important to have cosmetic surgery at an early age and that this trend is increasing. In today's society more emphasis is placed on appearance. There are more media presentations on cosmetic surgery and the cost of the surgery is decreasing, making cosmetic surgery even more appealing (Sarwer et al., 2003; Sarwer et al., 2005; Sarwer, Crerand, & Gibbons, 2007). There have been many studies done on the decision processes to perform cosmetic surgery. These include a wide range of factors, such as lower self-rated related to perceived physical attractiveness (Brown et al., 2007; Swami et al., 2009), dissatisfaction with one's body, (Cash, Goldenberg-Bivens, & Grasso, 2005; Markey & Markey, 2009), the investment required to make improvements in appearance (Delinsky, 2005; Sarwer et al., 2003), perceived social conformity (Swami et al., 2009), body dysmorphic disorder (Mulkens & Jansen, 2006; Sarwer & Crerand, 2008), sensitivity to peer rejection based on appearance (Park et al., 2009), greater internalization of the importance of appearance as presented by the media (Markey & Markey, 2009; Swami, 2009), celebrity worship (Swami et al., 2009), personality factors (Swami, Taylor, & Carvalho, 2009), materialistic values (Henderson-King & Brooks, 2009), and lower self-esteem (Swami, Taylor, & Carvalho, 2009).

These factors all contribute to the decision-making processes of having cosmetic surgery. Cosmetic surgery is seen as an improvement is some aspect of ones appearance that is causing mental suffering. It makes people look better and increases their self-esteem. People who demand cosmetic surgery often have low self- esteem. This is due to the person's own self-image, the perception they have of their own body and mind. People who compare themselves with others through interactions in daily life or the media are often dominated by social stereotypes (Breuning et al., 2010; Coca, 2006), their self-image is important to their confidence and self-esteem (Hendriks & Burgoon, 2003). Self-esteem refers to the feeling of having value in and of oneself, the acceptance of one's self upon self-evaluation, a positive

attitude when thinking of self, the concept of self-efficiency including one's abilities, of being a benefit to society and accepted by society (Pope & McHales, 1988; Rosenberg, 1965). The results of research showed that high self-esteem affects psychological changes in the positive direction,such as mental health, adapting oneself, positive emotions, exuberance, happiness, positive social behavior, confronting problems and achievement. These are found to be factors in preventing people from the risk of mental health problems by acting as a defense against negative influences. Moreover, it increases confidence and satisfaction in self-appearance (Dorak, 2011; Mann et al., 2004; Leary & MacDonald, 2003; Vesile & Mustafa, 2010). Contrarily, it is found that people who have low self-esteem face many problems with social anxiety and self-confidence and experience frustration and embarrassment when interacting with others (Rosenberg & Owens, 2001). This may be due to the high sensitivity to social perception (Kearney-Cooke, 1999). Then, cosmetic surgery is one alternative in today's society by which to build self-esteem and self-confidence because cosmetic surgery improves the physical appearance. People have improved self-esteem and this enhances their chances of having a good life after they have cosmetic surgery, a boost to both appearance and mind (Mann et al., 2004; Souri & Porjorat, 2017; Salehahmadi & Rafie, 2012).

From these issues listed above, the researcher is interested in studying how teenagers at the university in Chiang Mai province, between the ages of 18 and 22 years, correlate cosmetic surgery and self-esteem. In reviewing past research about cosmetic surgery and self-esteem, it was found that there has been only a limited interest in Thailand, even though Thailand is increasing rapidly with regard to the frequency of these surgical procedures. What are the effects on the mental health and social attitudes of teenagers? This research studies to compare the acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self-esteem between genders and academic years. The intent is to define and explain differences in attitudes between groups separated by gender and academic year. How much do gender and academic year change the acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self-esteem. Included is the study of the predictive variables that effects the cosmetic surgery and to know the influence of any predictive variables that result from cosmetic surgery.

Materials and Methods

Participants

The participants of this study were 391 university students in Chiang Mai Province which were selected through Stratified Random Sampling Technique. 30.7% of participants were students from Chiang Mai Rajabhat University (n=120), 40.9% Maejo University (n=160), and 28.4% Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna (n=111). The study population were 60.4% female (n=236), and 39.6% male (n=155), 51.7% had an average age of 21.05 years (n=206), 54% had a GPA of 3.05 (n=211), 50.1% were the fourth year students (n=196), and 54.3% had an average monthly expense of 6,650 baht (n=213).

Instruments

Acceptance of Cosmetic Surgery Scale (ACSS; Henderson-King &Henderson-King, 2005)

The Acceptance of Cosmetic Surgery Scale by Henderson-King & Henderson-King (2005) was a measure used to determine participants' attitudes towards cosmetic surgery. It was a 15-item scale with 3 subscales: 1) Intrapersonal (5 items; e.g., "If cosmetic surgery could make someone happier with the way they look, then they should try it"), 2) Social (5 items; e.g., "I would seriously consider having cosmetic surgery if my partner thought it was a good idea") and 3) Consider (5 items; e.g., "If I knew there would be no negative side effects or pain, I would like to try cosmetic surgery"). This scale was a five-point scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The ACSS was a strong internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α = .91) and the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of Intrapersonal, Social and Consider were .84, .80 and .81, respectively.

State Self-esteem Scale (SSES; Heatherton & Polivy, 1991)

The State Self-Esteem Scale in this study consisted of 20 items and was a scale that the respondents considered and assessed at the present time. There were 7 positive questions (items 1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, 14) and 13 negative questions (items 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 13, 15, 16). The SSES consisted of 3 subscales: 1) Performance self-esteem 7 items (items 1, 4, 5, 9, 14, 18, 19; e.g., "I feel confident about my abilities) 2) Self-esteem 7 items (items 2, 8, 10, 13, 15, 17, 20; e.g., "I am worried about what other people think of me") and 3) Appearance self-esteem 6 items (items 3, 6, 7, 11, 12, 16; e.g., "I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now"). Each question was a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (Not at all true) to 5 (Extremely true) and SSES related other Psychological variables measurement such as trait self-esteem, trait anxiety, depression, hostility, body size estimation, satisfaction with height, and social desirability. The SSES psychometrically sound with concurrent and discriminant validity (Heatherton &

Polivy, 1991). There was a strong internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α = .87) and the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of Performance self-esteem, Social self-esteem and Appearance self-esteem was at .82, .73 and .60, respectively.

Data Analysis

The data were collected for this research consisted of General information about the university students, Acceptance of Cosmetic Surgery Scale and State Self-Esteem Scale. The researcher examined the completion of the questionnaires and it was found that there was no missing data. Statistics employed for analyses of the data included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, one-way ANOVA and Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis were used in this study. Furthermore, to compare the difference between genders and academic years and find out the predict variables on acceptance of cosmetic surgery.

Results

The comparison of acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self-esteem of university students classified by genders and academic years

The analysis results of mean and standard deviation of acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self-esteem of university students classified by genders and academic years, Preliminary findings found that there were more females than males. Most of them were in the fourth year and females acceptance of cosmetic surgery higher than males in every academic years (M=3.62, S.D.= 0.58). On the contrary, males had higher self-esteem than females almost every academic years (M=3.22, S.D.= 0.42) except the second year level. The fourth year female university students had least self-esteem (M=2.93, S.D.= 0.35). (see table 1)

Table 1 Mean and standard deviation in acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self-esteem of university students classified by genders and academic years

Academic Years	n			Acceptance of Cosmetic Surgery						Self-Esteem					
	Male	Female	Total	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
				M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.
1	14	14	28	3.58	0.50	3.72	0.91	3.65	0.72	3.23	0.34	3.17	0.56	3.20	0.46
2	55	48	103	3.59	0.56	3.62	0.55	3.60	0.55	3.23	0.33	3.27	0.29	3.25	0.31
3	31	33	64	3.29	0.88	3.63	0.69	3.46	0.80	3.38	0.52	3.14	0.55	3.26	0.55
4	55	141	196	3.52	0.71	3.61	0.54	3.58	0.59	3.12	0.44	2.93	0.35	2.99	0.39
Total	155	236	391	3.50	0.69	3.62	0.58	3.57	0.63	3.22	0.42	3.04	0.41	3.12	0.42

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The result of t-test and one-way ANOVA analysis in compare acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self-esteem between genders and academic years of students, it test of homogeneity of variances in accordance with the assumption. Levene's test of the variance in participants was normalized both genders and academic years. The p-value was significantly higher than the .05 levels. The comparison on acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self-esteem between genders and academic years showed that only self-esteem was difference (F=17.441, p<.000/F=13.574, p<.000) but acceptance of cosmetic surgery was not difference (F = 3.142, p> 000 / F = .848, p> .000). The compare Post-Hoc by Scheffé' s approach in the self-esteem, it indicated that males had higher self-esteem than females and the fourth academic year had least self-esteem than the second and third academic years students. (see table 2)

Table 2 Compare the differences between acceptance of cosmetic surgery (ACS) and self-esteem (SEE) between genders and academic years

IV	DV	Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value	Levene's test	Post-hoc
Gender	ACS	Between Groups	1.234	1	1.234	3.142	.077	.152	no
		Within Groups	152.805	389	0.393				
		Total	154.039	390					
	SEE	Between Groups	3.020	1	3.020	17.441	.000	.992	male > female
		Within Groups	67.361	389	0.173				
		Total	70.381	390					
Academic years	ACS	Between Groups	1.006	3	0.335	.848	.468	.250	no
		Within Groups	153.032	387	0.395				
		Total	154.039	390					
	SEE	Between Groups	6.701	3	2.234	13.574	.000	.500	4 < 2,3
		Within Groups	63.680	387	0.165				
		Total	70.381	390					

The results of Multiple Regression Analysis of the predictive variables on acceptance of cosmetic surgery

The analysis results of the influence of predictive variables; self-esteem, age, GPA and monthly expense on acceptance of cosmetic surgery revealed that the self-esteem was the only predictor variable that had the coefficient of the variables in raw score (b = -.308), standard deviation error (SE_b = .077) and regression coefficient $(\beta = -0.208)$ in negative direction significantly at the .01 levels and it could explain the variance of the acceptance of cosmetic surgery is 4.30% (see table 3)

Table 3 Multiple regression coefficients to predict the acceptance of cosmetic surgery

Model	b	SE_b	β	t	p-value
(Constant)	4.412	.666		6.627	.000
Self-esteem (x_1)	-.308	.077	-.208	-4.016	.000
Age (x_2)	-.008	.027	-.016	-.315	.753
Grade point average (x_3)	.110	.074	.074	1.483	.139
Monthly expense (x_4)	-6.295E-6	.000	-.039	-.761	.447

R = .207, R^2= .043, Adjusted R^2 = .033, SEest = .61806, F = 4.310

There were of the prediction equation in terms of raw scores predict equation (Y') and Standardized scores predict equation (Z'_y) as follows.

Raw scores predict equation $Y' = 4.412 - .308_{X_1} - .008_{X_2} + .110_{X_3} - 6.295E\text{-}6_{X_4}$

Standardized scores predict equation $Z'_y = -.208Z_{X_1} - .016Z_{X_2} + .074Z_{X_3} - .039_{X_4}$

Discussion/Conclusion

The acceptance of cosmetic surgery and self- esteem of university students revealed that males and females were not different in their surgery acceptance. It was consistent with both attitudes and perspectives of males and females that cosmetic surgery had become common and widely accepted. Females tend to accept cosmetic surgery more readily than male. The results of the study showed that women exposed to cosmetic surgery advertisements were more likely to report a discrepancy between their ideal and actual body-image: 44% wished they were thinner and 68% wished their appearance was in some way more attractive and females often compared themselves to the ideal standards of beauty. (Burriss, 2017) They got on a diet, wore makeup and searched out the strategies to achieve those attributes of beauty due to their higher expectations regarding physical appearance (Bazner, 2002). The proportion of cosmetic surgery between males and females are 9 to 1

(American Society for Plastic Surgeons, 2008). The study of Campana, Ferreira, & Tavares (2012) indicated that females were more likely to perceive information about beauty and internalize attractiveness, a sense of wanting to achieve a more perfect body than males. This was consistent with the previous research; females were more likely to consider cosmetic surgery than males due to the lower self-ratings associated with physical attractiveness (Brown et al., 2007; Frederick, Lever, & Peplau, 2007; Swami et al., 2008). As with females, currently males tend to seek more cosmetic surgery than in previous years (Tiggemann & Miller, 2010). Teenagers found that their dissatisfaction with their appearance was normal. In 2014, males seeking out the services of plastic surgeons increased by 273% (American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, 2015b). Males gave the reasons for this large increase as having to do it with their work and business. It was a trend of wearing tighter fitting clothing and improving their appearance compared to decade ago (American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, 2017; Ozel et al., 2015).

The acceptance of cosmetic surgery was not related to the academic years. No matter what academic years they were in, there was no difference in accepting cosmetic surgery. This is because of the easier access to information in many channels such as media exposure about cosmetic surgery on television (Sperry et al., 2009), magazines and social networks. Now, there are a multitude of easy, fast ways to access information such as online social media and the internet as compared to face-to-face communication in the past (Bargh & McKenna, 2004). In 2010, more than 70% of teenagers used computers, cell phones, iPads, and other electronic devices and technology. They now spend a great percentage of their time communicating with their friends through e-mails, massages, and social networking sites (Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005; Turkle, 2011). As to the survey result, among university students most of them had smart phones 93.15% and laptops 61.81%. For this reason, university students can use devices to access social media for their entertainment and use them to benefit their studying, for example, chatting to friends, following friends' activities, and taking photos (Damrongpanit et al., 2016). So teenagers between 20 and 22 years were most likely to stress the importance of social network websites (Mikami et al., 2010). It exposes teenagers to a wide range of media so that they can compare themselves with a multitude of other people in the appearance, values and social placement (Swami et al., 2009). Especially, exposure to the fashion magazines, often leads teenagers to a desire to be more attractive and a feeling of dissatisfaction with appearance and a lower self-image (Hendriks & Burgoon, 2003). The more socially active the people were, the more importance they placed on their

body image, physical appearance. They placed more expectations on themselves to be attractive, beautiful or handsome (Aghte, Spörrle, & Maner, 2010). They are bombarded with advertisements and other media images that help set the standards by which they evaluate themselves (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). All these types of media and social interactions had a significant influence and positively affected attitudes towards cosmetic surgery (Sharp, Tiggemann, & Mattiske, 2014).

On the contrary, students with different genders and academic years had self-esteem significantly different at .01 levels. Males had higher self-esteem than females. The results of the study on the difference between genders with the self- esteem clearly affirmed that males had higher self- esteem than females (Bleidorn et al., 2016; Robins et al., 2002; Twenge & Campbell, 2001). The attitude of females to focus on their appearance became negative, they went on diets, paid much more attention to the media and to advertising for cosmetic surgery. The perception of the ideal physical image that appeared in the media induced females to feel as if the wrinkles were so aging that they needed to be repaired. Females had the feeling that a decrease in physical attractiveness had a negative impact, especially on self-esteem and cultural pressure on female's physical appearance (Dockrill, 2016; Mcleod, 2012; Robins et al., 2002). Self-esteem of students in the fourth academic years was lower than that of the second and third year. This might be because that the fourth year was the last year for them to study. In this year, students would focus on the professional experience. They need to learn about an adaptation at the internship site, an interaction with colleagues, and an accountability, and to learn about the culture of the organization under the context of Thai society, university values and attitudes of customers toward university brand which was quite high. People in society often dwell heavily on university rankings. These affected the perception and feeling of self-image and their confidence as well. Some organizations had experienced students from various institutions. Trainees are often compared to other university students through their overwhelming social thoughts and from the perspective on values and expectations of people working together. It also affected students' self-concept and self-esteem. When people had self-esteem and other non-cognitive traits, they were the important factors to make them satisfied in their work and the efficiency of their work (Judge & Bono, 2001). Therefore, the last year was the adjustment period. They might be concerned about the job, the fear of failure, or the fear of problems that would happen after graduation. These issues had a great impact on self-confidence. Students were expected to learn how to plan for change, and to prepare for

the world of work by changing the personality and the dress. It included the development of talents and good personalities to meet the needs of social organizations.

Multiple regression analysis shows that only self-esteem influences the acceptance of cosmetic surgery. It was the only predictive variable that had regression coefficient in negative direction. This means that if students had low self-esteem, they would show a high acceptance of cosmetic surgery. If students had high self-esteem, they would be less willing to consider cosmetic surgery. Their attitudes toward cosmetic surgery were the products of their feelings of themselves in both satisfaction and dissatisfaction including self-value or self-worth, the ability of person and self-acceptance (Coopersmith, 1967; Rosenberg, 1965). Self-esteem was positively correlated with happiness (Malekiha & Abedi, 2012; Myers, 1992; Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001). The people with higher self-esteem had less chance of debilitating their body image in the negative direction (Sheffield, Tse, & Sofronoff, 2005) and people who were satisfied in their body appearance, very few tended toward cosmetic surgery (Coca, 2006). In contrast, individuals with low self-esteem who were highly dissatisfied with their body had a positive attitude toward cosmetic surgery (Bazner, 2002; Pruzinsky & Cash, 2002). That was consistent with the research that showed self-esteem had a negative correlation with body image dissatisfaction. The people who are unsatisfied with their appearance would have low self-esteem and would be dominated by their need for social acceptance (Pduraru & Rcanu, 2013; Shepeliak, 2006).

However, this research results need further study on how to encourage or support the last year students to have self-esteem and perception of their own abilities rather than only to have their thoughts of or interests in surgery dependence. Besides that, there are a number of predictive influent variables affecting on acceptance of cosmetic surgery more worthy to be studied. Therefore, the further research should study to find out an answer leading to clearest explanation of phenomenon on how individuals have an attitude or a view toward surgery acceptance in the present society.

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