

# Tendency to Rhinoplasty in University Students Based on the Level of Self-Esteem and Body Image Concern

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## Abstract

**Objective:** The increasing tendency of the Iranian people, especially the youth to cosmetic surgery has become one of the major psychosocial challenges. The aim of this study was to determine tendency to rhinoplasty in terms of self-esteem and body image concern among university students of Ilam city.

**Methods:** Two hundred and eighty-six students from Ilam city universities were entered into cross-sectional study using two-stage random sampling method. Data were collected using a 34-item questionnaire that includes demographic information, Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES) and Body Image Concern Inventory (BICI) by self-reported data gathering method. Data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software and for analyzing data, the descriptive statistics, chi-square test, t-tests and One Way ANOVA were used.

**Results:** The participants Mean±SD of age was 21.15 ± 2.28. Most of them were female (58.74 %), single (90.9 %) and studying in non-medical fields(57.34 %).The results of the study showed the significant differences between students tendency to rhinoplasty by gender (P=0.001), Field of Study

(P=0.046) and economic conditions (P=0.027). In addition, there were significant differences between mean scores of self-esteem and body image concern in our study population in terms of rhinoplasty status, (P≥0.05).

**Conclusion:** The results of this study show that the intention of having rhinoplasty surgery among university students is affected by level of their Self-esteem and also their concerns about their body image. In addition, the social determinants of health such as gender and economic conditions play a significant role in the tendency of university students to undergo rhinoplasty.

**Key words:** University Students, Rhinoplasty, Self-esteem, Body Image Concern

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## Introduction

Today, more than ever we are witnessing rhinoplasty among teenagers and even adults.(1, 2) According to statistical reports, Iran is one of the countries which has the largest level of rhinoplasty in the world. (3,4) Individuals with different attitudes and views decide to undergo it. Different studies are representative of common motives of people.(5, 6) As rhinoplasty is one factor for relative physical improvement and treating of respiratory disease, it does not represent a problem in that regards. But when the concern is for being more beautiful, it becomes an anomaly and a problem in young people, provoking many physical, psychological and social problems. The young age is sensitive and critical in respect to cognitive processes and regarding concerns that a person has in respect to society according to how others see his or her appearance and social comparison of them, this causes a concern in that person and creates a tendency toward rhinoplasty.(1) On the other hand, studies have shown that self-esteem plays a decisive role in the tendency of youth toward cosmetic surgery (CS). (5, 6) According to the aforementioned studies, physical appearance and body image constitute an important aspect of self-esteem in adolescents.(7) Body image dissatisfaction and concern about other's evaluation results in low self-esteem and a person who is constantly seeking approval of others, looking for a solution to improve his/her body image and increase self-confidence. (2, 7) According to studies, the relationship between self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction is a reciprocal affair. This means that body image dissatisfaction decreases self-esteem and low self-esteem leads to body image dissatisfaction. The results of various studies show that rhinoplasty can improve people's body image satisfaction and also increase their self-confidence. (8, 9) The aim of this study was to determine tendency to rhinoplasty in terms of self-esteem and body image concern among university students of Ilam city.

## Methods

The Total number of 286 students from Ilam city universities (122 medical sciences students and 164 non- medical sciences students) with convenience sampling design was entered into a cross-sectional study. Data were collected using a three-part questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire was about demographic information including gender, field of Study, marital status, Family's economic condition and current status of participants about rhinoplasty. The second part was Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES). The RSES is a 10-item Likert type scale with items answered on a four-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This scale measures life satisfaction (e.g. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself) and to feel good about themselves (for example: At times I think I am no good at all). (10) The third part of the questionnaire included the 19-items Body Image Concern Inventory (BICI). The BICI is a brief self-report measure designed to assess multiple aspects of dysmorphic appearance concern, as opposed to only focusing on appearance dissatisfaction or one aspect of dysmorphic appearance

concern (e.g. I feel others are speaking negatively of my appearance), dissatisfaction with one's body image (e.g. I am dissatisfied with some aspect of my appearance), and the person's concern about participating in social activities (e.g. I have missed social activities because of my appearance). Participants were asked to answer the questions on a five-point Likert scale from never=1 to always=5. Students voluntarily participated in the study and completed self-report questionnaires. This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Ilam University of Medical Sciences. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS statistical software. For data analysis, descriptive statistics, chi-square test, t-tests and one way ANOVA were used and P-value less than 0.05 was considered as significance level.

## Results

Two hundred and eighty-six university students with mean age of  $21.15 \pm 2.28$  participated in this study and were mostly female (58.74 percent), single (90.9 percent) and studying in non-medical fields of study (57.34 percent). In addition, 9.09 percent of them had undergone rhinoplasty and 26.92 percent plan to do it in the future. The relative frequency and absolute frequency of subjects in terms of demographic characteristics are shown in Table 1 (next page). Comparing the rhinoplasty status in terms of demographic characteristics it showed that female students had significantly performed rhinoplasty more than boys and as well they were more likely than boys to have rhinoplasty in the future ( $P=0.01$ ). In addition, non-medical sciences students were significantly more likely than medical sciences students to have rhinoplasty in the future ( $P=0.046$ ), (Table 2). Also, the comparison of mean scores of self-esteem and body image concerns based on students rhinoplasty surgery status showed that self-esteem of students who had rhinoplasty surgery or those who want to do it in future was significantly lower than students who had no intention to have rhinoplasty ( $P=0.044$ ). Furthermore, body image concerns of students who had no intention to rhinoplasty was significantly less than students who had rhinoplasty or those who wanted to undergo it in future ( $P=0.001$ ), (Table 3).

**Table 1: The absolute and relative frequency of subject's demographic characteristics**

Demographic Variables	N	%
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	118	41.25
Female	168	58.74
<b>Status</b>		
Single / Divorced / Widowed	260	90.9
Married	26	9.09
<b>Field of Study</b>		
Medical Sciences	123	43.01
Non-Medical Sciences	163	56.99
<b>Economic Status</b>		
Weak	30	10.48
Average	187	65.38
Good	59	20.62

**Table 2: The absolute and relative frequency of subject's demographic characteristics in terms of current rhinoplasty status**

Demographic Variables	Participants Rhinoplasty Status			p-Value
	Has had rhinoplasty N (%)	Intends to have rhinoplasty N (%)	Does not intend to have rhinoplasty N (%)	
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	6 (2.09)	29 (10.13)	83 (29.02)	0.01
Female	20 (6.99)	48 (16.77)	100 (34.96)	
<b>Status</b>				
Single / Divorced / Widowed	21 (7.5)	71(24.72)	168(58.61)	0.08
Married	5 (1.66)	6(2.22)	15(5.27)	
<b>Field of Study</b>				
Medical Sciences	11 (3.84)	31(10.83)	81(28.32)	0.046
Non-Medical Sciences	15 (5.24)	46(16.08)	102(35.66)	
<b>Economic Status</b>				
Weak	4 (1.38)	10(3.61)	16(5.55)	0.027
Average	13 (4.44)	44(15.27)	130 (45.55)	
Good	9 (3.33)	23(8.05)	37 (12.77)	

**Table 3: Mean score and standard deviation of self-esteem and body image concern of study subjects in terms of rhinoplasty status**

Psychological variables	Participants Rhinoplasty Status			p-Value
	Has had rhinoplasty N (%)	Intends to have rhinoplasty N (%)	Does not intend to have rhinoplasty N (%)	
<b>Self-Esteem</b>	20.80 (1.25)	20.26 (1.38)	21.33 (1.40)	0.044
<b>Body Image Concern</b>	46.88 (9.07)	45.95 (11.69)	37.27 (11.76)	0.001

## Discussion

This study aimed to determine the tendency toward rhinoplasty in terms of self-esteem and body image concern among universities students of Ilam city. For determining the tendency of students to have rhinoplasty, they divided into three groups including: those who had rhinoplasty done in the past (RP-Group), those who want to have rhinoplasty in the future (RF-Group) and those who had no intention to have rhinoplasty in the future (NRF-Group). Results showed that the mean score of self-esteem in the NRF-Group is higher than other groups. Also, the NRF-Group reported lowest self-esteem. Based on previous studies, self-esteem is one of the most important predictors of cosmetic surgery in people. Zamani et al, (11) reported that self-esteem of their study subjects significantly increased after rhinoplasty surgery. Also other studies showed similar results. (1, 2, 12, 13) These findings suggest that students' satisfaction with their body image is a factor influencing their self-esteem. In addition, results of the present study showed that mean score of body image concern in the RP-Group and the RF-Group is significantly higher than in the NRF-Group. So, we can say that the intention of the students to have rhinoplasty is greatly in relation to satisfaction about their appearance. The relationship between self-esteem and body image satisfaction is a reciprocal interaction. It means when self-esteem is low, satisfaction with body image is low and the tendency toward cosmetic surgery will increase. In other cases, the lack of satisfaction with body image leads to decreasing of self-esteem. (14) Self-esteem is one psychological indicator that is affected by numerous socio-environmental factors. Fear of others judgment and evaluation has a negative impact on people's self-esteem. People with low self-esteem due to lack of internal reinforcement resources, seek external reinforcement such as approval of others. (1, 15) Therefore, these people are giving great importance to the judgment of others. Because of it, cosmetic surgery, like rhinoplasty, is one of the ways of improving their body image and getting other's approval.

Also, the results of this study showed that the RP-Group had a higher self-esteem in comparison to the RF-Group. This result is in line with the results of previous studies. (1, 15, 16) In the study of Pecorari et al (17) those persons who had cosmetic surgery reported a low rate of body image concern and their self-esteem was increased. Also, Sarwer et al (18) expressed that cosmic surgery is a way of enhancing individual's satisfaction from their body image and promoting physical and psycho-social health. However, students who had rhinoplasty in the past were worried more about their body image, while it was expected they reported low rate of body image concern in comparison to those who want to have rhinoplasty in the future. This result suggests that cosmetic surgery does not necessarily always lead to reduced concerns about body image and self-esteem does not improve. In support of the current result, Mohammadi et al (19) reported that cosmetic surgery doesn't significantly increase the self-esteem of subjects. Nevertheless, although cosmic surgery may not lead to increasing the rate of self-esteem

or decreasing the rate of body image concern, we cannot deny its psychological role in the tendency to cosmetic surgery and the growing demand for cosmetic surgery including rhinoplasty.

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