Araştırma Makalesi/ Research Article

Examination of Self-Esteem, Self-Confidence, and Social Support Levels in Patients Undergoing Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery

Plastik, Rekonstrüktif ve Estetik Cerrahi Olan Hastalarda Benlik Saygısı, Özgüven ve Sosyal Destek Düzeylerinin İncelenmesi

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study was conducted to examine the levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and social support in patients undergoing plastic, reconstructive, and aesthetic surgery.

Methods: This descriptive study was conducted between February and May 2023 in a hospital, involving 152 individuals who underwent plastic, reconstructive, and aesthetic surgery. Ethics committee approval for the research was received from the university. The study utilized a face-to-face survey method. Personal Data Form, "Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale", "Coppersmith Self-Confidence Scale", and "Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Scale (MSPSS)" were used. Percentage, average, t test in independent groups, one way ANOVA analysis and correlation analysis were used to analyze the data.

Results: In our study, the mean score of the individuals on the Self-Confidence scale was determined as 132.13±18.89, and the mean score on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale was determined as 22.77±2.52. The total mean score for the MSPSS was determined as 71.09±14.38. The self-confidence scale score of individuals who were satisfied with their appearance was significantly higher compared to those who were not satisfied (p<0.001). Furthermore, a statistically significant and positive correlation was observed between the Coppersmith Self Esteem Rating Scale and the MSPSS.

Conclusion: It was found that patients undergoing plastic, reconstructive, and aesthetic surgery had a high level of self-confidence and a moderate level of self-esteem. It was determined that as perceived social support increased, individuals' self-confidence also increased. It is recommended to psychologically evaluate individuals who will undergo aesthetic surgery and provide support to them after the surgery.

Key words: Plastic surgery, aesthetic surgery, self-esteem, self-confidence, perceived social support.

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu çalışma plastik, rekonstrüktif ve estetik cerrahi olan hastalarda benlik saygısı, özgüven ve sosyal destek düzeylerinin incelenmesi amacıyla yapılmıştır.

Yöntem: Tanımlayıcı türde yürütülen bu çalışma, Şubat-Mayıs 2023 tarihleri arasında bir hastanede yatmakta olan plastik, rekonstrüktif ve estetik cerrahi ameliyatı olan 152 birey ile yüz yüze anket yöntemi ile yürütülmüştür. Araştırma için etik kurul onayı üniversiteden alınmıştır. Çalışma verileri Kişisel Veri Formu, Rosenberg Benlik Saygısı Ölçeği, Özgüven Ölçeği, Çok Boyutlu Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği ile toplanmıştır. Verilerin analizinde yüzdelik, ortalama, bağımsız gruplarda t testi, one way ANOVA analizi ve korelasyon analizi kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular: Çalışmamızda bireylerin Öz-güven ölçeği puan ortalaması 132.13±18.89, Rosenberg benlik saygısı ölçeği puan ortalaması ise 22.77±2.52 olarak belirlenmiştir. Çok boyutlu algılanan sosyal destek ölçeği toplam puan ortalaması 71.09±14.38 olarak saptandı. Görünümünden memnun olan bireylerin öz güven ölçeği puanı istatiksel olarak anlamlı bir şekilde görünümünden memnun olmayanlara kıyasla daha yüksek düzeyde saptandı (p<0.001). Öz Güven Ölçeği ile Çok boyutlu Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği arasında istatiksel olarak anlamlı bir şekilde ve pozitif yönde bir korelasyon olduğu saptandı.

Sonuç: Bu çalışmada plastik, rekonstrüktif ve estetik cerrahi olan hastalarda öz güven düzeyi yüksek, benlik saygısı orta düzeyde saptandı. Algılanan sosyal destek arttıkça bireylerin öz güvenlerinin arttığı belirlendi. Estetik ameliyat olacak bireylerin psikolojik açıdan değerlendirilmesi ve ameliyat sonrası desteklenmesi önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Plastik cerrahi, estetik cerrahi, benlik saygısı, öz güven, algılanan sosyal destek

Introduction

Plastic reconstructive and aesthetic surgery is a specialized field of surgery that encompasses facial and body surgical procedures. Plastic surgery focuses on the preservation, restoration, or improvement of an individual's physical appearance (Asimakopoulou et al., 2019). External appearance is one of the most important factors that influence an individual's life experience. The primary goal of aesthetic surgery is to help enhance a person's body image in a positive way and increase their self-confidence, thereby assisting them in becoming more productive, happy, and successful in their family, work, and social life (Gurok et al., 2019).

Plastic surgery can help many individuals gain self-confidence and self-respect, as well as contribute to developing positive interpersonal relationships (Asimakopoulou et al., 2020). Borujeni et al. have found that self-confidence increases after rhinoplasty surgery in individuals who have undergone the procedure (Borujeni et al., 2020). Hassanzadeh et al. also determined that those who underwent rhinoplasty surgery had a higher level of self-confidence and happiness compared to those who did not have surgery (Hassanzadeh et al., 2018). Individuals with aesthetic issues related to their nose may suffer from a feeling of unattractiveness and experience difficulties in communicating with others (Ozturk, 2021). In a study conducted with those who had mammoplasty surgery, it was found that the self-confidence of individuals increased after the surgery (Koraş Sözen & Karabulut, 2023). It has been stated that self-esteem and self-confidence are directly related to attractiveness, and that more attractive individuals have higher self-esteem and self-confidence (Stundzaite-Barsauskiene et al., 2019). Many people attempt to alter their physical appearance in order to feel better. The short-term outcomes of plastic surgery can provide satisfaction and enhance one's well-being, but whether it leads to an increase in self-esteem in the long run remains uncertain (Hashemi et al., 2020). It should be taken into account that each patient applying for aesthetic surgery has different goals, purposes, reasons for applying to plastic surgery, and expectations from plastic surgery. Choosing the appropriate patient for the operation may be more important than the surgical process. The psychosocial evaluation of patients before the operation is important in order to prevent and reduce psychosocial problems (Karakartal, 2022). The outcomes of rhinoplasty can worsen the current condition of individuals with psychiatric problems such as depression, body dysmorphic disorder, psychosis, or severe personality disorders (Ozturk, 2021).

Self-esteem plays a significant role in various aspects of our lives, such as social adjustment. Numerous research papers have shown the crucial impact of self-esteem on our ability to function socially. The relationship between self-esteem and positive personal adjustment is believed to be mutually influential, as supported by multiple studies that highlight their interconnectedness (Kazeminia et al., 2023). Individuals with low self-esteem may prefer plastic surgery to rectify their perceived flaws (Heidarzadeh et al., 2019). Self-confidence has been found to be strongly associated with satisfaction with one's physical appearance, and it has been suggested that individuals who undergo cosmetic surgery not only improve their body image but also experience an enhancement in their self-confidence (Soroush et al., 2020). Although there are studies in the literature aimed at determining the self-confidence and self-esteem levels of individuals who have undergone plastic surgery, no study has been found that addresses their levels of social support simultaneously. Therefore, the objective of this research is to determine the levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and social support in individuals who have undergone plastic, reconstructive, and aesthetic surgery.

Methods

Type of Research

This study is a descriptive and cross-sectional research.

The Location and Time of the Study

This study was conducted at the Plastic, Reconstructive, and Aesthetic Surgery Clinic of a training and research hospital between February and May 2023.

The Population and Sample of the Study

The research participants comprised individuals who had undergone surgical procedures at a training and research hospital's clinic specializing in plastic, reconstructive, and aesthetic surgery. In determining the sample size for the study, the following sampling formula was used, which is applicable when the population is known. According to the data obtained from the hospital's information processing unit records, the total number of patients who sought treatment at the plastic, reconstructive, and aesthetic surgery clinic and underwent surgery during the one-year period from January 2022 to January 2023 was taken as 250.

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Because the number of elements in the universe is known

n = N x t2 x (pxq)

(N)+ t2 x (pxq)

N= Number of individuals in the universe (2536)

n= Number of individuals to be sampled (?)

p=Frequency (probability) of the event examined (0.5)

q= Frequency of occurrence of the event under investigation (1-p) (0.5)

t= The theoretical value in the t table at a certain degree of freedom and the determined error level is (1.96)

α 2= When the desired deviation according to the frequency of occurrence of the event (4% deviation as 0.04) was applied to the formula, the sampling was determined as 152 people. At the end of the study, the power was .95 when the p-v0alue, and sample size was 0.05, and 152.

Individuals over the age of 18, who had plastic, reconstructive and reconstructive plastic surgery, who had no neurological or cognitive problems, who gave consent to participate in the study, and who spoke Turkish were included in the study. Participants were asked to read and approve the informed consent form.

Data Collection Tools

The data were collected using a Personal Data Form, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Coppersmith Self-Confidence Scale, and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS).

Personal Data Form

The form prepared by the researcher, based on the literature, consists of a total of 16 questions.

The Self Esteem Rating Scale-Short Form

It was developed by Morris Rosenberg in 1963 to measure self-esteem and consists of a total of 10 items. As the total score increases, self-esteem also increases. The reliability and validity studies of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale in Turkey were conducted by Çuhadaroğlu (1985) in a high school sample group of 205 people (Tukuş, 2010). The 10-item scale with five positive and five negative statements is a 4-point scale. Since self-esteem is accepted as a one-way concept, the total score was used. Items 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 were calculated by reversing (Tukuş, 2010).

Self-Confidence Scale

The self-confidence scale was developed by Akın (2007). The items of the self-confidence scale were determined as a five-point Likert scale, and validity and reliability analyses were conducted on these items. The total number of items in the Self-Confidence Scale is 33. The application time of the scale is approximately 7-10 minutes (Akın, 2007). The scale consists of two sub-dimensions, which are defined as internal self-confidence and external self-confidence. Inner self-confidence sub-dimension consists of 17 items. This sub-dimension is related to the self-confidence of the individual and includes features such as self-love, self-knowledge, knowing the strengths and needs of empowerment, setting clear goals, and positive thinking. The external self-confidence sub-dimension consists of a total of 16 items. This sub-dimension is related to self-confidence towards the external environment and social life and includes features such as easy communication, healthy self-expression, controlling emotions, taking risks and so on. In the adaptation study of the scale, the internal consistency coefficients were calculated as 0.83, the internal self-confidence subscales were 0.83, and the external self-confidence subscales were 0.85, respectively (Akın, 2007).

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

MSPSS was developed by Zimet et al. in 1988. Eker and Arkar conducted its validity and reliability studies in our country in 1995. Eker and Arkar determined the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale to be between 0.77 and 0.92. In a subsequent study by Eker et al. in 2001, which involved a revised version of the MSPSS, the factor structure, validity, and reliability of the scale were examined. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be between 0.80 and 0.95 (Eker et al., 2001). MSPSS is a 7-point Likert-type scale. It is a scale consisting of four items each, containing three sub-dimensions related to the source of support, consisting of a total of 12 items, (family 3, 4, 8, 11; friend 6, 7, 9, 12; significant others 1, 2, 5, 10) with a seven-point Likert type evaluation feature. Scoring of the scale is based on the sum of the scores of each subgroup. A high score is an indication of high social support.

Data Collection Process

The research data were collected from the patients in the ward where the study was conducted. After obtaining the consent of the patients, the questions were given to them. Answering the questions took approximately 5-10 minutes.

Data Analysis

The research data were analyzed by the licensed SPSS 23 program. Descriptive characteristics of the participants were evaluated using numbers, percentage distributions, mean, and standard deviation. To examine the relationships between

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descriptive features and scale scores in normally distributed data, "One-Sample t-test" and "One-Way ANOVA" were employed. Pearson correlation analysis was used. Statistical significance was evaluated at a p-value of <0.05.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the Helsinki Declaration. Institutional permission for the study was obtained from the Education, Research, and Application Hospital administration, and ethical approval was obtained from the Scientific Studies Ethics Committee of Kocaeli University Faculty of Medicine (Decision date: 23.02.2023 and number: 2023-17). In addition, the principle of voluntarism was adopted in the study, and written consent was obtained from the participants included.

Results

Findings on Participants' Demographic Characteristics

78.9% of the participants (120 people) were female, and 56.6% were unmarried. Eighty-one (53.3%) of them do not have children. 39% of the participants are university graduates, 61.8% are employed, and 50.7% state that their income is equal to their expenses. Rhinoplasty ranks first among the types of aesthetic surgeries with a rate of 44.7%. 84.2% of the participants who had the operation expressed satisfaction with their appearance (Table 1).

Participant Scale Score Averages

The mean score of the participants' Coppersmith Self-confidence scale was 132.13±18.89 (high level); the mean score of the Rosenberg self-esteem scale was 32.86±4.52 (high level). The mean total score of the MSPSS was 71.09±14.38; among the sub-dimensions of the scale, family support was determined as 24.52±7.67, friend support as 23.26±5.16, and private support as 23.30±6.95 (Table 2).

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants

Socio-demographic characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Female	120	78.9
Male	32	21.1
Marital status		
Married	66	43.4
Single	86	56.6
Education level		
Elementary school or below	34	22.4
High school graduate	37	24.3
Bachelor's degree and above	60	39.5
Master's and doctoral degree	21	13.8
Income status		
Income less than expenses	45	29.6
Income equal to expenses	77	50.7
Income greater than expenses	30	19.7
Gender		
Female	120	78.9
Male	32	21.1
Socio-demographic characteristics	**n**	**%**
Marital status		
Married	66	43.4
Single	86	56.6
Education level		
Elementary school or below	34	22.4
High school graduate	37	24.3
Bachelor's degree and above	60	39.5
Master's and doctoral degree	21	13.8
Income status		
Income less than expenses	45	29.6
Income equal to expenses	77	50.7
Income greater than expenses	30	19.7
Employment status		
Employed	94	61.8
Unemployed	58	38.2
Satisfaction with appearance		
Satisfied	128	84.2
Not satisfied	24	15.8
Operation type		
Eyelid surgery	27	17.8
Rinoplasty	68	44.7
Breast aesthetics	14	9.2
Tummy tuck	10	6.6
Mass excision	13	8.6
Others	20	13.1

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Table 2. Mean scores of participants on The Self Esteem Rating Scale, Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale, and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (n=149)

Scales	Mean ± SD	Min–Max
The Self Esteem Scale	132.13±18.89	46-160
Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale	32.86±4.52	21-40
Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support	71.0±14.38	20-143
Family support	24.52±7.67	10-98
Friend support	23.26±5.16	5-28
Significant others support	23.30±6.95	4-70

SD= Standard Deviation; Min=Minimum; Max=Maximum

Average scores of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem and Coppersmith Self-Confidence scales according to the participants' socio-demographic characteristics

There was no statistically significant difference in the scores obtained from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem and Coppersmith Self-Confidence scales among the participants in terms of gender, marital status, education, income, and employment status. However, the average self-confidence scores of those who were satisfied with their appearance after the surgery were significantly higher compared to those who were not satisfied with their appearance (Table 3). The average Rosenberg Self-Esteem scores of those who were satisfied with their appearance after the surgery were significantly higher compared to those who were not satisfied with their appearance (Table 3).

Table 3. Comparison of Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale and The Self Esteem Rating Scale Scores According to Participants' Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale			The Self Esteem Rating Scale		
	Mean ± SD	t / F	p	Mean± SD	t / F	p
Gender						
Female	32.75±4.46	-0.623	0.534	132.14±18.14	0.004	0.996
Male	33.31±4.80			132.12±21.82		
Marital status						
Married	32.51±4.12	-0.842	0.401	132.98±17.4	0.483	0.630
Single	33.13±4.81			131.48±19.88		
Education level						
Elementary school or below	32.32±3.92			133.2±18.97		
High school graduate	32.72±4.40	0.361	0.781	132.81±22.27	0.922	0.432
Bachelor's degree	33.01±4.69			129.40±17.54		
Master's and doctoral degree	33.57±5.30			136.90±15.84		
Income status						
Income less than expenses	31.93±4.10			132.13±16.24		
Income equal to expenses	33.29±4.41	1.379	0.255	131.00±18.67	0.497	0.610
Income greater than expenses	33.16±5.31			135.06±23.08		
Satisfaction with appearance						
Yes	33.42±4.14	3.617	**0.000**	134.03±18.95	2.935	**0.004**
No	29.91±5.36			122.00±15.28		

Correlations between Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale, The Self Esteem Rating Scale, and MSPSS

Table 4 shows the correlations between the scales. Accordingly, significant correlation was found between the Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale and The Coppersmith Self Esteem Rating Scale and MSPSS. It was determined that there was a significant and positive correlation between The Coppersmith Self Esteem Rating Scale and MSPSS.

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In other words, it was determined that as the perceived social support level increased, the scores of the individuals on the self-confidence scale increased (Table 4).

Table 4. The correlation between patients' Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale, The Self Esteem Rating Scale and The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

Variables		The Self Esteem Rating Scale	Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support
Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale	r	0.462	0.461
	p	**0.000***	**0.000***
Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support	r	0.323	1
	p	**0.000***	

Significant at the p<0.01 level.

Discussion

Uncovering the factors that influence self-esteem after plastic surgery can assist healthcare providers in comprehending individuals' motivations for seeking such procedures and in predicting potential outcomes for self-esteem (Almutlq et al., 2021). This study aimed to assess the levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and perceived social support among individuals who underwent cosmetic surgery.

In the study, the average Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory score was determined as 132.13±18.89 (high level) and the average Rosenberg self-esteem scale score was determined as 32.86±4.52 (high level). Among the factors that are effective for patients to undergo plastic surgery are to increase their body satisfaction and self-confidence (Al-Yahya et al., 2019). In a study conducted with individuals who underwent cosmetic surgery, it was determined that there was no change in the patients' self-esteem and 93.15% of them had high self-esteem (Del Aguila et al., 2019). In a study, it was found that the scores obtained from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale of patients who underwent aesthetic rhinoplasty increased significantly after surgery (Chowdhury et al., 2022). In a study conducted with people who had blepharoplasty surgery, 44 participants stated that the surgery had a positive effect on their personal well-being, 33 people were more satisfied with their appearance than before, 20 people felt more confident, and 25 people found themselves more attractive (Papadopulos et al., 2019). Kazeminia et al. determined in their systematic review study that self-confidence scores increased after cosmetic surgery (Kazeminia et al., 2023). Ullah et al. determined that self-confidence increased after rhinoplasty surgery in individuals who underwent the procedure (Ullah et al., 2022). In a study conducted with patients who underwent hair transplantation, it was determined that the level of self-confidence significantly increased after surgery in a significant manner (Liu et al., 2019). Changes in body image alone are not enough to change one's self-esteem. Therefore, it is recommended to evaluate the patient psychologically before the surgical operation (Mousavi et al., 2020). In parallel with previous studies, our study also found that individuals who underwent surgery had high levels of self-confidence. However, it would not be accurate to claim that surgery alone increases self-confidence. Therefore, it is not possible to guarantee that the self-confidence of everyone who undergoes surgery will increase.

In this study, the scores of the Rosenberg Self-Confidence Scale and The Coppersmith Self-Esteem Rating Scale did not vary according to sociodemographic characteristics (gender, marital status, income, etc.). However, individuals who were satisfied with their appearance showed an increase in self-confidence and self-esteem scores. Liu et al. found a significant increase in self-confidence and satisfaction with appearance in patients after hair transplantation (Liu et al., 2019). Female genital aesthetic procedures, particularly labiaplasty, have had a positive effect on women's self-esteem (Sharp et al., 2020). In this study, the external appearance may have made individuals feel good about themselves and had a positive effect on their self-confidence.

In this study, it was observed that the self-confidence scores of individuals who underwent plastic surgery increased as their perceived social support increased. However, Heidarzadeh and colleagues found in their study that plastic surgery was not associated with body image, self-esteem, and psychological problems (Heidarzadeh et al., 2019). In another study, it was observed that aesthetic treatment with injectable substances led to

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significant improvements in the patients' reported psychological and social functionality, as well as a reduction in distress related to appearance (McKeown, 2021). Social support may also have a positive effect on reducing post-operative anxiety in individuals. In a study conducted with people who had rhinoplasty surgery, it was stated that the operation is not only aimed at looking beautiful but also at achieving gains such as improving the quality of life, finding new friends or having better social interaction, increasing self-confidence in public spaces, achieving personal satisfaction and getting rid of obsessions (Najjarzadehghalati et al., 2022). Satisfaction with family and friends after rhinoplasty surgery is among the main reasons that lead people to this surgery (Radman & Pourhoseinali, 2022). Considering that body perception is related to how the individual perceives his or her own body, as well as being nourished by the attitudes and behaviors of the individuals around him, the importance of social support systems emerges once again (Can et al., 2022). It is thought that providing social support after surgery will positively affect the individual's body perception. Furthermore, in this study, a statistically significant positive relationship was found between self-confidence and self-esteem. This indicates that self-esteem and self-confidence positively influence each other.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, it was found that individuals who underwent plastic surgery had a high level of self-confidence and a moderate level of self-esteem. Furthermore, a statistically significantly higher level of self-confidence was observed in individuals who were satisfied with their appearance. The findings indicated that there is a positive correlation between the perceived level of social support and the level of self-confidence. Future studies in this field could focus on raising individuals' awareness of social support resources to enhance their self-confidence and provide guidance on effectively utilizing existing social support networks. Additionally, it is important to assess the psychological condition of patients prior to surgery, evaluate the reasons for undergoing surgery, assess existing psychological issues, and determine the suitability for the procedure.

What did the study add to the literature?

- The study is a descriptive research that identifies the levels of self-confidence, self-esteem, and perceived social support among individuals after surgery.
- The study serves as an important data source that can contribute to the literature.

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