

# Social Media, Cosmetic Surgery Tendencies, and Body Image: A Narrative Review

**Iman Taheri**

MS student in Nursing, Nursing & Midwifery Faculty,  
Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran

**Mohadese Ramezani**

MS student in Nursing, Nursing & Midwifery Faculty,  
Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran

**Ehsan Jalal Abadi**

MS student in Nursing, Nursing & Midwifery Faculty,  
Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran

**Nafiseh Torabbeigi**

Bachelor of Science in Nursing,  
22 Bahman research and treatment training center, Neishabur

## Introduction

The pervasive influence of social media on individual perceptions and behaviors, particularly concerning cosmetic surgery, has garnered significant attention. This narrative review aims to explore the impact of social media on body image and the inclination towards cosmetic surgery across different cultural contexts. While many studies have focused on women, this review incorporates findings related to both young and middle-aged men and women to provide a broader understanding of these dynamics.

## Method

To compile this narrative review, various databases were searched, including PubMed, APA PsycInfo, Web of Science, as well as Iranian databases such as SID (Scientific Information Database) and IranMedex. A total of 76 articles related to the topic were initially identified. In the subsequent stage, the abstracts of these articles were reviewed, resulting in the exclusion of 36 articles deemed irrelevant to the core focus of the study. Ultimately, 11 articles that exhibited the highest relevance to the subject were selected for in-depth analysis and inclusion in this review.

## Results

This review synthesizes findings from both international and domestic studies. Internationally, studies such as those by Kenbay and Manigua (2024) and Walker et al. (2021) highlight the correlation between social media use and positive attitudes towards cosmetic surgery. Domestically, research like that of Talebi Delir (2023) and Khan-Zadeh and Aghamohammadi (2023) examines psychological and social factors influencing cosmetic surgery preferences in Iran. The review considers diverse methodologies, including cross-sectional surveys, meta-analyses, and structural equation modeling, to integrate a comprehensive perspective on the topic.

International studies indicate a significant relationship between social media usage and increased interest in cosmetic surgery, primarily driven by body dissatisfaction and exposure to beauty-enhancing imagery. For example, Kenbay and Manigua (2024) identified a lack of significant mediating effect of self-compassion in the relationship between social media use and cosmetic surgery attitudes. In contrast, domestic studies emphasize the role of cultural and psychological factors, such as body dysmorphic disorder and self-esteem issues, as identified by Talebi Delir (2023). These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of media influence on body image and cosmetic surgery desires.

## Conclusion

The review underscores the complex interplay between social media use, body image, and cosmetic surgery inclination. Despite cultural differences, there is a consistent pattern showing that social media can exacerbate body dissatisfaction, leading to a greater desire for cosmetic surgery. This highlights the need for targeted interventions addressing media literacy and psychological support, especially in diverse cultural settings.

## Keywords

Social media, Body image, Cosmetic surgery