

Beauty, Identity, and the Psychology of Perfection in the Age of Digital Influence

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Abstract

Social media, influencers, and commercial marketing have transformed beauty into a relentless pursuit of perfection, increasing pressure on women and, increasingly, men to undergo cosmetic procedures. This paper examines the rapidly changing landscape of beauty standards and cosmetic enhancement in modern society and explores how these influences shape self-image, redefine identity, and impact mental well-being, while encouraging repeated aesthetic enhancement. It also considers the role of appearance-related psychological conditions, including Body Dysmorphic Disorder, in motivating cosmetic intervention for some individuals. The paper advocates for ethical, patient-centred practice that incorporates psychological awareness, informed consent, and realistic expectations, prioritising mental well-being, authenticity, and patient safety over commercial interests and unrealistic beauty ideals.

Keywords: cosmetic procedures, body dysmorphia, influencers, and social media