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Psychological characteristics of women dissatisfied with their own appearance

Abstract. *The article presents the results of a pilot study of the comparative analysis of women's personal characteristics in relation to their appearance and what parts of the body they are less satisfied with. The article reveals the concept of body image. The article reflects the connections between self-esteem of body parts, General self-esteem, self-esteem, and objective assessments of appearance. Dissatisfaction with appearance can be measured using both explicit and implicit measures. It is an indisputable fact that a person's appearance is constantly at the center of attention. There is a lot of evidence about how people strive to improve their appearance. Women's self-esteem is determined by how well or poorly they evaluate their body parts and appearance, and how satisfied they are with relationships with other people. Accordingly, dissatisfaction affects all areas of life and relationships with people.*

Keywords: *dissatisfaction, appearance, self-attitude, self-esteem, autosympathy, self-interest, expected attitude from others.*

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Introduction

The second circumstance relates to people's anxiety about their appearance, as a substitute for this anxiety, the formation of psychological problems, conflicts, and dissonance at the level of experiencing relationships, including relationships to themselves, situations related to success, individual demand, and their uniqueness. The characteristic «core» of this context is a deep experience of a layer of standard fears, such as fear of age, fear of physiological changes, fear of rejection, fear of judgment, and so on.

One of the main relations of the psychological and social existence of a person is his attitude to himself, to his own personality. His ideas about himself and how he should be somehow correlated with his behavior. The nature of the

regulatory influence of self-attitude is determined by the breadth and depth of its involvement in the process of intrapersonal determination. The attitude of people to themselves influences the manifestation of social activity determines its adequacy and differentiation. It is worth noting that the attitude to yourself changes with age and external circumstances. It acts as a motive for self-regulation of behavior and is updated at all stages of the implementation of a behavioral act, starting with its motivating components and ending with its own assessment of the achieved effect of behavior [2, p.1-44], participates in the mechanisms of behavior regulation from the level of a specific situation of activity to the level of long-term implementation of ideological ideas.

In Russian psychology, the number of studies that examine satisfaction, concern about appearance, and their ideas about attractive or

beautiful appearance has increased. As a rule, the emphasis is on studying the attitude to their appearance, the idea of women about it. In particular, V. A. Labunskaya (2009) defines appearance as a set of dynamic, stable, and medium-stable parameters of self-expression that are organized into temporal structures and rearranged in the course of development of psychophysiological, socio-psychological, and psychological components of the personality structure that is included in a certain social and cultural context. At the same time, stable parameters are understood as individual constitutional characteristics of a person; medium-stable ones are cosmetics, hairstyle, clothing, jewelry, i.e. appearance design; and by dynamic, we mean nonverbal expressive behavior. This gender orientation of research reflects General trends in the study of various phenomena related to appearance. S. Chaiken, G. Flett, P. Pliner [3, p.263-273] argue that gender differences affect concern about physical parameters of appearance, self-assessment of appearance at all stages of life.

Traditionally, the problem of studying the appearance associated with elements of self-concept, dynamics of the formation of self-image, as well as such personal settings as «self-esteem», «self-perception», «self-acceptance», «identity», «self» [4, p.151]. In General, self-relation has a macrostructure with four emotional components: self-esteem, self-interest, autosympathy and expected attitude from other people, and two subsystems, each of which is specifically related to the meaning of «I»: a system of self-esteem and a system of emotional-value relations. The self-assessment system performs the function of comparison with others («I in comparison with others»), and the emotional value system signals the subjective significance of these self-assessments («I-I»)[5, p.206-215].

Such macrostructure of the self-evaluation suggests that the four emotional components of self (self-esteem, automate, same interest the expected attitude from other people) are in a certain hierarchy, where one component is dominant and the other subordinate, and in its entirety, providing a generalized sense of «for» or

«against» himself. However, there is no empirical data in the scientific literature that would indicate how a person who has a certain hierarchy of emotional components of the macrostructure of self-relationship is characterized. This determines the scientific novelty of our research.

The aim of the study was to identify and describe the personal characteristics of women of different ages who are dissatisfied with their own appearance, to present a system of psychological work in the framework of prevention.

The object of the study is women aged 16 to 50 years.

The subject of the study is the relationship of attitudes to their appearance, various components of self-attitude, and dissatisfaction with body parts in women of different ages

Research methods

The study involved 60 women aged 16 to 50 years, 35 of whom (58% of the total) attend fitness centers. Such a selection of subjects is because playing sports is a great potential for solving the problem of optimizing the self-attitude and self-esteem of the individual. In such places, you can often meet girls who know exactly what is not satisfying in their bodies and form their goals in accordance with it.

V. V. Stolin's self-attitude questionnaire was used to identify three levels of self-attitude that differ in the degree of generality: global self-attitude; self-attitude differentiated by self-respect, auto sympathy, self-interest, and expectations of self-attitude; the level of specific actions (readiness for them) in relation to the «I».

The difference between the content of the «I-image» (knowledge or self-image, including in the form of assessing the expression of certain traits) and self-attitude is taken as the initial one. In the course of life, a person learns about himself and accumulates knowledge about himself, this knowledge is a meaningful part of his ideas about himself. However, knowledge about himself, of course, is not indifferent to him: what is revealed in them turns out to be the object of his emotions, assessments, becomes the subject of his more or less stable self-attitude [6, p.284].

Table 1 – Main indicators for the method of self-attitude questionnaire By V.V. Stolin and S.R. Panteleev for the entire sample and its various groups.

	Global self-relation	Self-esteem	Self-esteem	Expected relationship from others	Self-interest
All	94,4%	83,7%	73,1%	68,7%	81,5%
16-30 years	95,4%	85,3%	78,3%	64,8%	85,1%
30-40 years	93,4%	82,1%	67,3%	66,2%	77,9%
40-50 years	93,5%	81,7	71,5%	71,2%	78,4%
Women attending the gym	95,2%	85,5%	74,6%	72,3%	84,3%

To measure the degree of satisfaction with individual body parts, a modified «self-satisfaction Scale» developed by O. A. Skugarevsky was used. In the original version, this scale consists of 21 body parts, each of which the Respondent is asked to rate on a six-point Likert scale (from 0 to 6) in accordance with the degree of satisfaction with it.

The method used to assess the component of dissatisfaction with the image of one's own body allows us to identify the degree of subjective satisfaction /dissatisfaction with individual parts of one's own body, including those that cause anxiety in people with eating disorders (for example, the stomach, thighs, buttocks).

Research result

The primary data obtained during the study were subjected to qualitative and statistical analysis.

We see that the average indicators for almost all components of self-attitude in all groups are pronounced and fall into the area of inflated self-attitude. Such high values are usually not interpreted, since they are considered to be obtained due to secondary factors, such as the social desirability factor. But it is possible that they are also a characteristic of the sample itself, which is made up of women who attend the gym and monitor their health, which may affect their positive attitude to themselves and their sense of self-esteem. In addition, there is evidence that women, especially during the

mid-life crisis, tend to rate themselves highly according to socially desirable criteria and show sympathy for themselves due to the use of Hyper-compensatory mechanisms of psychological protection, the resort to which is due to dissatisfaction with certain aspects of life [25], not considered in this study. According to the results, the indicators between the groups are small, but for all components of the relationship itself is higher for women who attend a gym, compared to other age groups identified. This group of women have a General positive sense of « for « themselves, are confident in their abilities and abilities, often see their advantages, but also notice their shortcomings, can achieve what they think is important, are adapted, and often satisfied with what they have. This shows that playing sports, attending group training is one of the first steps to eliminate dissatisfaction with your appearance.

Let's look at the results of the questionnaire of your body image, the scale of satisfaction with your own body. It was found that for women, the most important elements of their own body are, first, the face, hair, eyes, flat stomach, and body weight. Also, the legs and buttocks, the presence of Breasts, which corresponds to the standard of appearance promoted in society. The picture of satisfaction with the components of appearance differs from the indicators of significance, which confirms the disharmony between the image of the ideal physical self and the real One. Maximum satisfaction is noted in relation to the ears, jaw, followed by the hand and foot. And the

Table 2 – Main indicators of the «body satisfaction Scale» methodology

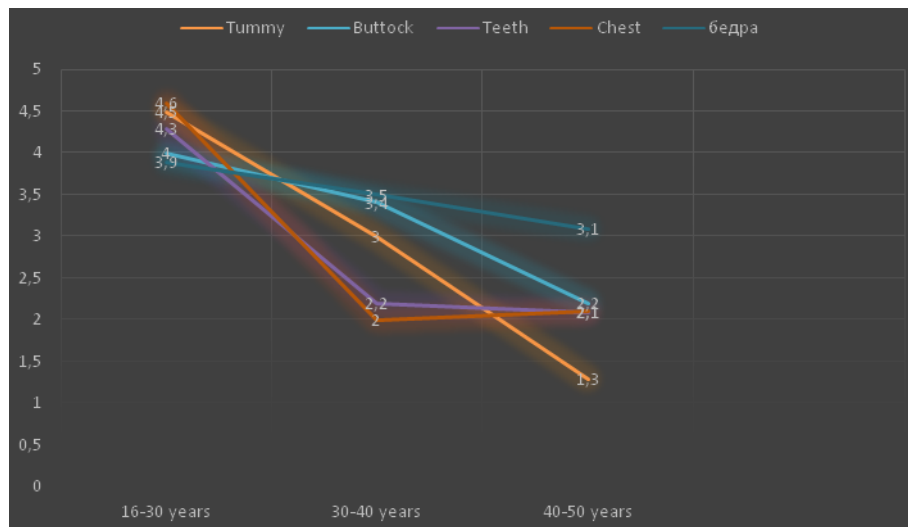
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Face	5,6%	0	13%	31,5%	27,8%	22,2%
Eyes	1,9%	9,4%	1,9%	22,6%	20,8%	43,4%
Nose	7,5%	9,4%	9,4%	20,8%	18,9%	34%
Ears	1,9%	11,3%	1,9%	9,4%	20,8%	54,7%
Teeth	13%	5,6%	16,7%	22,2%	14,8%	27,8%
Jaw	3,8%	3,8%	11,3%	13,2%	24,5%	43,4%
Neck	3,7%	7,4%	3,7%	18,5%	31,5%	35,2%
Thorax	1,9%	3,75	14,8%	11,1%	25,95	42,6%
Chest	3,7%	9,35	14,8%	18,5%	22,2%	31,5%
Backrest	3,7%	5,6%	7,4%	16,7%	24,1%	42,6%
Tummy	22,2%	7,4%	13%	27,8%	18,5%	11,1%
Hands (shoulder and forearm)	5,6%	5,6%	16,7%	14,8%	13%	44,4%
Paintbrush	1,9%	7,4%	1,9%	14,8%	20,4%	53,7%
Buttock	3,7%	7,4%	13%	25,9%	14,8%	35,2%
Pelvis	5,7%	1,9%	7,5%	26,4%	17%	41,5%
Hip	3,8%	5,7%	18,9%	15,1%	22,6%	34%
Knees	1,9%	7,7%	15,4%	13,5%	15,4%	46,2%
Leg (hip and Shin)	1,9%	13%	20,4%	16,7%	11,1%	37%
Foot	3,7%	11,1%	5,6%	7,4%	27,8%	44,4%
Skin	3,8%	5,7%	7,5%	26,4%	34%	22,6%
Hair	1,9%	7,4%	3,7%	29,6%	27,8%	29,6%
Height	3,7%	1,9%	9,3%	18,5%	14,8%	51,9%

lowest satisfaction was found in relation to the abdomen, buttocks, nose, teeth, chest, and thighs.

This diagram confirms the hypothesis of significant differences in the attitude of women of different ages to themselves and to their appearance. As women age, they become less accepting of themselves and their bodies and more dissatisfied with their appearance as a component of their body image, that is, they show concern about the impression their appearance makes on others. Since women's attitude to themselves is closely related to satisfaction with various bodily characteristics, which decreases significantly with age, it can be assumed that this is one of the possible reasons for the decrease in self-acceptance and low self-esteem demonstrated by the subjects. Women over 40 are less satisfied with their body and

their individual characteristics. Apparently, this is due to age-related physiological changes in women after 40 years, such as the appearance of gray hair and wrinkles, difficulty controlling fat deposits, primarily in the abdomen, deterioration of the skin and teeth, etc. In addition, it can be assumed that for women of this age category, the importance of the opinion of people around them increases, which together with visible signs of aging makes them feel less confident about their appearance in a social context.

According to the final data of the method's indicators, the first thing that draws attention to is that each component of the self-relationship is in one way or another related to satisfaction with all the bodily characteristics and appearance in General considered by us. At the same time, the connection with auto sympathy as an emotional

Diagram 1 – The average rating scale in relation to the least satisfied body parts for different ages

(Fig. 1)

component of self-attitude is much stronger than with self-esteem as an evaluative component. It can be assumed that for women, attitude to the body is primarily associated with the degree of self-acceptance, and only then with self-esteem, and, according to earlier studies, this relationship is two-way. For women who are concerned about their appearance and attach great importance to it, their degree of satisfaction with their body has a significant impact on their attitude to themselves, in particular, on self-esteem, which, within the framework of the concept we are considering, is directly related to self-esteem. Those women who believe that their attitude to themselves is determined primarily by self-esteem, attach less importance to their appearance and are more satisfied with how they look.

After analyzing the characteristics of the attitude to themselves and their appearance of women aged 16 to 50 years, we came to the following conclusions.

The sample we study is distinguished by a high level of global self-attitude and its various components (self-esteem, auto sympathy, self-interest, expected attitude from others). The results obtained may be a consequence of, first, physical activity and sports activities of respondents (management and teaching activities), second, a consequence of the high significance of the «social desirability» factor,

and third, a consequence of the sensitivity of the research topic (attitude to oneself and one's appearance), which can provoke defensive reactions (for example, hyper compensation) and unwillingness to give reliable answers.

The degree of dissatisfaction with appearance as a component of body image ranges from an adequate attitude to appearance to moderate dissatisfaction, and 87% of women surveyed are more or less dissatisfied with how they look. This confirms the current trend of increasing the percentage of women dissatisfied with their appearance, which is quite understandable by the intensive development of the beauty industry, postulated by the idea of the superiority of beautiful people over ugly and imposed on her templates.

The level of women's satisfaction with their bodies and their individual characteristics is average. Most of all, women, according to their own feelings, are satisfied with such bodily characteristics as the head (ears, jaw), hand and foot, least of all – the buttocks, nose, teeth, chest, and thighs. The most problematic bodily characteristic is the stomach. Women are least satisfied with the most significant physical characteristic for them – the skin condition. This may be one of the reasons for their dissatisfaction with their physical appearance. Apparently, women tend to assign high importance to those

parts of the body that they are most concerned about. With age, the quality of the skin affects certain parts of the body like the chest and buttocks. Also, changes in the female hormonal background during puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause lead to increased sensitivity of the gums to plaque accumulation.

The features of women's self-attitude depend on their age, which confirms the hypothesis Of V. V. Stolin and S. R. Pantileev about the expression of the meaning of «I» through self-attitude for the subject, which is determined by his life realities. With age, the attitude of women to their physical appearance changes for the worse.

The analysis made it possible to consider the construct «attitude to one's appearance» as one of the components of one's own body image. Based on this conclusion, we have come to understand that the attitude to one's appearance is an evaluative component of the body image, which is expressed in satisfaction with the physical appearance and its individual characteristics, the significance of individual body characteristics and appearance in General, as well as in beliefs and actions about one's appearance that are formed in the process of evaluating oneself. Thus, the evaluative component of the body image reflects the individual's attitude to their own appearance.

Analysis of the literature on the problem of self-evaluation allowed us to conclude that this phenomenon is most fully and consistently disclosed in the concept of V. V. Stolin and S. R. Panteleev, according to which, with respect to itself, considered as a multidimensional construct, is the representation in consciousness of a personal sense of «I» for the subject, expressed in stable emotions and feelings, emerging in the

process of mapping qualities of the subject from the sense-motives, determined him the realities of life.

Thus, the results obtained in our study indicate the high importance of appearance in a woman's life and the pronounced mutual influence of attitudes to appearance and self-attitude. This suggests that in the framework of psychological assistance to women with a problematic attitude to themselves and their appearance, one of the possible ways to work on themselves is to create a positive body image. On the one hand, this can be done by direct influence on the body, for example, in the framework of body-oriented therapy. On the other hand, as a target of influence, you can choose the most significant component of self-attitude, which is most strongly associated with the attitude to appearance. The analysis carried out in the framework of our research allows us to determine the main targets of influence when working with different age groups of women, in order to further use them in training, consulting, and correctional work. However, we believe that the most effective way to influence women with a problematic attitude to their appearance is to reduce the importance of appearance and increase the value of other personal characteristics. In our opinion, this work should be carried out not only within the framework of individual counseling and psych correction, but also at the level of educational institutions, social institutions, and first of all, in the family. This would allow girls to be raised in such a way that they grow up to be women who are less dependent on their appearance and are able to appreciate both in themselves and in other people values that deserve more respect.

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Психологические особенности женщин, недовольных собственной внешностью

Аннотация. В статье представлены результаты пилотажного исследования сравнительного анализа личностных особенностей женщин по отношению к своей внешности и того, какими частями тела они менее удовлетворены. Раскрывается понятие телесного образа, отражаются связи самооценки частей тела с общей самооценкой, самоуважением и объективными оценками внешности. Неудовлетворенность внешностью может быть измерена с помощью как явных, так и неявных мер. Неоспоримым фактом является то, что внешность человека постоянно находится в центре внимания. Существует множество доказательств того, что люди стремятся улучшить свою внешность. Самооценка женщин определяется тем, насколько хорошо или плохо они оценивают свои части тела и внешний вид, и насколько они удовлетворены отношениями с другими людьми. Соответственно, неудовлетворенность сказывается на всех областях жизни и на отношениях с людьми.

Ключевые слова: неудовлетворенность, внешность, самоотношение, самоуважение, аутосимпатия, самоинтерес, ожидаемое отношение от других.

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Өз келбетіне наразы әйелдердің психологиялық ерекшеліктері

Аңдатпа. Мақалада әйелдердің сыртқы келбетіне қатысты жеке ерекшеліктерін салыстырмалы талдаудың пилотаж зерттеулерінің нәтижелері және дененің қандай бөліктері аз қанағаттандырылатыны көрсетіледі. Дене бейнесі ұғымы, дене мүшелерінің өзін-өзі бағалауы мен жалпы өзін-өзі бағалау және сыртқы келбетті объективті бағалау арасындағы байланыс көрінеді. Сыртқы келбетке қанағаттанбауды анық және жасырын шаралар арқылы өлшеуге болады. Адамның сыртқы келбеті үнемі назарда болатыны даусыз. Адамдардың сыртқы келбетін жақсартуға ұмтылатыны туралы көптеген дәлелдер бар. Әйелдердің өзін-өзі бағалауы олардың дене мүшелері мен сыртқы келбетін қаншалықты жақсы немесе нашар бағалайтынын және басқа адамдармен қарым-қатынасқа қаншалықты қанағаттанатынын анықтайды. Тиісінше, қанағаттанбау өмірдің барлық салаларына және адамдармен қарым-қатынасқа әсер етеді.

Түйін сөздер: қанағаттанбау, сыртқы келбет, өзін-өзі бағалау, аутосимпатия, өзін-өзі қызықтыру, басқалардан күтілетін көзқарас.

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