

Research Paper

Investigating the Causes of Body Dysmorphic Disorder in Women: Content Analysis



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ABSTRACT

Background and Aim There is almost no accurate information about the causes of body dysmorphic disorder. Many patients with body dysmorphic disorder who apply for plastic surgery show a negative response to these treatments and sometimes the symptoms get worse. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the causes of body dysmorphic disorder in women.

Methods & Materials The present research was a qualitative study with a content analysis type. Variables and categories were obtained by interviewing 15 experts and eight people with body dysmorphic disorder and reviewing 71 articles. Also, to diagnose body dysmorphic disorder, Yale Brown's Practical Obsession Questionnaire was used in addition to the interviews. The sampling method in this research was purposive sampling. Data analysis was done in three stages: open, central, and selective coding. The validity of the components was checked by calculating the content analysis index.

Ethical Considerations In the research, before the interview, written consent was received regarding the specificity and confidentiality of the research (Code: IR.UM.REC.1401.105).

Results The influential factors in body dysmorphic disorder were: a. Cultural and social factors b. Psychological factors, and c. Biological factors.

Conclusion According to the obtained results, several factors play a role in the occurrence of body dysmorphic disorder, and their identification in different environments, cultures, and societies provides the possibility of developing preventive measures, and designing and developing a suitable treatment model. However, to increase the external validity of the research, it is suggested to conduct similar research in other societies.

Keywords:

body dysmorphic disorder, content analysis, BDD

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Body dysmorphic disorder is defined as a mental preoccupation with one or more defects in physical appearance that are not very noticeable or are minor. Also, this disorder is characterized by repetitive behaviors or mental activities in response to anxiety. It can also be said that insight is low and at least one-third of people generally have delusional beliefs [5]. The prevalence of body dysmorphic disorder in Iran is reported to be 7.1% [21]. Although body dysmorphic disorder is relatively common, it has been very little researched [22]. Therefore, due to the lack of research conducted in the field of the causes of body dysmorphic disorder [11], the high prevalence rate of this disorder in the society and the increase in applicants for plastic surgeries and the lack of response from these treatments [3], and the noticeable lack of studies conducted in the field of the causes of body deformity disorder, the present study investigated the causes of body dysmorphic disorder in women.

Materials and Methods

The present research was a qualitative study with content analysis type, which was carried out in order to investigate the factors affecting body dysmorphic disorder in women. The sources and content of the research texts were analyzed through the review of articles and interviews with people with body dysmorphic disorder and experts. In this research, English and Persian articles related to the topic and indexed from 2016 to 2021, were checked and the sampling continued until theoretical saturation was reached. Searching in these databases was done using the keywords of body dysmorphic disorder, body dysmorphic disorder, and BDD. The process of choosing keywords was based on the review of several articles and the consensus of the research team. Semi-structured interviews were also used to collect data. The work process was such that after studying and reviewing the final interview questions, the interview process started and interviews were conducted with beauticians (four people), psychiatrists (five people), psychologists (six people), and women with body dysmorphic disorder (eight people) were analyzed for content. Sources and finalized texts were coded and analyzed according to conventional content analysis. In this method, the content validity index (CVI) was used to evaluate the content validity from the experts' point of view to quantify the agreement of the panel members.

Results

After searching the texts and conducting interviews, finally, 71 articles and 23 semi-structured interviews were used for content analysis in this research. According to this process, finally, 207 open codes were extracted and then these codes were placed in 59 sub-classes and then in nine main classes. Finally, from these classes, three main factors were identified as the final factors of body dysmorphic disorder in women. The results of the last stage of the coding process are shown in Table 2. In this step, which shows the final abstract of the coding of this content analysis, three main factors were extracted from the combination of nine classes to achieve the factors affecting body dysmorphic disorder in women. After going through the validation process during the coding process and using the opinions of the expert panel at the end of the coding, finally, three effective factors were extracted which are 1- cultural and social factors, 2- psychological factors, and 3- biological factors. These three components each consisted of three components. It was not possible to reduce the components and combine them according to the experts of the Delphi expert panel. The results of the agreement between the panel members and the content validity of the extracted components showed that the values of the CVI index for these nine classes were all equal to one. Only the values of the class of mental disorders and anatomical factors were equal to 0.9 and 0.5 respectively. Finally, all the classes had the minimum acceptable value of 0.79, and the only class that was anatomical factors that did not acquire the minimum value of CVI and was excluded from the study.

Discussion

The present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the factors affecting body dysmorphic disorder in women. The technique of qualitative content analysis was chosen to achieve this goal. The results of this study finally showed that the factors affecting body dysmorphic disorder can be divided into three main factors: 1. Biological approach 2. Cultural and social approach 3. Psychological approach [28]. From the point of view of social psychology, body dysmorphic disorder is created based on changes in society's values, observational learning, social networks, media advertisements, and emphasis on the "social body" instead of the "natural body". Also, many people with the dysmorphic disorder have experienced emotional abuse and sexual abuse in childhood. Injuries caused by driving accidents that lead to wounds or skin complications can affect people's appearance and ultimately lead to unnecessary attention to appearance. Early negative experiences (images of negative experiences, teasing, neglect, bul-

lying, etc.) may prepare a person for the negative effect they feel in later years when viewing their body parts. These experiences may form basic beliefs about the value of separation in people. Also, early experiences that lead to positive reinforcement and emphasis on appearance also play a role in the formation of this disorder [10, 16, 31-33]. Some people are genetically predisposed to suffering from mental disorders. The prevalence of body dysmorphic disorder is high in the first-degree relatives of OCD sufferers [1, 3, 31]. Based on the present findings, the effective factors in dysmorphic disorder in women can be divided into three main cultural and social, psychological and biological factors. On the one hand, some of these factors can be taken into consideration by cultural, social, and health planners at different levels of prevention, in order to take practical steps to prevent the emergence of this disorder using formal and systematic educational programs. On the other hand, these results can be used as a prelude to future research in the field of research on the design of a treatment package for the treatment of body dysmorphic disorder.

Ethical Considerations

Compliance with ethical guidelines

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (Code: IR.UM.REC.1401.105).

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Authors' contributions

Main designer of the project: Ali Azam Rajabian; Consultants in designing and modifying the study: Mohammad Javad Asghari Ebrahimabad, Seyed Kazem Rasool-Zadeh Tabatabaei, Hamidreza Aghamohammadian Sharbaf

Conflicts of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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