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The Relation Between Self-Perceived Dental Aesthetics and Self-Esteem

M. Simon¹, A. Grecu¹, B. Culic¹, A. Mesaros¹, M. Varvara¹, D. Moise¹, C. Gasparik¹, B. E. Varvara¹, C. M. Prodan¹, S. Nechita¹, L. Zaharia¹, A. A. Andreica¹, R. Balazsi², D. Ducea¹

¹Department of Dental Propaedeutics and Aesthetics, Iuliu Hatieganu University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj, Romania, ²Department of Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Objectives This study evaluated the relationship between self-perceived dental aesthetics, self-esteem, and dental habits in a dental student sample.

Methods A cross-sectional survey involving a sample comprising 172 1st and 2nd-year dental students from the programs taught in English and French languages within the Dental Medicine Faculty of Cluj-Napoca, Romania (mean age=20.43, 41.3% M, 58.7% F) has been conducted. The Psychosocial Impact of Dental Aesthetics Questionnaire (PIDAQ), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), together with dental habits assessment questions, in both English and French versions, were applied to the two samples, in pencil and paper self-completing format. Informed consent was obtained from each participant beforehand. Subscale and overall questionnaire scores were computed and used for statistical procedures (Pearson's correlations and t-test), investigating correlations between the self-perceived dental aesthetics and self-esteem and differences between the concepts concerning the study year and gender.

Results The overall mean PIDAQ score was 16.56 (n=172), while the overall mean RSES score was 32.71 (n=172). For both study lines, the Dental Self-Confidence PIDAQ subscale registered the highest score, indicating the highest perceived impact at this level. Statistically significant small correlations were identified between the RSES overall score and the Social Impact (r=-0.219, p=0.04), Psychological Impact (r=-0.175, p=0.22), Aesthetic Concern (r=-0.228, p=0.03) PIDAQ subscale scores, as well as the PIDAQ overall score (r=-0.208, p=0.06). The t-test revealed statistically significant differences for the Social Impact PIDAQ subscale scores $t(165.16)=-2.083$, p=0.39, in respect to the year of study; furthermore, statistically significant RSES overall score differences, regarding the variables gender $t(170)=1.998$, p=0.47 (M>F) and year of study $t(170)=-2.429$, p=0.16 (2nd>1st), were registered.

Conclusions The current study highlighted a statistically significant relation between students' self-perceived dental aesthetics and self-esteem and statistically significant differences between these concepts concerning gender and year of study.