

# Structural Relationship between Self-esteem, Appearance Management Behavior, Body Image, Interpersonal Relationship and Hope of Adults Workers

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## Abstract

This study was carried out to verify the correlation and the structural relationship between self-esteem, appearance management behavior, body image, interpersonal relationship and hope targeting 772 males and females residing in Gyeonggi province and Metropolitan areas in Korea. The data were analyzed using SPSS Win 21.0 program for frequency analysis, ANOVA and correlation analysis. The AMOS 21.0 program was used to validate the structural equation model. Both self-esteem and appearance management behavior were found to affect body image. Body image was found to have a significant influence on hopes and interpersonal relationship, and hope was found to affect interpersonal relationship.

**Keywords:** Adults, Appearance Management Behavior, Body Image, Hope, Interpersonal Relationship, Self-Esteem

## 1. Introduction

Currently, as the quality of life has improved due to a rapid economic growth and development of social culture, the Korean society has higher desire for beauty and its concept was diversified. Therefore, peoples' interest and efforts to improve appearance have peaked. Such phenomena have led to a social atmosphere called "lookism and appearance racism" which places emphasis on the body and appearance and may cause dissatisfaction depending on an individual's body. It also affects the overall lives including personal values and interactions with others<sup>1,2</sup>.

According to the study on the influence of appearance, weight and height on wages by Hamermesh and Biddle<sup>3</sup>, when assuming that human capital variables such as education, career and marital status are the same, men having the appearances of better than average gain 5% wage premium than men having average appearances, but it was shown that men having the appearance of below average had a wage loss of -9% compared to those with average appearances. For women, those with good appearances

had a wage premium of 4% and those with below average appearances had a wage loss of -5%. Although the wage gap for men was greater, when considering the wedding industry, the disadvantages of women who are less attractive will be greater because if a woman's appearance is considered unattractive, she is likely to have a higher probability of meeting a man with a low income. This emphasizes that for both sexes, those considered attractive will gain 5~10% appearance premium compared to those with less than average appearances, and it shows that good looks/appearances will act as driving forces for improving the productivity.

In addition, according to the 'The Regional Economist' magazine published by FRB (Federal Reserve Board), handsome people have about 5% average higher income than normal compared to ugly people with a loss of about 9%. In addition, based on the US Caucasian male, when the average height is one inch taller, the salary will increase by 1.8%, and for women having heavier weight than average received a maximum of 19% less wages. The phenomenon of having increased wages due to premium appearance is

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called 'beauty premium' while wage discrimination due to not so graceful appearance is called 'plainness penalty' and the phenomenon of receiving economic benefits by being tall is called 'height premium.'

Due to these social phenomena, an adult's appearance affects not only his/her personal life such as dating and marriage but also affects their interaction with the whole society including employment, promotion, business and marketing<sup>4</sup>. Based on the fixed idea that appearance is the standard for an individual's superiority and success, persons with outward beauty have high self-satisfaction, live active lives and exude confidence in social life but those without outward beauty are socially withdrawn, have no confidence in social life and receive unfair treatments from others<sup>5</sup>. This means that an adult's ability to maintain a young and attractive appearance is directly related to their ability and comes from beauty premium phenomenon of trying to receive favorable benefits in various aspects.

Meanwhile, appearance is an important factor for being assessed by the others and when the physical appearance is more positive, physical self-esteem and overall self-esteem is higher. Thus the relationship between physical appearance and self-esteem is high and is recognized by both men and women as being important<sup>6</sup>. Since appearance is the process of expressing oneself while performing their role through interaction with others, individuals are enhancing the satisfaction on their body through active skin care, cosmetic surgery and weight management in order to overcome the difference between the ideal physical appearance and their actual selves<sup>7</sup>. In other words, the appearance affects the psychological wellbeing of individuals so that those who have a beautiful appearance can be said to live a successful social life with confidence.

The humans of modern society are interpersonal relationship beings who must coexist through interaction<sup>8</sup>. Harmonious interpersonal relationships are formed and appearance is used not only as a social tool but also for expressing people's individuality, and appearance management behaviors are actively conducted with consciousness on the assessment of others. This means that appearance is an important factor that influences interpersonal perception, and when appearance looks beautiful, the halo-effect which perceives other characteristics to look good will act to influence the interpersonal relationships<sup>9-11</sup>. The physical appearance or the body image is not only meant to symbolize the innate outer appearance but it is the first clue others perceive visually, and as important influencing factors of interpersonal perception, they even infer the

nature of the ability of individuals. A positive change in appearance makes even the other characteristics to be perceived well by others and with higher stress reduction and self-satisfaction, it leads to the enhancement of happiness and increases the likelihood of satisfactory interpersonal relationships<sup>12,13,14</sup>.

Meanwhile, hope is an essential condition of human behavior that moves humans to achieve something and it is a positive expectation on the acquisition of goals with respect to the importance of goals, reaching the goals and cognitive behavior<sup>15</sup>. In addition, people with a high degree of hope maintain a positive mental state pursuing the desired ideal appearance<sup>16</sup> and is key especially in forming relationships with others<sup>17</sup>. Therefore, hope can realize the importance of achieving the ideal appearance of adults and acts as a key element in promoting interpersonal relationships by acting positively on behavior and appearance evaluation for improving their appearance. It is determined that an adult's body image, interpersonal relationships and hope are highly related.

So far, studies on body image related to appearance have mostly dealt with relationships between perceptual body image and self-esteem in terms of body satisfaction and body dissatisfaction. But the fact is that a study on the relationship with attitudinal body image in terms of feeling, evaluation and behavior on the appearance due to self-esteem and appearance management behavior is insufficient.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to provide a basic material for preparing against a happy senescence and adapting to rapid social changes by verifying the structural relationships between variables such as self-esteem, appearance management behavior, body image, interpersonal relationship and hope targeting adult males and females in the 30 to 50 age range, having the most vigorous productive capacity. In order to achieve this goal, the following two questions were selected for the study. First, are there any correlations between adult's self-esteem, appearance management behavior, body image, interpersonal relationship and hope? Second, what are the structural relationships between these variables?

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1 Research Model

Oh<sup>18</sup> reported that appearance management behavior and self-esteem interact with each other and according to

Chang<sup>4</sup>, appearance management is an important factor that affects the self-esteem and mental wellbeing. Chang<sup>19</sup> also suggested that appearance management behavior and body satisfaction affect interpersonal relationships. According to Yang<sup>20</sup>, the higher the physical attractiveness, the higher the self-esteem and Lim<sup>21</sup> suggested that appearance affects self-esteem and interpersonal relationships. Additionally Cash and Pruzinsky<sup>22</sup> suggested that appearance satisfaction and interpersonal relationships are correlated. Meanwhile, Snyder and others<sup>26</sup> have suggested that people with higher levels of hope pay more attention to forming relationships with others, enjoy interacting with others and invest more time in forming relationships with others. The proposed research model based on these previous studies is shown in Figure 1.

## 2.2 Subjects and Data Collection

This study targeted a total of 772 subjects consisting of 471 (61%) males and 301 (39%) females residing in the Seoul and Gyeonggi areas in the age range 30–50. 59.7% of the subjects were in their 40s, 33.3% were in their 50s and 7.0% were in their 30s. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the subjects were married and 56.6% were high school graduates while 33.7% were junior college/university graduates, 4.9% were graduate school graduates and others were 4.8%. 23.8% were Buddhists, 20.9% were Christians and 5.8% were Catholics. As far as occupation went, 33% were in production/technical, 26.7% were others, 13.6% were self-employed/business, 9.5% were professionals, 8.8% were office workers/ or in managerial positions and 8.4% were in sales/service jobs.

Data were collected through questionnaires. The survey was conducted by explaining the purpose of the study to the subjects and using the method of subjects directly writing the questionnaire. In order to identify

the clarity and reliability of questions for measuring each variable, a pilot survey was conducted targeting 30 males and females residing in Gyeonggi and metropolitan areas. After the pilot study, some portion of the questionnaire was modified. A total of 772 questionnaires consisting of 567 questionnaires returned from survey and 205 questionnaires received through e-mails and mails were used for final analysis. The data collection was conducted for two months from May 1st 2014 to June 30th 2014.

## 2.3 Survey Tools

### 2.3.1 Self-Esteem

The ‘Self-Esteem Scale: SES’ developed by Rosenberg<sup>23</sup> was used for this portion of the study. This scale has a total of 10 questions consisting of five positive items (including one’s value, character, self-confidence and self-respect), and five negative items (including a sense of defeat, worthlessness and self-contempt). The 5-point Likert scale of (1 = not at all, 5 = strongly agree) was used for rating the responses where a higher score meant a higher self-esteem. Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for self-esteem was “0.778”.

### 2.3.2 Appearance Management Behavior

For appearance management behavior, the scale developed by Lennon and Rudd<sup>24</sup> was modified to fit this study. It consists of 10 questions including 4 questions for body, appearance management, 3 questions for makeup and hair care management and 3 questions for cosmetic surgery and professional management. For measurement, the 5-point Likert scale of (1 = not at all, 5 = strongly agree) was used where the higher score meant higher appearance management behaviors. Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for appearance management behavior was “0.981”.

### 2.3.3 Body Image

For body image scale, the scale developed by Cash<sup>5</sup> was used. It consists of 15 sub-factors including 10 questions for appearance oriented type and 5 questions for appearance evaluation. For measurement, 5-point Likert scale of (1 = not at all, 5 = strongly agree) was used where the higher score meant a higher body image. Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for body image was “0.833”.

### 2.3.4 Interpersonal Relationship

The interpersonal relationship scale developed by Guernsey<sup>25</sup> was used. It consists of 25 questions including

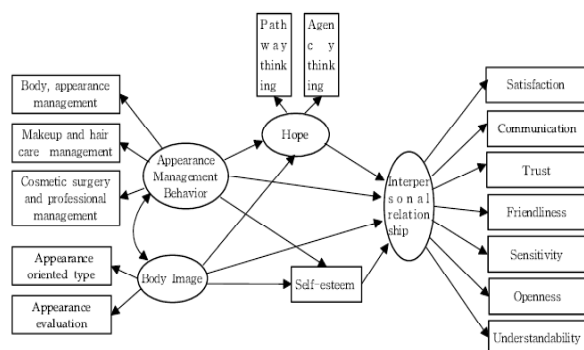


Figure 1. Research model.

4 questions for satisfaction, 4 questions for communication, 3 questions for trust, 3 questions for friendliness, 2 questions for sensitivity, 5 questions for openness and 4 questions for understandability. The 5-point Likert scale of (1 = not at all, 5 = strongly agree) was used for measurement where the higher score meant higher interpersonal relationships. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the interpersonal relationship was "0.938".

### 2.3.5 Hope

The 'Dispositional Hope Scale:DHS' developed by Snyder and others<sup>26</sup> was modified to fit this study. From a total of 12 questions, 4 fake questions were excluded and a total of 8 questions consisting of 4 agency thinking questions and 4 pathway thinking questions were used. For measurement, the 5-point Likert scale of (1 = not at all, 5 = strongly agree) was used where the higher score meant a higher level of hope. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for hope was "0.877".

## 2.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS Win 21.0 program for frequency analysis, ANOVA and correlation analysis. The AMOS 21.0 program was used to validate the structural equation model. Sobel's test<sup>27</sup> was used to verify the degree of significance of independent variables on indirect effects to dependent variables through mediating variables.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Correlation Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows the Pearson correlation results obtained from the data analyses which shows the correlation between variables. The ones that showed the highest correlation in the correlation between sub-regions were appearance evaluation and satisfaction  $r = 0.869$ , appearance oriented

**Table 1.** Correlation between variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	1														
2	.468**	1													
3	.481**	.193**	1												
4	.514**	.254**	.544**	1											
5	.429**	.300**	.512**	.569**	1										
6	.326**	.261**	.393**	.504**	.637**	1									
7	.397**	.267**	.480**	.591**	.660**	.869**	1								
8	.394**	.263**	.355**	.512**	.613**	.479**	.531**	1							
9	.455**	.281**	.492**	.581**	.752**	.676**	.689**	.561**	1						
10	.484**	.314**	.495**	.607**	.737**	.616**	.646**	.665**	.686**	1					
11	.500**	.507**	.220**	.392**	.354**	.351**	.382**	.331**	.412**	.396**	1				
12	.406**	.501**	.094**	.267**	.210**	.216**	.228**	.266**	.255**	.291**	.664**	1			
13	.309**	.452**	-.014	.184**	.170**	.138**	.139**	.216**	.176**	.220**	.511**	.681**	1		
14	.333**	.171**	.509**	.449**	.488**	.435**	.511**	.407**	.535**	.492**	.287**	.157**	.082*	1	
15	.404**	.195**	.535**	.500**	.504**	.437**	.484**	.396**	.525**	.502**	.329**	.209**	.111**	.719**	1
16	3.409	3.009	2.736	2.592	3.249	3.144	3.375	3.393	3.255	3.354	3.316	3.254	3.363	2.908	2.735
17	0.509	0.783	0.876	1.001	0.587	0.649	0.634	0.611	0.612	0.599	0.685	0.592	0.607	0.519	0.534
18	.496	-.006	.359	.344	.223	.069	-.194	.019	-.066	-.130	-.186	.131	-.055	-.251	-.125
19	.168	-.053	-.070	-.397	.205	.288	.803	.239	.432	.342	.234	.352	.232	.510	.223

1. Self-esteem, 2. Body appearance management, 3. Makeup and hair care management, 4. Cosmetic surgery and professional management, 5. Appearance oriented type, 6. Appearance evaluation, 7. Satisfaction, 8. Communication, 9. Trust, 10. Friendliness, 11. Sensitivity, 12. Openness, 13. Understandability, 14. Pathway thinking, 15. Agency thinking, 16. Mean, 17. SD, 18. Skewness, 19. Kurtosis

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

type and trust  $r = 0.752$  and appearance oriented type and friendliness  $r = 0.737$ . Meanwhile, the ones that showed the lowest correlation were understandability and pathway thinking  $r = 0.082$  and understandability and agency thinking  $r = 0.111$  where makeup/hair management and understandability did not show any correlation.

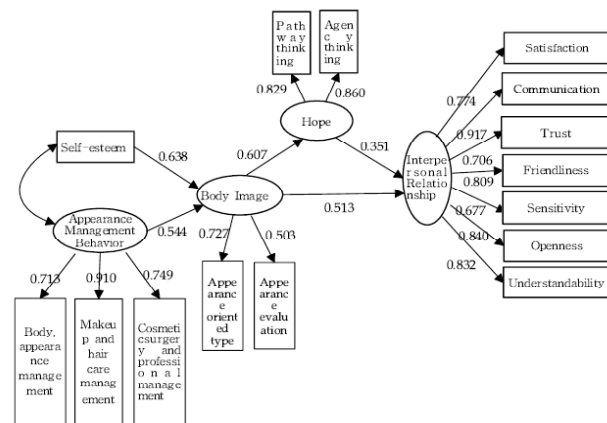
### 3.2 Validating Modification Model

After validating the research model, the goodness of fit index that evaluates the overall fitness of the model was  $X^2 = 922.675$  ( $df = 82$ ),  $TLI = 0.855$ ,  $CFL = 0.886$  and  $RMSEA = 0.115$ . Overall, it was determined that the level of goodness of fit was unsatisfactory thus some portions of the model were modified through MI modification indices. Among the error variance that exceed 10 for its modification values were modified by connecting to the covariance path between the error terms that can be explained theoretically<sup>28</sup>.

As a result of modifying the model, the goodness of fit index for  $X^2$  was 167.841 ( $df = 68$ ),  $TLI$  was “0.979”,  $CFL$  was “0.979” and  $RMSEA$  was “0.044” which compared to the previous research model, showed that modified model had much better improvements in all indices for  $TLI$ ,  $CFL$  and  $RMSEA$  as shown in Table 2. Therefore, this study has selected the modified model as the final research model. The modified study model and validation results on each path coefficients are presented in Figure 2 and Table 3. Validation results for each path are as follows. Self-esteem was shown to cause a significant influence on the body image ( $\beta = 0.638$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and the appearance management behavior also showed a significant influence on the body image ( $\beta = 0.544$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The body image was shown to exert a significant influence on hope ( $\beta = 0.607$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In addition, it showed a significant influence on interpersonal relationships ( $\beta = 0.513$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In other words, the higher the level of body image, the higher the level of hope and interpersonal relationship. Hope was shown to cause a significant influence on interpersonal relationships

**Table 2.** Verification of goodness of fit for the research model and modified model

	$\chi^2$	df	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Research model	922.675	82	0.855	0.886	0.115
Modified model	167.841	68	0.979	0.979	0.044



**Figure 2.** Modified model.

**Table 3.** Path of modified model

Path of the variable	B	$\beta$	S.E	t
Self-esteem → Body Image	0.410	0.638	0.066	6.232***
Appearance Management Behavior → Body Image	0.236	0.544	0.041	5.726***
Body Image → Hope	0.797	0.607	0.162	1.907***
Body Image → Interpersonal Relationship	0.764	0.513	0.140	5.469***
Hope → Interpersonal Relationship	0.398	0.351	0.053	7.539***

\*\*\* $p < .001$

( $\beta = 0.351$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In other words, the higher the level of hope, the higher the level of interpersonal relationship.

## 4. Discussion and Conclusion

Self-esteem was shown to exert a significant influence on body image, and appearance management behavior was also shown to cause a significant influence on body image. This means that the higher the level of self-esteem and appearance management behavior, the higher the level of body image. Such results are consistent with the results of Ford and Draker<sup>29</sup> who concluded that the higher the self-esteem of female college students, the higher the evaluation on their body. It is also consistent with the study results of Cash and others<sup>30</sup> who reported that physical attractiveness is perceived higher after makeup and with a higher likability of the body image, it brings a positive self-perception. In other words, if the self-esteem is high



and the appearance management behavior is more active, an overall positive body image results.

Secondly, the body image was shown to have a significant influence on hope and interpersonal relationship. Such results partially match the study results of Cash and Pruzinsky<sup>21</sup> that college students dissatisfied with their appearances are socially intimidated and cannot receive a good treatment from others in social life. In other words, it can be seen that a higher level of body image results in a higher level of hope and interpersonal relationships.

Third, it was shown that hope has a significant influence on interpersonal relationship. The higher the level of hope was, the higher the level of interpersonal relationship was. This result is consistent with the study results of Snyder and others<sup>17</sup> where the people with higher level of hope enjoy the interaction with others and invest a lot of time meeting various people so it can be seen that the person with a higher level of hope has a higher level of interpersonal relationship.

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