

THE MODERN MIRROR: THE AGE OF MANUFACTURED APPEARANCE

Ebtisam Elghblawi

Dermatologist

Correspondence:

Dr Ebtisam Elghblawi

Dermatologist

Email: ebtisamya@yahoo.com

Received: May 2026; Accepted: June 2026; Published: July 2026

Citation: Ebtisam Elghblawi. The Modern Mirror: The Age of Manufactured Appearance. Middle East Journal of Nursing 2026; 20(1): 54-61. DOI: 10.5742/MEJN2026.9378113

Abstract

This article explores the rapid evolution of beauty standards and cosmetic enhancement in contemporary society. Beauty has shifted from subtle self-expression to a highly visible social currency shaped by media, influencers, commercial interests, and digital culture. The discussion traces the expansion of aesthetic practices, including permanent make-up, eyelash and hair enhancements, nail modifications, body art, fillers, botulinum toxin, thread lifts, fat transfer, and other cosmetic procedures. While marketed as empowerment, self-improvement, and youth preservation, many interventions carry physical, psychological, and ethical concerns. The article also examines the influence of colourism, skin-lightening practices, pharmaceutical marketing, and the pursuit of idealised appearances that often reflect social conformity rather than individuality. Alongside these trends, a counter-movement promoting natural appearance has emerged. Ultimately, the paper questions how beauty ideals affect identity, self-worth, and mental well-being. It argues for ethical, patient-centred practice that prioritises safety, authenticity, and informed decision-making over relentless aesthetic modification and enhancement.

Keywords: cosmetic enhancement, body modification, mental well-being, safety, self-esteem, influencers, contemporary society