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The attractive lip: A photomorphometric analysis



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KEYWORDS

Photomorphometry;
Lip aesthetics;
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Summary *Background:* Throughout literature, there are different parameters defining the ideal shape of the lip and lower third of the face. This study was conducted to clarify what it is that makes lips attractive – and whether there are gender-related differences of an attractive lip and lower third of the face.

Patients and methods: Pictures of the lip and chin region of 176 patients were photographed in a standardised way and evaluated by 250 voluntary judges through an internet presentation by means of an analogue Likert scaling system.

Results: We found a significant higher ratio of upper vermillion height/mouth-nose distance in frontal-view images of attractive compared to unattractive female ($p < 0.001$) and male ($p < 0.05$) perioral regions. Furthermore, the ratio of upper vermillion height/chin-nose distance was significantly higher in attractive than in unattractive female ($p < 0.005$) and male ($p < 0.05$) lip and chin regions. The nasolabial angle was significantly sharper in attractive compared to unattractive female perioral regions ($p < 0.001$). Moreover, attractive female lip and chin regions showed a wider mentolabial angle compared to unattractive female lip and chin regions ($p < 0.05$). Comparing men and women, we found that attractive female perioral regions showed a higher ratio of lower vermillion height/chin-mouth distance ($p < 0.05$) and lower vermillion height/chin-nose distance than attractive male perioral regions ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: We were able to define certain parameters of the lip and lower third of the face that seem to add to the attractiveness of female and male individuals and prove that there are gender-related differences in form and shape of an attractive lower third of the face.

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Introduction

In 1984, Farkas et al. defined proportion standards by using classical anthropometric landmarks in the upper lip–lower lip–chin area of young adults,¹ however not referring to attractive new proportions in particular but rather to average proportion standards.

Recently, several studies have been conducted analysing ideal facial proportions^{2,3} and symmetry of the face.⁴ Besides, a broad range of studies have identified different attractive aspects of the eye^{5–7} and nose.^{8–10} Likewise, it has been suggested that a certain scheme of childlike characteristics combined with aspects of maturity and expression make a female face appear explicitly attractive.¹¹ However, little is known about 'ideal' features of the lower third of the face and especially the 'perfect'

shape of lips. Nevertheless, there are certain features which are generally considered attractive in both men and women, such as full lips, as Sforza et al.¹² showed in their study about facial morphometry of male and female adolescents.

The goal of our study was to emphasise what makes certain lips appealing and to analyse gender differences in certain proportions and angles of attractive and unattractive lips and perioral regions.

Patients and methods

The perioral region of 176 healthy Caucasians (18–30 years, 88 female, 88 male) was photographed in a standardised way (frontal and lateral view) and evaluated by 250 voluntary jurors through an Internet presentation by means

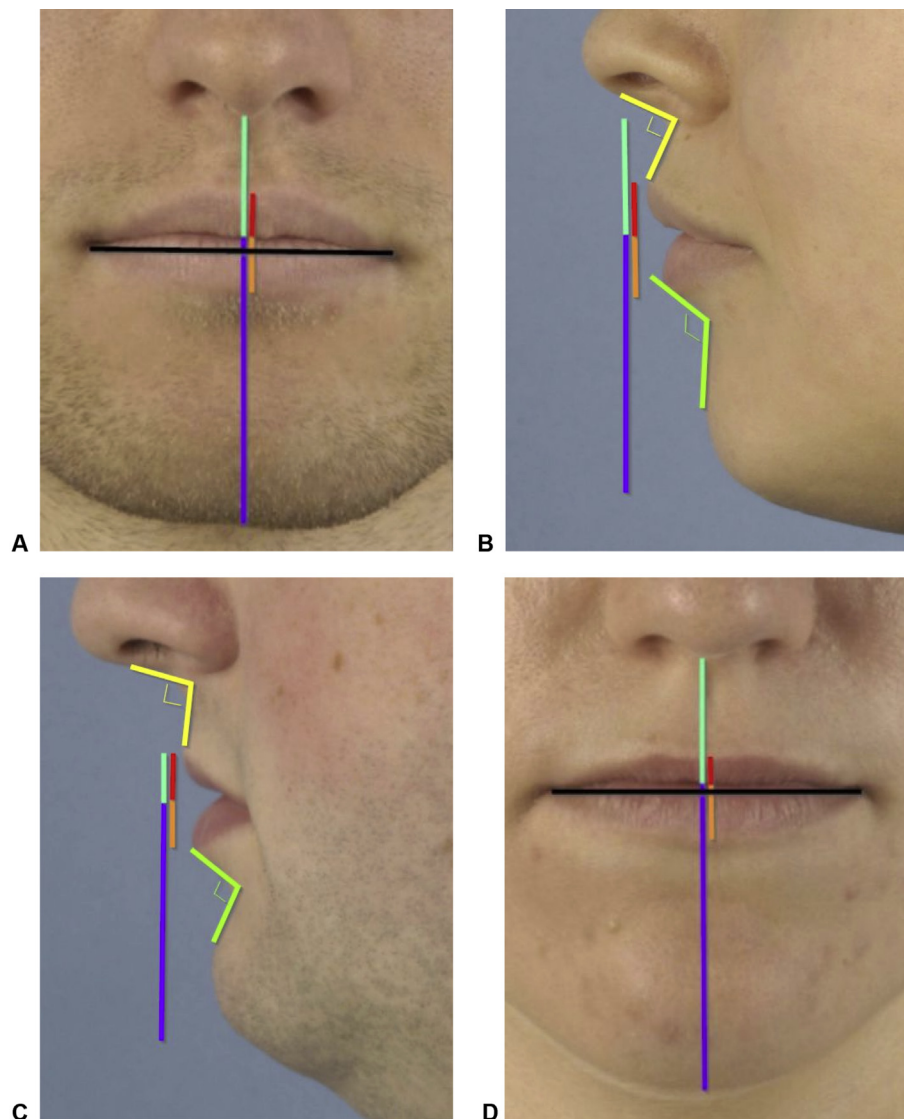


Figure 1 A. Likert 1/2, Male, Frontal view. B. Likert 1/2, Female, Lateral view. C. Likert 6/7, Male, Lateral view. D. Likert 6/7, Female, Frontal view. Black line = Mouth width. Turquoise line = mouth–nose distance. Purple line = chin–mouth distance. Turquoise line and purple line = chin–nose distance. Red line = upper vermilion height. Orange line = Lower vermilion height. Angle between yellow lines = Nasolabial angle. Angle between green lines = Mentolabial angle. 'Nose' refers to the nasal/columellar base.

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