Body Image in People with Lower-Limb Amputee: Qualitative Study

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Abstract:
Objective: The aim of this study was to describe and understand amputee’s perception of his body image.
Methods: A qualitative study, Semi-structured interviews were performed with 21 people with lower limb amputation. Interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data were analyzed using content analysis method.
Setting: The Red Crescent Rehabilitation Center in Iran.
Participants: A convenience sample of 21 patients with lower limb amputation performed after the age of 18 and followed up in Red Crescent Rehabilitation Center in Iran.
Result: This is the first study in Iran exploring the holistic amputee’s perception of his body image. The themes emerged from interviews could be categorized into the following five themes: changes in own life, problems in well-being, relation with the prosthesis; perceived social support, self-perceptions.

Keywords: Body image - lower limb amputation

Introduction
Lower limb amputation is a surgical procedure that results from a serious medical condition such as diabetes, trauma or neoplasm. It has been described as an event usually associated with several changes in one’s personal life (Buzgova, Buzga and Kristimkova’ 2009). Anxiety, depression, body-image and social discomfort have been pointed out as frequent consequences of a lower limb amputation (Singh et al. 2009).
An individual have a limb amputated, the person will tend to compare the appearance of his or her body and functional capabilities to others’. Based on these comparisons, one could speculate it might be difficult for the amputee to have a positive attitude toward his or her body, resulting in a decrease in self-esteem and a